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Contact:

Ryan Aylesworth
Enfield NH Town Manager
raylesworth@enfield.nh.us
(603) 442-5405

Mike Akillian, Director
The Center for Strategic Governance
mike.akillian@strat-gov.com
(603) 465-1343

Enfield Adopts Strategic Governance to Frame and Achieve A Desired Future

Partners with The Center for Strategic Governance to Engage Residents, Town Committees and Boards

Enfield, NH (May 2, 2018) – To build upon its strong foundation of innovative thinking and community engagement, the Town of Enfield has adopted a process to create strategic plans for all its departments and to integrate them with an updated master plan and capital improvements plan. Collectively, this effort will serve as a roadmap for ongoing enhancements to municipal services and overall community development.

“Enfield is a close-knit community of people who support one another and aim to retain the culture and character of a rural, but progressive New Hampshire community,” says Meredith Smith, Chairperson of the Board of Selectmen. To continue to do that, according to Town Manager Ryan Aylesworth, “we have to be intentional in what we strive for and how we invest over the coming years.” A commitment to strategic governance can transform a community, and success of the process requires broad based buy-in among employees, local officials, and citizens.

Enfield is partnering with the Amherst-NH-based Center for Strategic Governance, LLC. (www.strat-gov.com) for this initiative. “The role of strategic governance is to help leaders and citizens create a desired future,” explained Center Director Mike Akillian. “It consists of two ongoing efforts: strategic thinking and operational governance. Strategic thinking helps the community decide *what* to achieve, and operational governance focuses on *how* to achieve it. Together they constitute applied leadership for municipalities. We are very pleased to be supporting Enfield in their adoption of this type of governance.”

Enfield’s eight operating departments will complete 10 work activities that will help them

understand their past, envision the future, and manage the present. This work will result in multi-year strategic departmental plans with measurable outcomes along with the strategic initiatives and investments needed to achieve those outcomes. These plans will enable the Enfield Town Manager, Board of Selectmen, Budget Committee and residents to frame broad priorities and make informed financial tradeoffs by looking at such quality-of-life factors as public safety, infrastructure, emergency services, town character, housing, business development, financial health, recreation, environmental quality, etc. Plans will be refreshed annually to reflect real-world changes and to ensure that desired citizen-focused outcomes are being achieved.

“This process will also enable us to integrate our master planning and capital improvements planning with our departmental efforts,” says Aylesworth. “Clear strategic goals can serve as a basis for land use planning and aligning ordinances in a well-timed fashion. They can also aid in timing capital expenditures, because they are tied closely to clearly framed, strategic initiatives. This project is strongly supported by our residents as well as public officials, because it can help us allocate limited resources very effectively to achieve our strategic priorities.”

Strategic governance creates a multi-year vision that shapes annual planning and budgeting. “Everyone in town government knows what goals they're working towards, so plans and budgets are driven by the progress to be made on those goals in any given year,” says Akillian. “This also builds and sustains voter support, because residents help frame the strategic goals and can easily keep tabs on progress.”

In the coming weeks, a comprehensive survey covering all aspects of municipal functions and services will be finalized and disseminated to Enfield residents. The results of the survey will help local officials set priorities, identify areas of strength and needed improvement, and ultimately ensure that municipal services are effectively meeting the needs of Enfield residents. The project schedule calls for departmental strategic plans to be created over the summer and to be presented publicly in the July timeframe. This will enable the 2019 planning and budgeting process to serve as the first year of a multi-year planning window.

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