



Manager-Elected Official Relationships: Striking a Balance

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The Manager is an Organization Capacity-Builder

- Implement and update business practices and processes
- Effectively and efficiently employ management tools
- Attract and retain talented and motivated personnel
- Ensure local operations run smoothly and routinely

The Manager is a Valued Advisor to the Governing Body

- Offer balanced and impartial policy advice to the governing body
- Recommend any measures that they deem expedient, including alternatives and relevant information that is reasonably available on the different options
- Be willing to take calculated risks and put forth new ideas and unpopular recommendations

The Manager is a Valued Advisor to the Governing Body

- Get fully behind governing body decisions and ensure that the administration does the same
- Help elected officials explain their decision to the public and help the public understand the governing body's point of view

The Governing Body and the Manager Jointly Strive for Good Service to Citizens

- Be assertive in ensuring that their administration provides the very best service possible to the community
- Create an organization culture of responsiveness and performance, both in providing routine service to citizens and in handling special requests and complaints
- Take personal risks on behalf of employees and fully accept responsibility with the Council when things go

wrong

The Governing Body and the Manager Jointly Strive for Good Service to Citizens

- Give Council members the necessary information to follow up with citizens if the Council member wishes
- Support and steer citizen complaints to administration
- Council members inform the manager of problems and give the manager the opportunity to get problems fixed

Elected Officials' Relationships with Employees Are Carefully Managed

- Council members observe the chain of command
- Council members and managers protect planned workflow
- Managers encourage direct contact between Council members and employees for routine inquiries or requests that do not affect administrative workloads
- Council members submit substantial requests to the entire Council which decides whether to take action

The Governing Body Acts as a Body and is Dealt with as a Body

- Council takes official action as a body
- Managers welcome suggestions from individual Council members that do not conflict with Council policy
- Individual Council members' requests that set new directions or require resource reallocations are put before the entire Council

The Governing Body Acts as a Body and is Dealt with as a Body

- Managers treat all members of Council alike
- Managers seek to prevent Council members from being surprised or caught off guard on issues
- Managers ensure all Council members have the same level of information and understanding

The Manager and the Governing Body Give Each Other a Chance to Prove Themselves

- Managers direct administration based on what a majority of the council decides
- Managers expect newly elected officials to give them a chance to prove that they can serve the new members
- Council members accept campaign rhetoric seldom stands up to the complexity of governing, leading, or managing
- Managers seek to earn the trust and the confidence of new members

The Manager and the Governing Body Freely Give and Seek Feedback

- Managers and Council members work to maintain open communications
- Managers provide all Council members with accurate, relevant, and timely information
- Council members ask questions and make their interests, positions, and feelings known to the manager

The Manager and the Governing Body Freely Give and Seek Feedback

- Council members offer constructive criticism to the manager on an ongoing basis
- Council members clarify their expectations of the manager, providing direction and benchmarks for success
- Council members and manager freely give and accept feedback in the spirit of continuous improvement

The Manager and the Governing Body Work Together to Develop a Highly Effective Governing Body

- Managers serve as “coaches” to help Mayors and Councils develop high-performing habits:
 1. Thinking and acting strategically and with a vision for the community’s future
 2. Respecting the “shared constituency” with the citizens in horizontal and vertical relations with other jurisdictions
 3. Demonstrating teamwork
 4. Mastering small-group decision making
 5. Honoring the council-staff partnership

The Manager and the Governing Body Work Together to Develop a Highly Effective Governing Body

- Managers serve as “coaches” to help Mayors and Councils develop high-performing habits (continued):
 6. Allocating governing body time and energy appropriately in four key areas—goal setting retreats, study sessions, regular public hearings and meetings, and community relations
 7. Having clear rules and procedures for board or council meetings
 8. Obtaining objective feedback and conducting systematic and valid assessment of policy and implementation performance
 9. Practicing continuous personal learning and leadership development of individual elected officials

The Manager and the Governing Body Work Together to Develop a Highly Effective Governing Body

- Managers and Mayors orient new Council members, encourage new members to do their homework, ask good questions, and to exercise caution and courtesy when speaking publicly about the city and staff.
- Managers and Council behave in a manner that encourages citizen confidence in local government
- Managers prepare agendas and plan meetings that focus on major topics

Facts About Elected Officials

- They are elected for what they say and not what they know
- They serve the interests of those who elected them
- In most cases, have no formal training for their jobs as elected officials
- Often don't think of themselves as a member of a team, the governing body

Facts About Staff

- Staff are hired for what they know – education, qualifications, and accomplishments.
- Serve all the people including elected officials
- Spend their careers refining their skills through training, education, experiences
- Consider themselves a member of a team

Striking A Balance

- Have situational awareness & avoid blind spots
- Provide elected official “delight”
- Know the difference between policy and administration
- Be Responsive
- Don’t take it personally
- Explain your reasons for saying “no”, give options

Striking A Balance

- Be a good listener
- Accept that politics overrides logic
- Assist elected officials in being community builders and not customer service representatives
- Build trust and credibility through consistent communication with all
- Expand your comfort zone

Questions/Discussion