

 **MML 2019 Summer Conference**




How Roles, Values, and Perspectives Drive Effective Governance

Catherine Tuck Parrish, The Novak Consulting Group

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 **Workshop Agenda**

- Introductions
- Governing Body Working Conditions
- Competing Values in Decision Making
- Bridging the Gap Between Politics and Administration
- Governance Roles
- Tools to Foster an Effective Governing Body

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Campaign vs. Governance

- What skills and circumstances got you elected?
- What did you think you would do when you were elected?
- What do you actually do now that you are on the governing body?

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Based on the Research and Writing of Dr. John Nalbandian

Professor of Public Administration, University of Kansas
Former Mayor and City Commissioner in Lawrence,
Kansas

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The Novak Consulting Group

Council Working Conditions

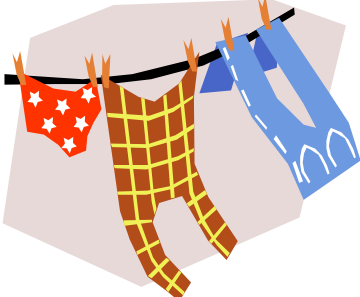
- Vague task and role definition
- No hierarchy
- No specialization
- Little feedback or performance evaluation

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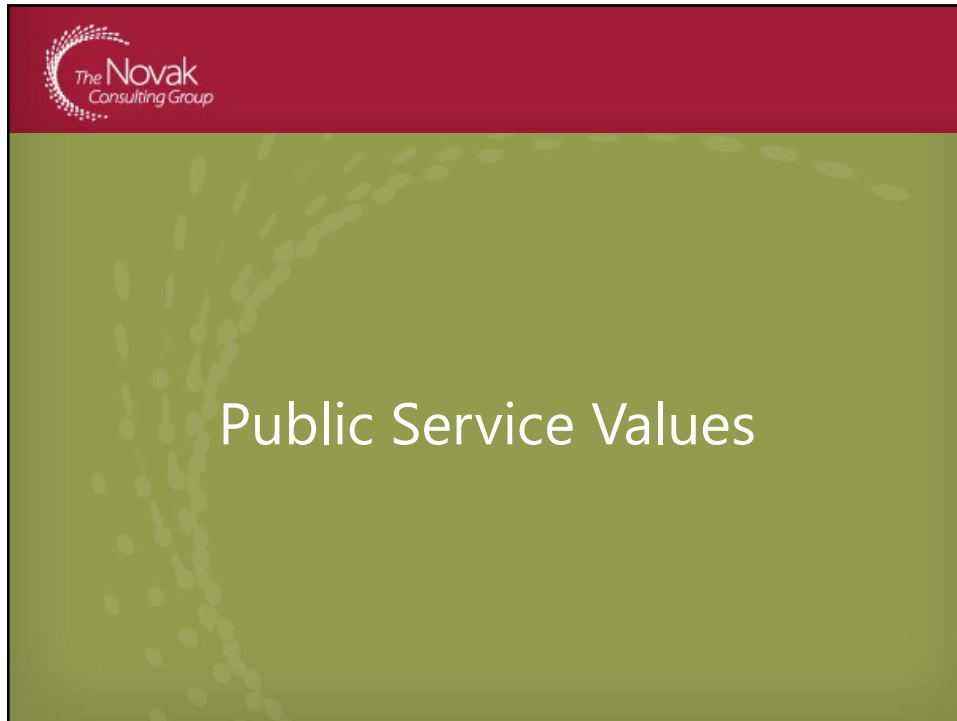
The Novak Consulting Group

