High Performance Government

Governing Body and Staff in Partnership

John Nalbandian

University of Kansas

Nalband@ku.edu

Objectives

- Describe community building as goal of governance

- Discuss politics as choices among conflicting values

- Compare political and administrative values and perspectives

- Identify translating and aligning roles for chief administrative officers

John Nalbandian
www.goodlocalgovernment.org

The High Performance Governing Body

- Addresses difficult policy problems

- Builds capacity to work effectively together

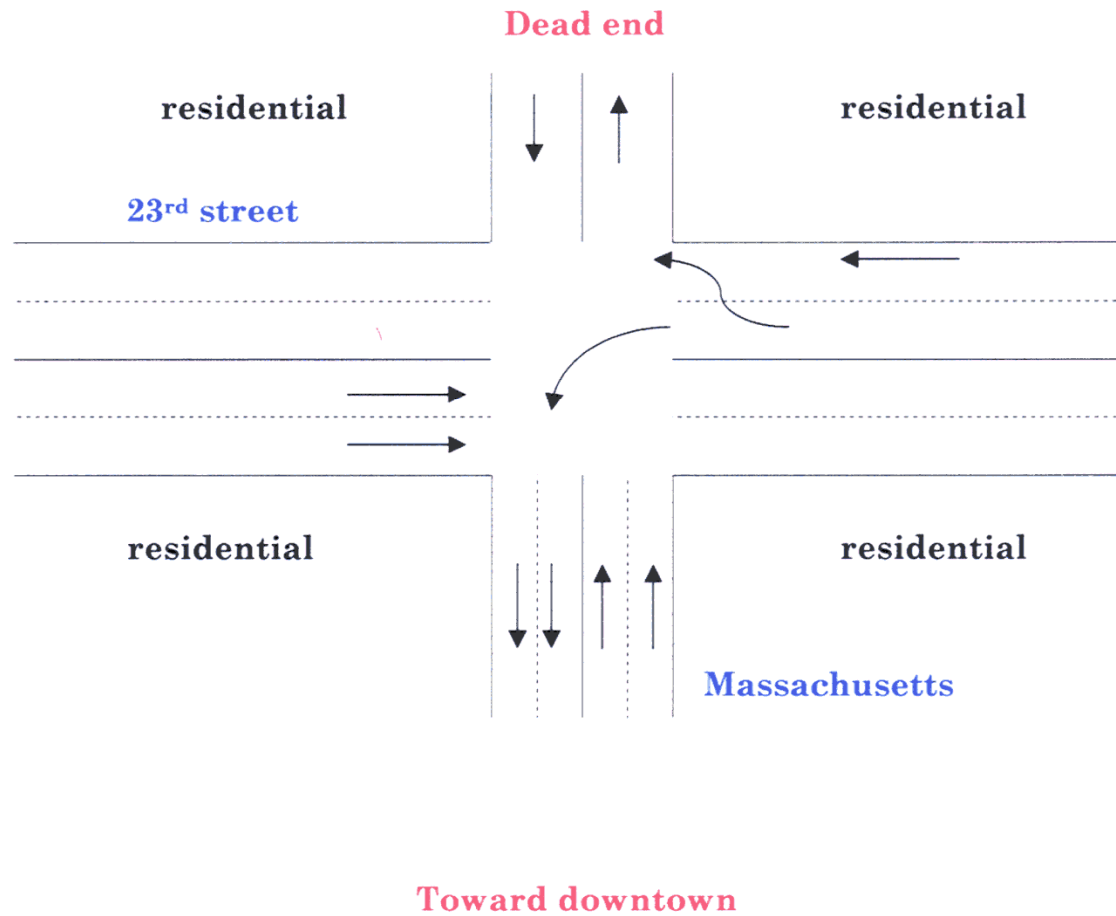- Develops productive relationship with staff

Obstacles

- Examine <u>conflicting values</u> that drive policymaking

- Identify <u>conditions</u> that make public policymaking difficult

- Describe <u>perspectives</u> of elected officials and staff

23rd and Massachusetts

Values

- **RESPONSIVENESS** =

  - Representation/Participation +

  - Efficiency/Professionalism +

  - Social Equity +

  - Individual Rights

John Nalbandian
www.goodlocalgovernment.org

Efficiency and Politics

E
f
f
i
c
i
e
n
c
y

High

Low

- **Representation**

- **Social Equity**

- **Individual Rights**

John Nalbandian
www.goodlocalgovernment.org

Governing Body Working Conditions

- No Hierarchy

- Vague Task Definition

- No Specialization

- Little Feedback

- Open Meetings

John Nalbandian
**www.goodlocalgovernment.org**

Create productive working conditions

- Facilitative leadership
- Know the policy making role
- Goals setting—know council priorities
- Establish council protocol and stick to it
- Team building—know and respect each other and other styles
- Work with staff in partnership

Characteristics of Politics and Administration

Political acceptability ←——→ Administrative sustainability
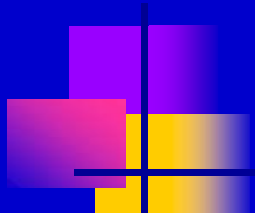
Characteristics	Politics	Administration
Activity	Game/allocation of values	Problem Solving
Players	Representatives	Experts
Conversation	"What do you hear?" ■ Passion ■ Dreams ■ Stories	"What do you know?" ■ Data ■ Plans ■ Reports
Pieces	Intangible: Interests and symbols	Tangible: Information; money, people, equipment
Currency	Power (stories)	Knowledge (deeds)
Dynamics	Conflict, compromise, change	Predictability, cooperation, continuity

←— CAO and Senior Staff in the GAP —→

Facilitating Roles

- <u>Translate</u> politics and administration
- <u>Bridge</u> the gap between what is politically acceptable and administratively feasible
- <u>Align</u>
  - Staff priorities with governing body goals
  - Governing body and staff expectations

John Nalbandian
www.goodlocalgovernment.org

Summary

- Role of governing body is community building
- Good politics is about values not right answers
- Value conflicts require compromise and negotiation if "cups" matter
- Do not ignore any value over a period of time
- Democratic process is "messy"
- Politics/administration=ways of thinking
- Role of translator is critical
- Alignment is crucial

John Nalbandian
www.goodlocalgovernment.org