

Potato City Council Role Play Instructions

Role Play No.1

You are a member of the Potato City Council. A special council meeting was scheduled tonight to discuss the growing problem of homelessness in your community. The city council chairperson is sick and unable to attend the meeting. No one was appointed to be the leader tonight.

You believe strongly that the city council should provide funds to build a new homeless shelter to address the problem. In your view, all the existing shelters are understaffed and not adequate to deal with the homeless people. You believe that you are "the voice" for the homeless people in Potato City.

Your mission tonight is to "win over" the rest of the council. You don't want to make them angry. Be convincing. Sell the council. Three of five council members (a majority) must vote in agreement to make it happen. After your sales pitches, ask each member how they will vote. You conducted a survey recently in Potato City. The results:

- On the average night in Potato City, 23 people sleep outdoors. You didn't survey the three homeless shelters in town, but you believe that they are full.
- Sixty percent of the residents of Potato City believe that the city should do something about the homeless. (You surveyed 60 residents by phone.)
- The city has extra money that could be used to build and maintain a homeless shelter. (You don't know how much money the city has, but you've heard about it).

Role Play No. 2

You are a member of the Potato City Council. A special council meeting was scheduled tonight to discuss the growing problem of homelessness in your community. The city council chairperson is sick and unable to attend the meeting. No one was appointed to be the leader tonight.

You don't have any strong feelings about homelessness in Potato City. It hasn't affected you directly. Your goal tonight is to be agreeable and join the group in decision making. Don't speak unless you are asked a question. Board action requires a majority (three of five members must agree).

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Role Play No. 3

You are a member of the Potato City Council. A special council meeting was scheduled tonight to discuss the growing problem of homelessness in your community. The city council chairperson is sick and unable to attend the meeting. No one was appointed to be the leader tonight. Therefore, you are taking charge.

You believe that this meeting is a waste of time. You don't believe that homelessness is an issue that the city should address. The city has \$1 million in reserve, but you feel that it can be put to better uses than homelessness. In your view, homelessness is best addressed by nonprofit groups already operating three homeless shelters in Potato City.

Tell the council members how to vote, then ask for an official vote by raising their hands. Board rules require a majority (at least three of five), of members to change any policy. You expect strong opposition by some members of the board. You are prepared to take charge in the absence of the board chairperson. You don't care if you offend them; get the job done.

Role Play No. 4

You are a member of the Potato City Council. A special council meeting was scheduled tonight to discuss the growing problem of homelessness in your community. The city council chairperson is sick and unable to attend the meeting. No one was appointed to be the leader tonight.

You have mixed feelings about homelessness. You are not sure how you feel because you don't have a lot of information. Your goal tonight is to ask each member of the council how they feel about it and then make your decision. You want to see the board be as united as possible in this issue. The issue at hand is; Should the council spend city funds on constructing and maintaining a homeless shelter? Board rules require a majority (at least three of five), of members to agree to create new policy. You don't want the board to jump to any conclusions quickly. Resist any effort to have a quick board vote.

Potato City Council Role Play Instructions

Role Play No. 5

You are a member of the Potato City Council. A special meeting was scheduled tonight to discuss the growing problem of homelessness in your community. The city council chairperson is sick and unable to attend the meeting. No one was appointed to be the leader tonight.

You believe that the board needs to discuss the matter of homelessness, make a general statement of support, then delegate the specifics to a community task force. This community task force, you believe, should be given the complete authority to decide whether to build a city sponsored homeless shelter or to improve the three existing shelters operated by nonprofit groups. You believe that the task force can do a better job of making this decision than the city council. Your task as a city council is to provide general guidelines to the task force to help them make the decision.