

Town of Palm Beach

2025 FAPPO Best Practice Essay Award Submittal

“Contribution to the Achievement of the Public Procurement Profession”

Part of my annual evaluation is the development of staff. Securing training, securing budget for training, introducing best practices and certification by UPPCC as either a CPPB or CPPO when the criteria is met by the respective procurement agent.

2024 was a model year for the Town of Palm Beach Procurement and Contracts. Our organization had hired two individuals several years ago that had the opportunity to actually test for their CPPB certification in the fall of 2024. They met the criterion to test both by years in procurement and training hours.

As we begin 2025, all staff members that are eligible to be certified as a CPPB or CPPO are. This reflects a standard in the community that we strive for educated and trained staff in their profession.

The journey began with an open discussion with staff about certification, the benefits of certification and how we would work collaboratively to make this path come to life.

While passing the test is a personal one, how management approaches mentoring and training is a critical path towards success of the staff member.

The first target was having each staff member sign up with NIGP for CPPB/CPPO training. This was aided by having a sufficient training budget. I want staff to be exposed to as much procurement training as possible.

Once staff completed their training with NIGP, the fun began. I scheduled bi-monthly meetings with either lunch or some kind of dessert. The goal of the meetings was to take the tests offered by NIGP where we sat around the conference room table and everyone in the room provided an answer. The goal was to engage conversation about why they answered the way they did before revealing the answer. We did this for over nine months. We managed to get the CFO to participate in training/answer sessions to questions proffered by NIGP testing.

Not only did we learn as a group, but we bonded as a group in a much stronger sense. Knowing that you have their back and the freedom for a staff member to ask questions is a major milestone.

For those of us that have been in the procurement world for a number of years, we have an obligation to mentor and train staff whether they stay and grow in your organization or if they leave, that you have mentored a well-rounded procurement professional.

The procurement profession continues to grow. Both staff members that sat for their CPPB have also been tasked with working on the FAPPO Best Practices and NPI AEP. This exposes them to elements that also triggers questions and answers.

The Town of Palm Beach recognizes our continued desire for best practices, professional certification and related education. To bring back to the Town Council, the award for FAPPO Best Practices, NPI AEP and UPPCC certification elevates respect for the profession.

The role of mentor is one that we should all take as the highest gift we can leave with our staff.

Although staff is certified, we continue to meet to learn from one another.