City of Missoula Board Member Training Program

BUILDING A BETTER BOARD

Presented by: Marty Rehbein, City Clerk

Thanks for your service!

Grazie

شكراً

Gracias

Ευχαριστώ

Hvala

ขอบคุณ

Köszönettel

Teşekkürler

Merci

Thank you

Vielen Dank

תודה

Bedankt

Obrigado!

Areas we'll cover:

- Governance
- Developing a productive board environment
- Conducting effective meetings

Governance

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has. **Margaret Mead**

Mission

- What is your board's mission?
- How do you use it?

Roles

- With the elected officials
  - Different roles for different boards: advisory, regulatory, oversight, administer, develop policy
- With Staff
  - Is there a clear and broadly understood distinction between where the board's role ends and staff role begins?
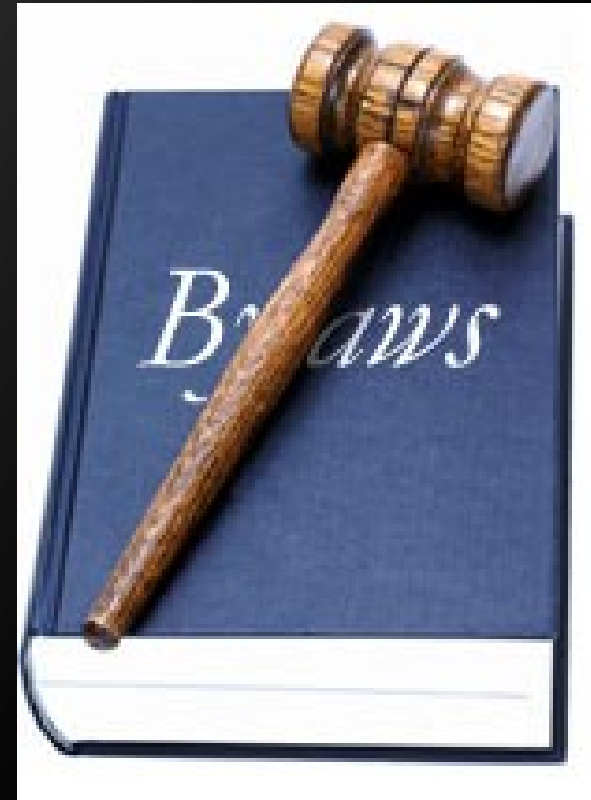
Board Responsibilities

- Ordinance/resolution
- Statute
- Bylaws
- Directives from the governing body/appointing official

Bylaws and rules

- Know your bylaws
- Availability
- When the going gets tough…
- Robert's Rules & Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure
- Resources—City Attorney/City Clerk

Meeting Minutes

- Board minutes must include:
  - Date, time place of meeting
  - Attendance of board members
  - Substance of matters proposed, discussed or decided.
  - Record of votes taken

Meeting Minutes

- Summary minutes
  - A collective focus on the matters proposed and discussed avoiding he/she said (speaker attribution)
  - Bulleted point summaries of key points raised during discussion supplemented with meeting documents and video
  - Objective, accurate, complete, professional, and consistent with a logical flow
  - Include motions and votes

Meeting Minutes

- Approving minutes
  - Unanimous consent or motion/vote
  - Correcting the record vs. the minutes
    - Minutes reflect what was said
    - Advice: To correct the record do it under "Comments from Members"

Accountability

- Self-evaluation
- Reporting to governing body/Mayor
- Appointment

Developing a Productive Board Environment

The true civilization is where every man gives to every other every right that he claims for himself.   **Robert Ingersoll**

Build Trust/Respect

- Arrive on time and be prepared
- Active listening
- Constructive debate
- Respectful dissent
- Joy, humor and satisfaction

Develop a productive environment

▸ Personal strategies for civility

- Separate people from the problem
- Obtain the facts
- Limit personal misunderstandings
- Use fair processes
- Be open for opportunities to understand, compromise, persuade, or be persuaded

You must be the change you wish to see in the world.
Mahatma Gandhi

Develop a productive environment

- ◉ Presiding officer's role:
  - • Set expectations up front
  - • Be fair and impartial
  - • Polite reminders
  - • Call on members to speak, keep a list
- ◉ Board member role:
  - • Model civil behavior
  - • Support the chair's efforts to maintain civility

We have an agenda item that has generated a great deal of interest. I'd like to start the meeting by saying that we want to hear from everyone, and the board members would like the meeting to proceed in a thoughtful, respectful, productive manner.