Council Working Conditions

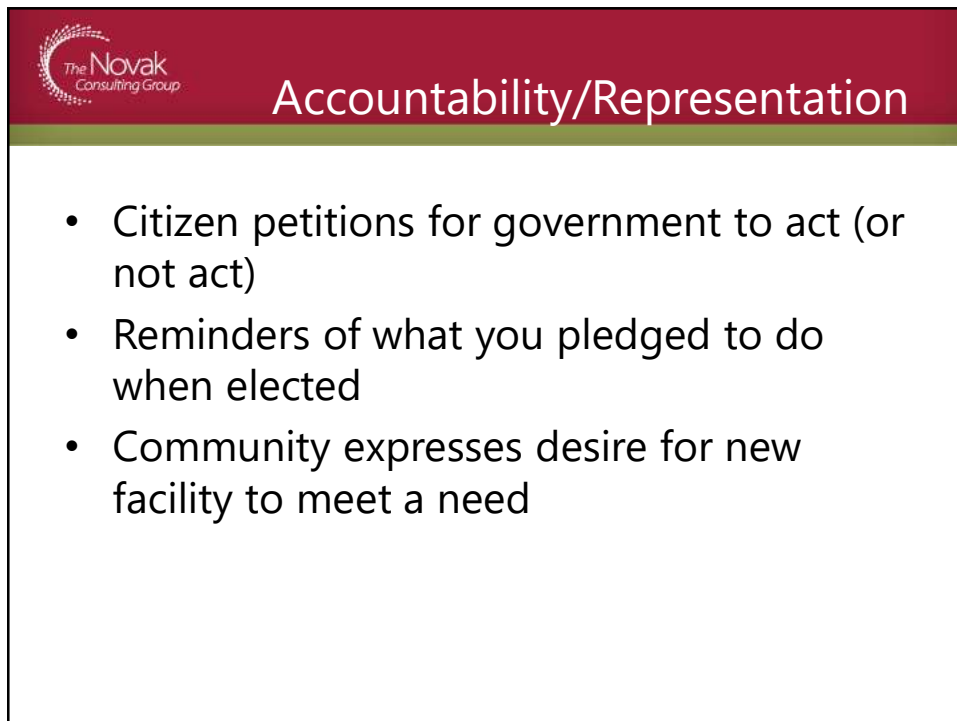
Do it all
in
public!

An illustration of laundry hanging on a line. From left to right, there is a red shirt with white stars, a yellow and brown plaid shirt, and a pair of blue pants. The laundry is hanging on a black line against a light grey background.

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Efficiency and Effectiveness/ Professionalism

- Staff presents implementation of approved parks master plan items in five-year capital plan
- Budget shortfalls that require layoffs are based on job performance
- Road location to align with existing roads from engineering perspective

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Social Equity and Diversity

- Neighborhood feels undesirable uses are placed in one section of town
- Concerns are expressed because layoffs based on seniority will impact minorities disproportionately
- Older neighborhoods express concern that newer neighborhoods are getting more infrastructure funds

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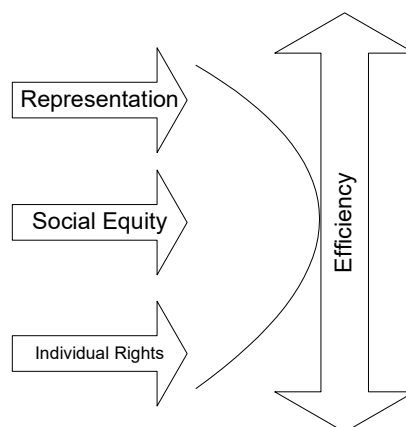
Justice/Individual Rights

- Union objects to layoffs based on performance since appraisals are not equal among supervisors
- Parents demand a crossing guard as kids have the right to cross the street safely
- Road alignment with more greenspace requires more land from property owners

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When Political Values Collide



Dr. John Nalbandian, Professor, University of Kansas

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The Gap Between Politics and Administration

