

# Getting the Most with Your Elected Leaders:

Values, Politics, and Professionalism

Michigan Local Government Management  
Association

February, 2010

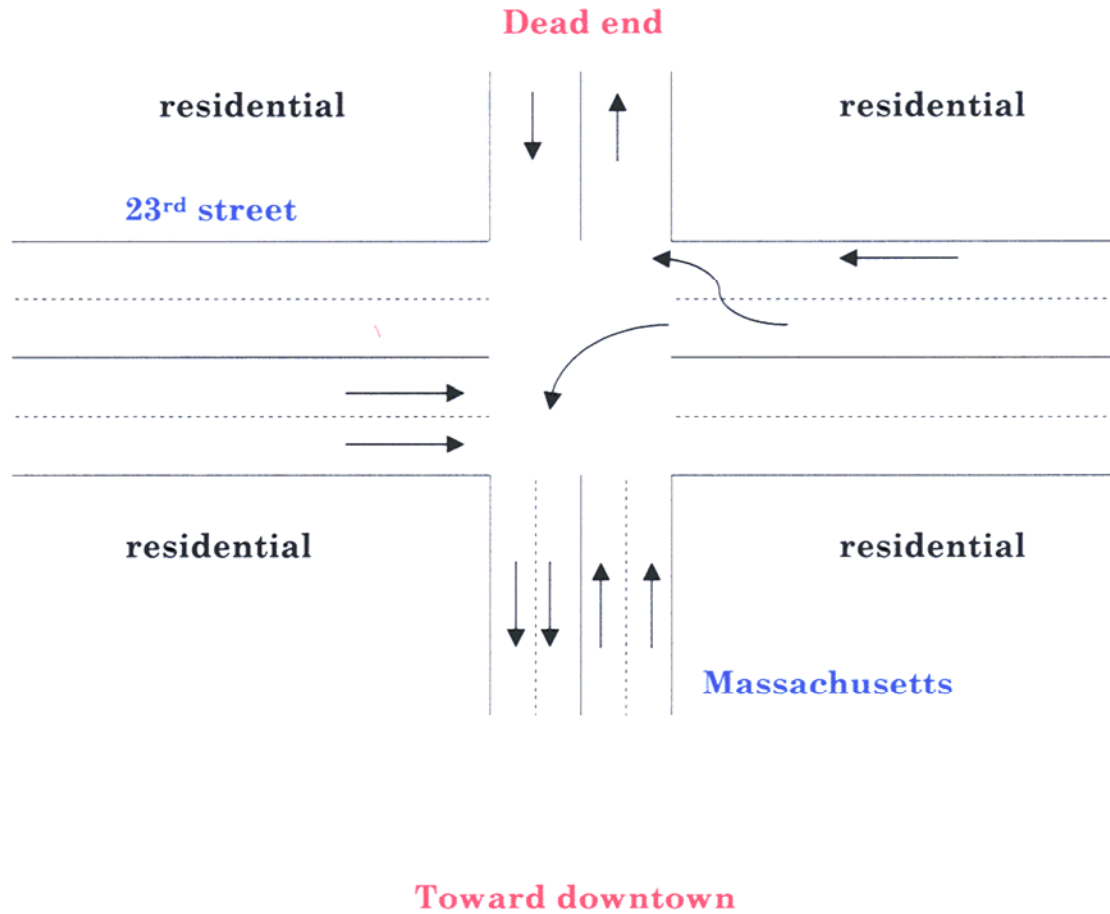
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# Objectives

- ◆ Discuss politics as choices among conflicting values
- ◆ Compare political and administrative values and perspectives
- ◆ Identify translating and aligning roles for chief administrative officers

