


Lessons From The 
CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC



Puget Sound Finance Officers Association

November 10, 2021

Presenters:

Barbara Lopez, Finance Director,
City of Puyallup

Nanci Lien, Finance Director,
Retired
City of Olympia

Agenda



1. Meeting Format
2. PSFOA 2022 Board Elections
3. CPE Credits
4. Olympia & Puyallup Demographics
5. Lessons Learned
6. What's Next?



PSFOA 2022 Proposed Board of Directors

	Position	Name	Organization
1	President	Kevin Fuhrer	City of Auburn
2	President elect	Alex Beherndt	WA State Auditor's Office
3	Board member	Tony Cullerton	City of Tukwila
4	Secretary	Chris Gianini	City of Sammamish
5	Treasurer	Chase Donnelly	City of Federal Way
6	Past President	Martin Chaw	FCS GROUP
7	Board member	Sandra Groshong	WA State Auditor's Office
8	Board member	Phung Huynh	City of Kent
9	Board member	Barbara Lopez	City of Puyallup
10	Board member	Karen Jester	Soos Creek Water and Sewer District
11	Vacant		
12	Vacant		
	Ex-officio	Sri Krishnan	City of Kirkland
	Ex-officio	Dan Legard, WFOA (2022 President)	City of Kennewick

Question for All

**What type of government
do you represent?**

(Use chat function to respond)

City Demographics

	City of Olympia	City of Puyallup
Population	54,150	43,040
# Employees	616	310
2021 Operating Budget	\$168 Million	\$111 Million
2021 General Fund Budget	\$88 Million	\$50 Million
General Fund Reserve	\$18 Million	\$7.5 Million
Federal CARES Funds	\$1.58 Million	\$1.87 Million
Federal AARP Funds	\$9.2 Million	\$11.8 Million
Employees Sent Home to Work	3/17/2020	3/17/2020
# Positions Laid Off/Cut	0/0	0/0 (≈ 30 furloughed)
Staff Returned to Office Full Time?	No	Yes – 1 telework day/week

Lesson #1

Take Care of Employees First!



- ▶ Flight attendant instructions
- ▶ Employee care
- ▶ Importance of self-care
- ▶ Engaged supervisors
- ▶ Importance of 1:1's
- ▶ At work support groups
- ▶ Recognition
- ▶ Ways to connect remotely



Lesson #2

Management Needs to Lead



- ▶ Increased meeting frequency
- ▶ Get in front of issues
- ▶ Tough decisions – timing & speed
- ▶ Supervisors/managers/directors to step up
- ▶ Concept of “First Team”

Lesson #3

Develop Strategies



- ▶ Identify operational vs financial issues
- ▶ Develop options
- ▶ Assign responsibilities
- ▶ Dust off any continuity plans



Lesson #4

Communicate, Communicate, Communicate!



- ▶ Strong, clear, frequent
- ▶ Frequent management meetings
- ▶ How can depts help each other
- ▶ Identify top things to address
- ▶ All on same page
- ▶ Consistent messaging
- ▶ Message to all levels

Lesson #5

Data Matters

- ▶ What do we know?
- ▶ What don't we know?
- ▶ Where to focus efforts?
- ▶ Major revenue sources
- ▶ Cash vs revenue
- ▶ Revenue reprojection
- ▶ Educate all levels of government



Lesson #6

Flexibility Saved the Day!



- ▶ Remove telecommuting barriers
- ▶ Implement right technology
- ▶ Ergonomic needs
- ▶ Travel less essential than we thought
- ▶ Employee creativity
- ▶ Work - Life balance

Question for All

**Approximately what % of your
department has returned to
the office full-time?**

(Use chat function to respond)

Lesson #7

An Engaged H/R Program is Essential!



- ▶ Anticipate employee needs
- ▶ Policy adjustments
- ▶ Communication
- ▶ Changes to recruitment process
- ▶ Changes to onboarding
- ▶ Retaining existing employees

Lesson #8

Culture Matters



- ▶ “Good to Great” – Jim Collins book
- ▶ Always a way forward
- ▶ No such thing as “normal”
- ▶ Any cracks in systems are magnified
- ▶ Nothing was simple
- ▶ Reminder – how **important** Finance is!



Lesson #9

Funny Things We've Learned!

- ▶ What 6' apart looks like
- ▶ How **not** to touch our face
- ▶ Happy Birthday song lasts 20 seconds
- ▶ How to bake bread
- ▶ How quickly we can get ready for Zoom meeting
- ▶ Need minimum 2 weeks of toilet paper on hand
- ▶ The names of **so** many governors



Lesson #10

More Funny Things We've Learned!



- ▶ How to make “no-sew” masks from things we have around house
- ▶ Restaurants are extremely creative
- ▶ Appreciation of Amazon, Walmart, UPS, etc
- ▶ Drive by honking IS a birthday party
- ▶ Sweatpants ARE an essential clothing item
- ▶ There are LOTS of ESSENTIAL workers!
- ▶ Benefits of outdoor activities
- ▶ Importance of our hairdressers/barbers

Question for All

**For the majority of your work week,
do you prefer to work in the office
or telework?**

(Use chat function to respond)

What Next?



- ▶ Craft what is the new “normal”
- ▶ Future won't be the same
- ▶ More expectations for flexibility
- ▶ Employees expect more options
- ▶ More technology needs
- ▶ More/different training for all





Questions?

December Meeting



- ▶ December 10, 2021 (Friday)
- ▶ Remote Meeting
- ▶ State Auditor Office Update
- ▶ “Chief Happiness Officer”
 - Ms. Brooklyn Dicent
- ▶ Watch for email notice
- ▶ Meeting handouts online
 - PSFOA.org

December 2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Friday, Dec 10th 2021



Thank you!