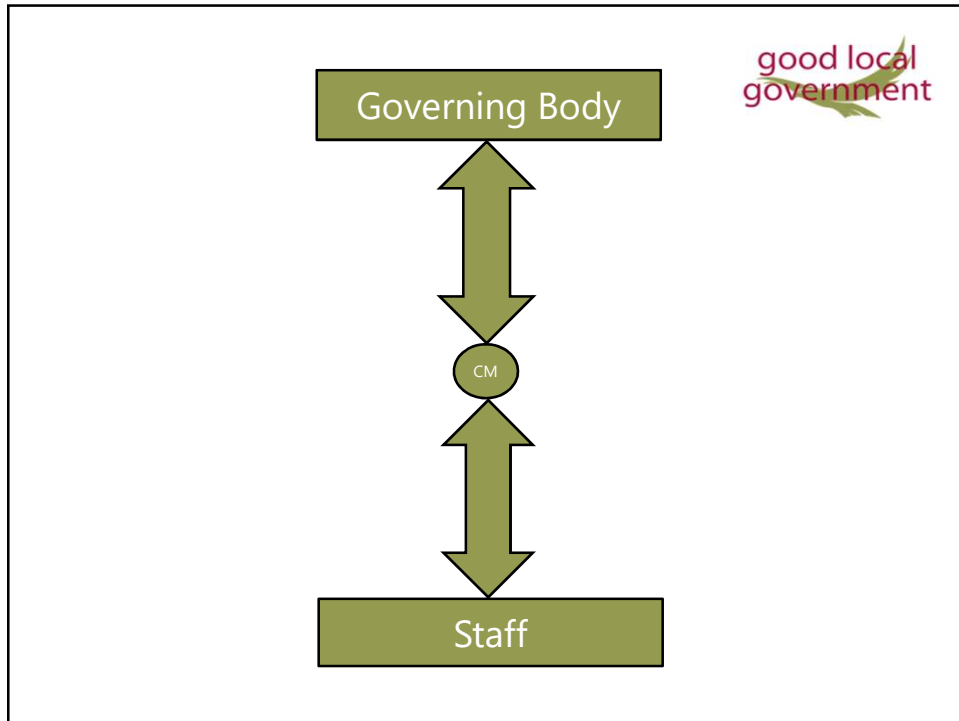
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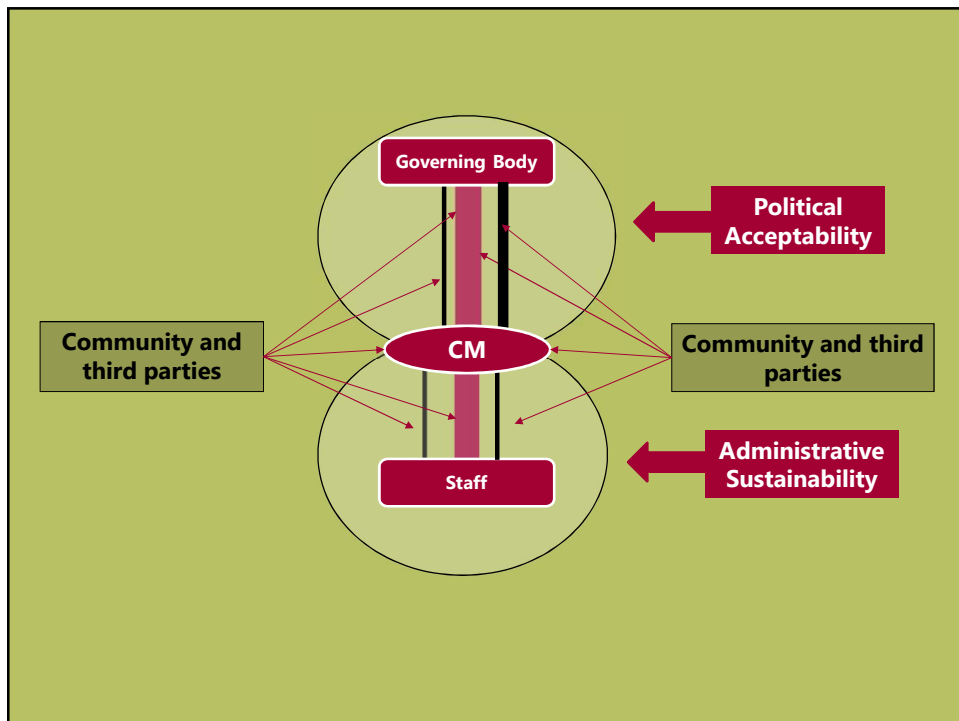
The Gap