## 23<sup>rd</sup> and Massachusetts



# Values

- ◆ Representation
- ◆ Efficiency
- ◆ Social equity
- ◆ Individual rights

# Efficiency and Politics


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- **Representation**
  - **Social Equity**
  - **Individual Rights**
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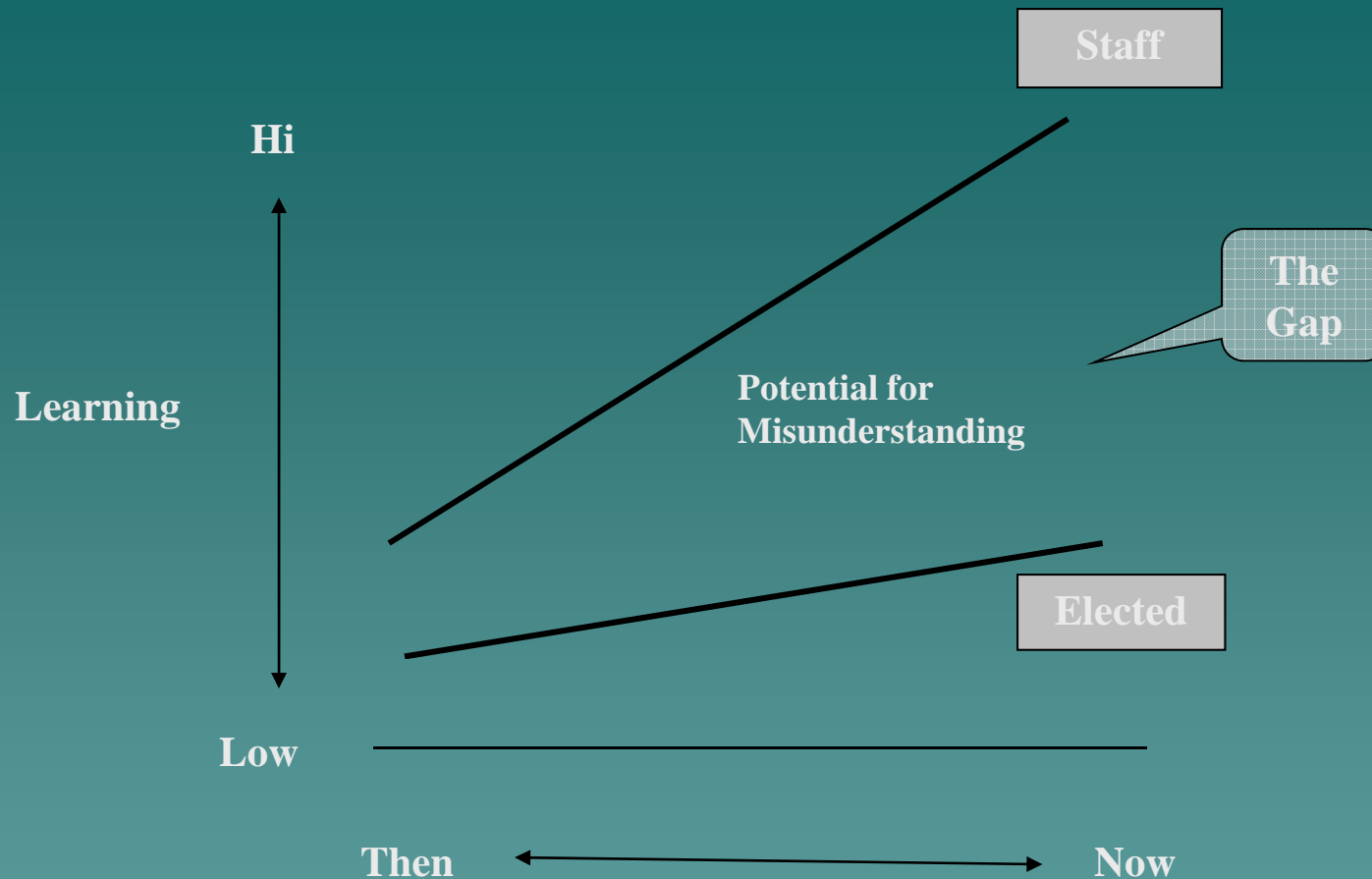
# Working conditions

- ◆ No hierarchy
  - ◆ Vague task definition
  - ◆ No specialization
  - ◆ No systematic feedback
  - ◆ Work in public
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# Create productive working conditions

- ◆ Understand value of 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

# Gap between Professional and Political Learning\*



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\*Credit to John Arnold,  
CM, Topeka, KS

# Characteristics of Politics and Administration

Characteristics	Politics	Administration
Activity	Game/ Allocating 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 →

# Facilitating Roles

- ◆ Translate politics and administration
- ◆ Align
  - Council work with council goals
  - Staff priorities with governing body goals
  - Governing body and staff expectations and contributions
  - Passion and data
- ◆ Create intersections

# Summary

- ◆ Role of governing body is community building
- ◆ Promote inclusion and goal accomplishment
- ◆ Good politics is about values not right answers
- ◆ Value conflicts require compromise and negotiation
- ◆ Do not ignore any value over a period of time
- ◆ Democratic process is “messy”
- ◆ Create productive working conditions