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7. Media Events
8. Community Votes
Community Votes

**Goal**: To develop a plan that will win your community vote.

I. Principles of Winning Community Votes

II. Steps to Winning a Community Vote
   1. Goals
   2. The Question
   3. Get Out the Vote
   4. Influences
   5. Tactics and Plan

III. Evaluation
I. Principles of Winning Community Votes

1. Present the Right Question
   The question on the ballot or town meeting warrant must be legally worded and compelling. There are usually two ways of presenting a question to the voters—through a petition and/or through municipal leaders. Know the best way to get the right question on the ballot.

2. Identify Your Supporters and Get Out the Vote—Don’t Educate the Whole Community
   Spend your time strategically. In most cases, you do not have to do a massive community education campaign. Rather, you just need to identify your supporters and get them out to vote.

3. Create the Feeling the Whole Town is Voting Your Way
   Through visibility tactics such as signs, buttons and letters to the editor, show that the question has widespread support in the community. Usually you want to create the sense that the majority of the town is with you.

4. Demonstrate VIP Support
   Identify the VIPs (elected and non-elected) in the community and urge them to support the campaign. Show the community that the important people in town are voting your way.

5. Build Your Group Through Your Campaign
   It takes an organized group to win a community vote. You will need quality people in your core groups and a quantity of people to conduct the public education and outreach. A sizable and powerful group will give you the resources to both run and legitimize your campaign. Your group should be stronger at the end of your campaign than it was when you started.
6. Craft a Message Using the Four Cs
   In order to win your campaign, you will need to effectively tell your story (your message) in such a way that any reasonable person has only one choice—to side with you. Your story should be a **Concise**, **Compelling**, and **Consistent** message that **Controls** the issue. In addition you need an appropriate public face for the campaign. The messenger, or public deliverer of the message, is arguably more important than the message.

7. Create a Buzz that Peaks on Election Day
   Escalate your tactics to build your momentum up until Election Day. Coordinate your media outreach, group building and visibility tactics so that they peak at the end of the campaign.

8. Be Aware of the Opposition
   Your opposition will also be developing a plan to win. Try to predict their strategies and tactics and plan to respond appropriately.
II. Steps To Winning A Community Vote

Step 1: Set Goals

Campaign Goals:

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Step 2: The Question

A community vote can be held in two ways—on a municipal-wide ballot or on a town meeting warrant. These votes can be binding or non-binding.

A question is placed on the ballot or town meeting warrant in one of three ways—through a citizen’s petition, by the chief municipal officer or by a vote of the main elected body (City Council, Select board, or Board of Alderman).

Determine the legal and chronological process for presenting your question before the voters.
## Processes for the Question

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<th>Process for the Question:</th>
<th>The steps in the process:</th>
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Step 3: Get Out the Vote

1. How Many Voters Do You Need to Win?
   Average the turnout in the last three comparable votes and multiply by 60 percent. That is how many votes you will need to win. (This calculation assumes that you only need a simple majority. If you need 67 percent or 34 percent, you should adjust accordingly.)

   ________ Average Turnout X 60 percent = _________ Voters

2. Use Past Voter Lists to Identify Likely Voters
   If someone has voted in the past three elections they are much more likely to vote. If they have not voted, they are not likely to vote. Weed out the non-voters from your voter identification plan.

3. How Are You Going to Identify the _____ Supportive Voters?
   For each of these options, determine how many voters you plan to identify, what sources you will use for your lists, and who will coordinate each realm.

   Option 1: Broadcast Method
   Through door-knocking or telephone calling

   Option 2: Selective Identification
   Through existing lists, contacting groups, and other concerned constituencies

4. Getting Out the Vote
   Once you have identified your supporters you need a plan to make sure they vote.

   a. Original Commitment ____________________________

   b. Campaign Information ____________________________

   c. Reminder ________________________________
Step 4: Influences

Likely Voter in _______________________

Personal Contact: ________________________________

Public: _________________________________________

Other Groups _____________________________________

Elected Officials: ________________________________

Influential People: ________________________________

Media: _________________________________________

Experts/Information: ______________________________

Opposition: ____________________________________
## Step 5: Tactics And Plan

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<tr>
<th>Primary Influences</th>
<th>Tactics</th>
<th>Who?</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<td>Major Events</td>
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<td>Core Group Meeting</td>
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Write your goals for each tactic you plan on using in the “goals” boxes and then work backward.

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III. Evaluation

Take a few minutes to evaluate your campaign plan.

☐ Do you have a good question?

☐ Do you have a plan to identify enough supportive voters to win and to get them to vote?

☐ Do you have enough people to implement your plan?

☐ Do you have a clear and concise message? Do your materials portray the message?

☐ Have you identified appropriate campaign spokespeople?

☐ Do you have a plan for securing the endorsements of key VIPs in your community?

☐ Do you have a good fundraising plan?

☐ Does your group have a plan for recruiting group members, garnering media attention, fundraising, developing your message and materials, or planning for an upcoming hearing?
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