



Local Government Resolution Initiative Toolkit: How to get the ball rolling

Recruit a Team of Volunteers

It takes time and a recovery community to get a resolution or proclamation passed by a local government – you will need a team of volunteers to help you. Find three or four volunteers from your community to help you.

Make the Initial Contact

Your local city and county representatives are elected to represent *you* and *your needs*. You have the right to meet with them to advocate for yourself and your community. You do not need to be a business owner, lobbyist, or a big donor to ask for a meeting.

Tip: It is always easiest to approach a city councilor or county commissioner who you know. Do you have a mutual friend? Have they shown support for a local non-profit that you volunteer for? Did you attend the same high school? Find a way to show the policymaker that you have something or someone in common.

You can find contact information for your council or commission member by Googling them. Send your council or commission member an email asking for a meeting to talk about addiction recovery in the community. Keep it short and friendly. Wait a few days – if you do not receive a response, follow up with a phone call. If you cannot reach your representative by email or phone, make a visit to the council or commission offices. Or attend a standing council or commission meeting and introduce yourself to them after the meeting. **It is okay to be persistent!**

Prepare for the Meeting

Once your council or commission member has agreed to meet with you, coordinate with your volunteers and rehearse what you will say. Be sure to ask your council or commission member how much time you will have for the meeting so that you can prepare accordingly. The second page of this handout provides a draft agenda and describes the meeting roles for the volunteers.

After the Meeting

Follow up with an email thanking the council or commission member for their time. Remind them of their commitment to supporting the resolution. If you discussed a date for a public hearing, confirm that date in your email. If you committed to sending the council or commission member anything, such as a draft of the resolution or proclamation, include that in your email.

Stay in touch with your council or commission member. Ask if they need anything more from you to prepare for the hearing and resolution. In each email, reiterate any dates and times that they have committed to. For example, “Do you need any more background information from me to prepare for the public hearing scheduled for December 17th?”

Keep Oregon Recovers Informed

The staff at Oregon Recovers wants to help you in this process! Send Mike Marshall (mike@oregonrecovers.org) or Andrew Swanson (andrew@oregonrecovers.org) an email to alert them to your progress and let them know when you need help. Add the information for you and your local effort to the tab for your city or county at this [Oregon Recovers tracking spreadsheet](#) and update it when you meet with local government officials. When a public hearing or meeting is scheduled, please call Mike Marshall (503-828-7193) or Andrew Swanson (971-335-9033) at Oregon Recovers ASAP to let them know.

Agenda for an Initial Meeting with a Council or Commission Member

- Brief introductions
- Find out: what connection does our elected friend have to addiction and/or recovery?
- Explain the purpose of your visit – **put your ask up front:**
 - Resolution introduction
 - Resolution sponsorship or support
 - Space on the commission/council agenda for a public hearing
 - Push to get this scheduled
- Data on addiction as a public health crisis – ***create a sense of urgency with your presentation***
- Personal stories from 1-2 volunteers
- Present the resolution draft
- End with again asking the council or commission member:
 - Will they be a champion of addiction and introduce the resolution?
 - Will they support the resolution?
 - Will they help you to schedule a public hearing for the resolution? If so, when will that be scheduled?
 - Who should be your point of contact for follow up? Is it the council member? Is it a staff member? Get contact information.

Meeting Roles

Facilitator:

Low-speaking role. Keeps meeting on time and ensure the conversation remains on-message.

Notetaker:

Low-speaking role. Takes notes on the conversation (including questions from our elected friend, and any commitments they make). Add any updates from the meeting to the tab for your city or county at this [Oregon Recovers tracking spreadsheet](#).

Speakers:

- Describe the data around the public health crisis
- Briefly share their connection to addiction recovery
- Split up presentation of the resolution
- Make absolutely sure all of “The Asks” happen!