Develop a productive environment

▸ Promote civil dissension
  ◦ Model civil behavior when you discuss issues
  ◦ Speak to the issue directly
  ◦ Avoid interrupting a speaker
  ◦ Avoid emphatic language (always, never)
  ◦ Avoid escalating uncivil dissension (loud talk, non-verbal cues, sarcasm, zingers)
  ◦ Avoid monopolizing the debate
  ◦ Avoid personalizing the debate (you must be crazy to think….)
  ◦ Seek points of agreement and build compromise.

Develop a productive environment

▸ Establishing ad hoc groups, task forces, working groups, subcommittees, etc
- Purpose
- Scope
- Membership/voting privileges
- Timeframe
- Decision-making structure
- Public notice/minutes rules apply

Effective meetings

- Rights and responsibilities at stake in a public meeting
  - Open meeting— liberal construction
  - Right to know
  - Public notice
  - Right to participate
  - E-mails/Web 2.0, oh my!

Effective meetings

- Develop an agenda
- Provide public notice
- Ensure participation for members of the public
- Maintain a respectful atmosphere and keep the discussion on topic

Effective meetings

- ▸ **Develop the agenda**
  - ◦ Identify topics
  - ◦ Talk with staff, other board members, and interested parties
  - ◦ Meeting logistics/notice
  - ◦ Time management
    - · Presentations
    - · Issue complexity
    - · Public interest

Effective meetings

- ◉ Chair participation
 - A little participation is okay
  - Passing the baton

Effective meetings

- Public comment
  - Public comment on items not on the agenda (state law)
  - When to invite public comment during the meeting
  - Reasonable limits
    - Tips for negotiating speaking limits
    - Speaker queue
  - Put people at ease
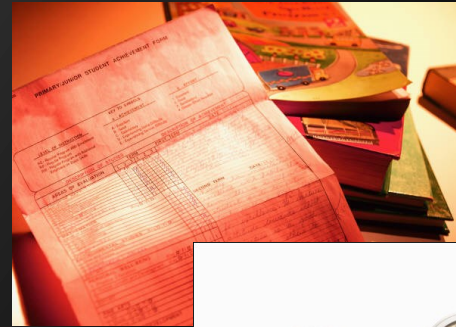 - Thank you

Effective meetings

- Motions—a great tool to focus discussion of an issue
  - When to make a motion
  - Affirmative motions
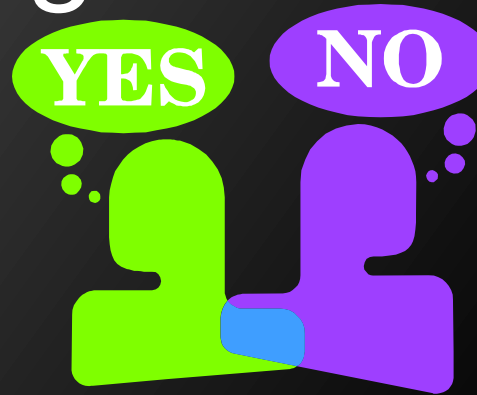- Call for a motion
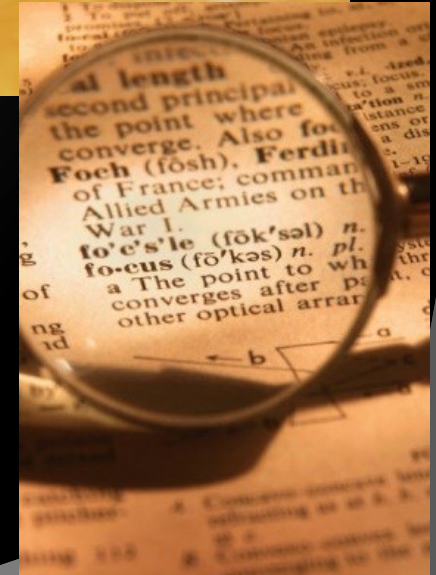
Effective meetings

- Debate
  - Staff and citizens may be called on during debate to answer a question or offer a clarification.
  - Tips to encourage the pace of debate
  - Tips to focus debate on the motion

Effective meetings

- Voting
  - Bringing debate to a close
  - Voice vote
  - Roll call vote
- Announce the results

Questions?