Grassroots Community Organizing

Maine Grassroots Climate Action Conference
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Community Organizing = Achieving Goals Through People Power

- We are committed to organizing with our neighbors to improve our community in specific ways.
- Our volunteer time is very precious.
- A thoughtful organizing plan helps us be effective and efficient with our time, energy and resources.
- “A goal without a plan is a wish.”
Campaign Planning

I. Determining Specific Goal(s)
II. Assessing Lay of the Land
III. Strategy
IV. Communication
V. Tactics/Timeline
VI. Resource Management
Determining Specific Goals

Real Life Goals
- Specific change we wish to see in the world
- (e.g. install solar panels on high school)
- Quantifiable; How we know we won and/or lost
- Strategy and tactics follow

Organizational Goals
- changes we wish to see in our group
- (e.g. 5 new active team members; 100 email list of supporters); $200 raised
Assessing the Lay of the Land

- Team Strengths and Needs
- Community Allies (organizational and influential individuals)
- Opponents (ditto)
Strategy

- **Strategic Vehicle:** arena where we will achieve our goals (e.g. town council)

- **Targets:** Decision-makers who can make our goals a reality or not (e.g. 4 town councilors)

- **Secondary targets:** may influence primary targets (e.g. specific business owner)

- **Specific audience we need to persuade**
Campaign Communications

- Clear, concise message (one sentence)
- Story (2-3 sentences)
- Problem/Solution; “elevator speech” slogan
- Local Media Outreach
Tactics and Timeline

- **Tactics:** Specific actions/activities to pressure targets/decision-makers to grant our goal
- Tactics should not confused with Goals
- What order and when?
- Involve people; attract public and media attention; resources, etc...
- Fun and community building!
Resources = People and Money

- Volunteer Recruitment and Stewardship
- How many needed? Training? Support?
- Budget
- Fundraising plan if necessary
- Ask-Thank-Inform-Involve cycle
Getting Started
(see handout)

- Initial meeting for core organizers
- Initial team meeting to brainstorm plan (Goal, Targets, Strategy, Message, Tactics, Timeline, Resources; who is doing what when; next steps)
- Importance of written plan for sharing and input
- Keeping on Track by reviewing plan
Next Steps

- Schedule now your first or next CAT meeting in January to settle on goal.
- Schedule community-wide planning meeting to brainstorm campaign plan.
- Contact maine.chapter@sierraclub.org and we’ll invite SC members and supporters in your town to your meetings.
- Contact maine.chapter@sierraclub.org for advice and guidance.