

CY NOTES – LAND & WATER SUMMIT SEMINAR 3/14/15

BASIC COMMUNICATIONS THINKING

- **FIRST STEP: ANSWER “SO WHAT?” QUESTION? HOW DOES THIS HELP MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY AND COMMUNITY ITSELF?**
- **4 Cs: CLEAR+CONCISE+CONSISTENT = CREDIBILITY**
- **STAY OUT OF FIGHTS OF WHICH YOU AREN’T PART (E.G., MIDDLETOWN TOWN COUNCIL VS. OPEN SPACE ISSUE OPPONENTS)**

ACTIONS THAT WORK

- **MEET EARLY ON WITH LOCAL MEDIA TO EXPLAIN WHAT IS GOING ON, HOW IT WORKS, AND HOW YOUR INVOLVEMENT WILL BENEFIT COMMUNITY, BECAUSE ALL THIS IS VERY COMPLEX. SAY YOU DO NOT NEED THEIR EDITORIAL SUPPORT AT THIS TIME, BUT JUST WANT TO THEM TO KNOW WHAT YOU ARE DOING. (Local media will appreciate this, as they see themselves as the conscience of the community – very often very true – and from a practical standpoint, no reporter likes being sent to a town meeting on this issue and having to understand the arguments being made with no background.)**
- **PRE-EMPTIVE STRIKE, AS PERTAINS TO ABOVE MEETINGS. KNOW YOUR (ACTUAL AND ANTICIPATED) OPPONENTS’ ARGUMENTS AS WELL AS YOUR OWN. WHEN YOU MEET WITH EDITORS, TELL THEM “YOU ARE GOING TO HEAR THIS IS A BAD IDEA BECAUSE XYZ.” EXPLAIN IT IS NOT, AND HERE’S WHY... (This greatly helps reporters and editors in the long run because they can then recall, “That’s what we were told they would say, but we already know why they are wrong according to (your group).”**
- **THE ANTI-ELITISM RESPONSE - CITE LAND USE BOND ISSUES APPROVAL RATES, THAT WERE LED BY PROV, CENTRAL FALLS AND NEWPORT. PEOPLE IN CITIES VALUE PARKS AS MUCH AS BLOCK ISLANDERS VALUE UNTOUCHED MEADOWS.**
- **LAND CONSERVATION IS A WHOLE. NOT ALL CONSERVED LAND GOES TO THE BUNNIES AND BIRDS OR BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPES AND FORESTS, BUT INCLUDES RECREATIONAL SPACES. SHOW THE BIG PICTURE.**
- **NETWORK, AND GIVE EVERYONE CREDIT. ALL CONSERVATION GROUPS SHOULD BE WORKING TOGETHER. DON’T THINK OF JUST IMPRESSING YOUR DONORS. (CY’s Tiverton/Little Compton and BI examples)**