Effective Governance
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Workshop Materials
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Two basic features:

- An elected council to decide policy questions, and;
- A professionally trained manager hired by council to govern the municipal administration

In practice:

- The city council paints the big picture, and;
- Entrusts the details of administration and implementation to direct reports
Council-Manager Form of Government

The Council-Manager Form

- VOTERS
  - GOVERNING BODY
    - MANAGER
      - DEPARTMENT HEADS

Source: ICMA
Roles of Elected Office

1. Set public policy
2. Be professional
3. Be accountable
4. Be a big-picture thinker
5. Be a good steward
6. Be an advocate
7. Be a community builder
8. Be a decision-maker
9. Provide oversight
10. Be ethical
The public expects and deserves your best

- Honesty
- Decisions that put the community first
- Open and fair decision-making process
- Respect for individuals & the community
- Accountability
- Decorum and professionalism
- Personal character
- Lawful, ethical conduct

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Your Role in the BIG Picture

• When you were elected, you became the ultimate insider!

• Misunderstanding your role can:
  — Increase the risk of liability for the city and for you
  — Reduce your own effectiveness

• Being part of an effective decision-making body requires collaboration and consensus-building among often diverse personalities and beliefs

• Civility. Civility. Civility.
Appropriate Conduct

• Your conduct impacts your effectiveness (+/-)
• Incivility and divisiveness need not be a part of nonpartisan local government
• You are viewed as:
  1. Leaders in the community; and
  2. Top representatives of the municipality as an employer
• You set the example and tone for the entire organization
Appropriate Conduct

As municipal elected officials:
- You hold both actual and “perceived” powers
- You are the center of the organizational universe
- Your words and actions may have an unintended but huge impact on others

No matter what, you can never put aside your elected official persona
The Ultimate Challenge

Each elected official has different goals and priorities.

It is **impossible** to reconcile everything that a group of different people want.

The members of the governing body must sort out the goals and priorities of you and your colleagues. Listen to different views.

- What is most important to you?
- Where are you willing to compromise?

Then establish a **singular** set of goals, priorities, and directions for your manager and other direct reports.
In closing...

“Two things define you: your patience when you have nothing and your attitude when you have everything.” – George Bernard Shaw

1. Recognize roles when they are changing roles – both yours and others
2. Stay in your lane!
   - Stay within your “job description”
   - Stay out of those of others
3. Act as “WE,” not “I.”
   You are on a team! So be a team!
4. Be cautious about citizen pressures; be deliberative
5. Check your personal motives. Decide what you believe is best for the city/town – now and in the future