**Board Basics 101:**

**Top Ten Ways to Build a Culture of Productivity, Credibility, and Accountability**

By Bill Buchanan

10. Follow Tom Sawyer’s example (to a point) when recruiting help.

* Every meeting and neighborhood encounter is an opportunity to recruit.
* Make it fun or you’ll be doing it alone.

9. Respect one another’s time.

* Schedule start and end times to meetings and stick to them.
* Stick to the agenda, including an agenda item for adding items to the next meeting agenda.
* Everyone talks once before someone twice.
* Robert’s Rules of Order—within reason.
  + Motion, second, discussion, vote (yes/no) on motion or to table.
  + Brainstorming is good with a time limit.

8. Balance substance and process.

* Struggle between “get ‘er done” and “process” people.
* Both are needed to avoid repeating same mistakes while still accomplishing something.
* Delegate (“Martyrs never prosper”).

7. Make your organization smarter than any single member.

* Minutes prevent rehashing
* Welcome dissenting views
* Use a white board to record action items and who is accountable.
* Recruit new members.
* Single personality organizations are weak and vulnerable.
* Question assumptions.

6. Guard your culture.

* Do not loan your credibility to anyone (not even the City) unless you’ve done the work.
* Single issue organization versus diverse purpose
* Political capital doesn’t store, is hard earned, and easily squandered
* Politics versus policy.
  + Campaign for candidate: no.
  + Campaign for walkable neighborhood: yes.

5. Sweat the small stuff to accomplish big things.

* Treasurer report for each meeting.
* Short action-oriented minutes for each meeting circulated same day.
* If you want to retain good board members, insure them.

4. Be loyal.

* Duty of loyalty: organization over private interest.
* No private benefit unless disclosed and approved by disinterested board.
* Transparency.
* Written conflicts of interest policy.

3. Follow the organization’s rules (not just your own).

* Duty of obedience: follow the articles, bylaws, mission, and applicable laws.

2. Care.

* Duty of care: show up, pay attention, and inquire.

1. Have fun!

* Recruiting
* Retention
* Enthusiasm
* Creativity
* Success
* Sustainability