- A gap exists and is growing between what is politically acceptable (what we want to do) and operationally sustainable (what we can do)
- Working the gap is facilitated by understanding that politics involves choices among conflicting values—no value profile is best
- And that politics and administration involve more than different behaviors; they are different ways of thinking

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good local government

Characteristics of Politics and Administration

	Political Acceptability	←————→	Administrative Sustainability
Characteristics	Politics		Administration
Activity	Game/allocation of values	CAO and Senior Staff: in the GAP Electeds	Problem Solving
Players	Representatives/trustees		Experts-trustees
Conversation	"What do you hear?" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Passion ■ Dreams ■ Stories 		"What do you know?" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Data ■ Plans ■ Reports
Pieces	Intangible: Interests and symbols		Tangible: Information; money, people, equipment
Currency	Power (stories), loyalty, trust		Knowledge (deeds)
Dynamics	Constructive conflict, compromise, change		Predictability, cooperation, continuity

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Governance Roles

- Strategic Vision
- Trustee-Steward
- Representative – Constituent Advocate
- Community Builder – Bringing People Together
- Decision Maker
- Oversight

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Effective Elected Officials

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Characteristics of Effective Councils

1. Willingness to address difficult issues, often the "big picture" problems facing a community
2. Ability/capacity of Council to deal with these issues as a team
3. Maintain effective relationships with staff


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Ideal Governing Body Member

- Community
- Brand
- Majority
- Unique Power
- No Right Answers


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Ideal Governing Body Member

- Dual Roles
- Respect
- Partnership
- Acceptable and Sustainable
- Outcome-Focused

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Practical Tools to Improve Council Effectiveness

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Preparing Councils

Orientation

- Starts before the election
- Communication of non-confidential materials
- Government 101 – state laws, charter, codes, capital projects, and other major initiatives
- Tour of operational facilities
- Ask – tailor to issues, individuals

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Retreats and Goal Setting

- Spend time off the dais
- Articulate shared vision
- Develop goals and objectives
- Define success
- Measure and report progress
- Setting: no regular business, 1-2 day session
- Frequency: annual

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Elected Official Involvement

- Engage former elected officials
- Mentor newly elected on how to get things done
- Learn how to get issues addressed and influence other Council members

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Regular Communication

- One-on-one meetings with City Manager/ Administrator
- One-on-one meetings with other Council members
- Appropriate access to department heads (ask don't task)
- Ensure elected officials provided the same information
- Provide adequate time for Council to review agenda items in advance
- Provide questions to staff in advance of meeting

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Document Business Processes


- Rules of conduct for meetings – public, Council, and staff
- Customer service guidelines
- Use of letterhead and meeting rooms
- How items get placed on agenda
- How the Council will manage itself, enforce its own rules

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My Actions


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My Action Plan

- How can I help translate and be a bridge builder between the political and administrative realm?
- How can I use the lens of different values to weigh decision-making?
- What governance role should I help the governing body focus on?
- What can I do to be a more effective governing board member?
- What practices can our governing body utilize to become more effective?


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Metaphor of the Cups

[Cups and Community Building](#)

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 **About TNCG**

- The Novak Consulting Group – trusted advisors transforming communities.
- We are local government practitioners strengthening organizations for the communities they serve and the people who work in them.
- Three practice areas:
 - Strategic Planning
 - Executive Search
 - Organizational Assessment

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 **Thank You**

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