The Board of Orange County Commissioners focused its 2016 annual retreat on establishing policy priorities for the coming year. The Board suggested topics that it wanted to emphasize and associated those policy initiatives with an existing Board goal. The Commissioners then used a voting system to prioritize the policy initiatives. Policy initiatives that were not awarded any votes during this process were omitted from the list below.

Applies to all goals

- More aggressive social agenda
- Bridge diverse cultural populations and values
- Social Justice Values:
  - Foster a community culture that rejects oppression and inequity.
  - Ensure economic self-sufficiency.
  - Create a safe community.
  - Establish sustainable and equitable land use and environmental policies.
  - Enable full civic participation.

Goal 1: Ensure a community network of basic human services and infrastructure that maintains, protects, and promotes the well-being of all county residents.
(Each Commissioner was allotted two votes for the priorities related to this goal)

AFFORDABLE HOUSING (5 VOTES)

- Provide decent, standard housing options for all residents regardless of household income level.
- Identify funds to develop targeted number of units (set numerical goal).
- Develop explicit plan to inform bond expenditures and other BOCC affordable housing funding.

FAMILY SUCCESS ALLIANCE (3 VOTES)

- Additional support to expand FSA
- All County departments coordinate with efforts of FSA

COMMUNITY CENTERS (3 VOTES)

- Decentralize community resources through community centers
- Provide food, hot meals, and essential services to residents in need.
- Complete Cedar Grove community center and explore service expansion for community centers.

NON-PROFIT FUNDING (1 VOTE)

- Review process and adequacy of dollar amount.

AGING/MENTAL HEALTH (1 VOTE)

- Convening including state legislators on serious gaps in quality and quantity of long term senior care, especially low-income seniors.
- Thorough review of services from Cardinal.

TRANSPORTATION (1 VOTE)

- Identify initiatives or ways to leverage current programs to help break cycle of poverty
- Employment as articulated by staff (crossed with transportation as relevant).
- Survey of unmet transportation needs for education and employment needs of low income residents, used to prioritize additional services.
Goal 2: Promote an interactive and engaging system of governance that reflects community values.  
(Each Commissioner was allotted one vote for the priorities related to this goal)

OUTREACH/INTERNET ACCESS (3 VOTES)
  • Continue upgrades to IT and explore new outreach methods, including old school methods, use of multiple language efforts.
  • Expand internet access through County hotspots or incentives to private parties.

RESIDENTS ACCESS TO COUNTY (2 VOTES)
  • Human answering phone
  • Rumor page – stop bad information flow
  • Make the website functional
  • Communicate the role of a County Commission

INTERGOVERNMENTAL FUNDING FORMULA (2 VOTES)

Goal 3: Implement planning and economic development policies which create a balanced, dynamic local economy, and which promote diversity, sustainable growth, and enhanced revenue while embracing community values.
(Each Commissioner was allotted one vote for the priorities related to this goal)

PARTNERSHIPS (2 VOTES)
  • Reinvigorate joint planning with neighbors
  • Partnerships with other governments, staff, and residents

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (2 VOTES)
  • Clarify what types of development are wanted and what infrastructure is needed
  • Increase in the number of living wage jobs or opportunities for gainful employment (salaried positions) and options.

SUB-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (2 VOTES)
  • Continue good work to fund priorities in other goals.
  • Target small business loan/grant fund to identified needs (i.e., childcare).

Goal 4: Invest in quality County facilities, a diverse work force, and technology to achieve a high performing County government.
(Each Commissioner was allotted one vote for the priorities related to this goal)

HOUSING LIVING WAGE FOR ORANGE COUNTY STAFF (4 VOTES)
SUPPORT THE MANAGER’S INTERNAL STRATEGIC INITIATIVES TO ENSURE QUALITY IMPLEMENTATION OF ALL KEY PRIORITIES (3 VOTES)

Goal 5: Create, preserve, and protect a natural environment that includes clean water, clean air, wildlife, important natural lands, and sustainable energy for present and future generations. (Each Commissioner was allotted one vote for the priorities related to this goal)

INCLUDE LOCAL AGRICULTURE AS KEY TO UNMENTIONED “OPEN SPACE.” (6 VOTES)
DEVELOP PLAN FOR RESIDENTS AND FARMERS AND BUSINESSES TO PREPARE FOR AND ADJUST TO EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE (1 VOTE)
Goal 6: Ensure a high quality of life and lifelong learning that champions diversity, education at all levels, libraries, parks, recreation, and animal welfare.
(Each Commissioner was allotted two votes for the priorities related to this goal)

EDUCATION: AT-RISK CHILDREN (5 votes)
• Increase support to expand pre-kindergarten services
• Continue to close the achievement gaps and end the school to prison pipeline.

CONNECT STUDENTS TO COMMUNITY COLLEGES (4 VOTES)

MOVE TOWARD A JOINT EFFORT WITH TOWNS ON PARKS AND TRAILS DEVELOPMENT (2 VOTES)

INCREASE COLLABORATION BETWEEN SCHOOL DISTRICTS (1 VOTE)

BOND REFERENDUM (1 VOTE)
• Smooth bond process for educational facilities (affordable housing per goal 1)
• Identify criteria for bond referendum projects – schools and housing

FUND K-12 AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES AT LEAST AT 2015-16 LEVELS (1 VOTE)