

Public Comments, 210817, Leelanau County Board

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PART I

I know most of you know me. For those unfamiliar with me, I tried to recall past times when I was in a board or

Partial “board” past experience

- Leelanau Township Board
- ASI Controls, Board Member and Chairman
- Director, Purdue Fellows in Latin America
- Director, ASHRAE professional society
- “Board” American Society Engineering Education
- Chair of delegation of UMC Jurisdictional Conference
- Chair, Northport Evangelical Covenant Church
- Chair St. Andrew Church, W. Lafayette, IN
- National President, PiTauSigma

leadership position that should give me some credibility. Some of these are listed, but beyond that I want to share that while in a teaching position I became a Synectics certified facilitator, while serving in a township I became a Township Governance Academy graduate, while serving in a Township Planning Commission I became a Citizen Planner, and while in the County Planning Commission I completed the Zoning Administrator Certification. All these steps were challenging, and fun – and tools to improve my service.

Allow me to express appreciation for your service to our county residents. Likewise, I trust you might also be intentional in the process of seeking of opportunities for continual education and training allowing us to better serve our constituencies. I have two primary concerns a) challenge for growth; b) clarity in relationships and accountability.

As a starting point, please take heed to this. Allow me to define a functional group to be a group such as a committee, board, commission, work team, task group, whatever. I trust you recognize the difference between “efficiency” and “effectiveness”.

For effectiveness a functional group should have, as a minimum: a) a clear and unified vision, energizing, and ideal ultimate destination for the functional group; and b) shared core values that serve as behavioral boundaries while advancing towards the vision.

Two Basic Essentials for effectiveness



Relationships and Authority

CITIZEN VOTERS

BOARD OF  
COMMISSIONERS

I am now giving you an assignment. Can you formulate the core values held by the Board, and your driving vision statement? I'll come back to that – in a future public comment.

Let's start work on relationships. You are an elected officer, and you are hence selected by the citizen voters. They are your bosses; nobody else is above you. So to be effective you must know your citizens; that's all of them – those who voted for you and those who did not. Simple, isn't? So... In what activities are you involved to be intentional in hearing from your “bosses”?

Let's broaden our perspective to what we might call the “three legs”. These are three important elected officers. They have the same “bosses” you have – and I suspect they have more clarity of their responsibilities. Important to note that these three elected officers are almost sacred. Like a stool needs three legs to be steady so the county has to have these three elected officers at their best. The only influence you have is on the approval of budgets; and you may request reports, but must also recognize their “autonomy”.

Relationships and Authority

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BOARD OF  
COMMISSIONERS

COUNTY CLERK

TREASURER

SHERIFF

## Relationships and Authority

CITIZEN VOTERS



Incidentally there are other “elected officers” with close to the same autonomy as the three primary ones, but this beyond our current comments.

Returning to the relationships between you and the three key elected officers. Yes, you review financials and might ask for reports and that should be it. You might sense that there might be unhealthy dynamics and things could be done better, and you are tempted to jump down in as a Commissioner. That breaks the autonomy of the “stool legs” and is in conflict with legislated tasks. And that is where the County Administrator comes in. He/she is the one with administrative smarts and the magic touch of a peacemaker. Yes, he/she is like a Chief Executive Officer; he/she is the magician, he/she is the dreamer, he/she is the problem solver he/she is the rudder in a sail boat, broken

and a mender of the sails.

## Relationships and Authority

CITIZEN VOTERS



More to follow during the next public hearing.