

Meridian Township Governance Leadership Retreat

for Board of Trustees and Management



October 22, 2022

9:00-3:00 P.M.

Central Fire Station Conference Room

Facilitated by Larry Merrill, Consultant

Goals:

- Align roles, process and culture for optimal township governance effectiveness.
- Awareness of the foundation and characteristics of strategic goals (actual goals to be established at a future event.)

Objectives:

- Establish and maintain trust among board members and staff.
- Board members know their job.
- Reach consensus on efficient and democratic board processes.
- Understand characteristics of sound goals.
- Revisit current vision, mission and values.
- Achieve a shared understanding and definition of goals, objectives and projects.
- Establish short and long-term township goals.

Process:

- Consultant presentations on governance statutory requirements and best practices.
- Facilitated participation sharing of insights on Meridian governance.
- Revisit and update current township vision, mission and values.

Retreat Agenda

9:00 a.m.	Welcome Affirm Retreat Objectives and Retreat Rules of Engagement (Presentation)
9:15-10:00	Getting to Know Us (Participation)
10:00-10:15	Break
10:15-11:00	What Every Township Board Must Do (Presentation)
11:00-11:30	What is Your Mental Model of Governing Boards? (Participation)
11:30-noon	What Do Great Governing Boards Look Like? (Presentation)
12:00-12:30	Lunch
12:30-1:00	What Do We Need to Do Differently? (Participation)
1:00-1:45	Policy Governance Refresher (Presentation)
1:45-2:00	Break
2:00-3:00	Fundamentals of Setting Goals in Policy Governance (Presentation) Revisit Vision, Mission and Values (Participation)

1. Welcome

2. Affirm Retreat Objectives and Rules of Engagement

Rules of Engagement

- Be present in the moment.
- Only one meeting—no side conversations.
- All viewpoints are valid, even if we do not agree.
- Anyone can tactfully intervene to ensure we achieve outcomes. Our discourse will be respectful, collegial, nothing personal.
- Express disagreement verbally.
- Know where your point is going before you start—comments relevant to issue being considered.
- Raise concerns and objections at meeting, rather than after.
- Help facilitator keep meeting moving.
- We will end on time.
- Anything else?

3. Getting to Know Us

A. What I Want My Board Colleagues to Know About Me

B. What Part of Today's Agenda Most Interests Me

4. What Every Township Board Must Do:

Major Statutory Responsibilities

Hold monthly meetings; establish meeting schedule.

Adopt General Appropriations Act.

Enact and amend ordinances.

Vacate, regulate use of roads.

Tax levies.

Appoint boards and commissions (most).

Create, combine township offices (with limitations).

Create police and fire departments; appointments.

Assessor(s) appointments.

Acquire and dispose of property.

Debt issuance

Industrial facility tax exemptions

Liquor licenses

Special assessment districts

General Fiduciary Oversight

- Duty of Care
 - Depositories
 - Authorize expenditures
 - Audit and approve claims against the township.
- Duty of loyalty
- Duty of obedience
- Additional duties as assigned

Political Governance Dimension

- Make informed decisions on behalf of affected parties
 - Representative(s) “of” or Representatives “for”
 - Ensure interest groups prevail, or ensure interest groups have a voice?
 - Ambassadors on behalf of stakeholders
 - Ambassadors on behalf of the township
- Speak with one voice.

Internal Legislative Political Role

- Operational policy at a strategic level.

How Charter Township Boards with Superintendent/Manager Differ

- Delegation of Authority to Superintendent/Manager (see appendix page 11)
- Role of Supervisor

5. What is Your Mental Model of a Governing Board?

- A. Where Does that Model Come From?
- B. How Does your Mental Model Differ from the Meridian Board?

6. What Does a Great Governing Board Look Like?

Great Governance Traits	To What Extent Does Our Board Exhibit These Traits?			
	Always	Usually	Seldom	Never
Agenda focuses on outcomes				
Future, not the past				
Use information, not collect it				
Capacity, capability, strategic plan routinely discussed				
Earn and sustain trust				
Deliberative process				
Policymaking over politics				
Fiduciary duty understood				
Focus on value to constituents and stakeholders rather than distribution of power				
Collaboration between board and staff, mutual accountability				
Mistakes are learning opportunities, natural result of risks and innovation				
Success measured in quality, not just quantity				
Board does not accept dishonesty or manipulation				

7. Based on our evaluation, what do we need to do differently to be the governing board our community needs us to be?

8. Policy Governance® Refresher

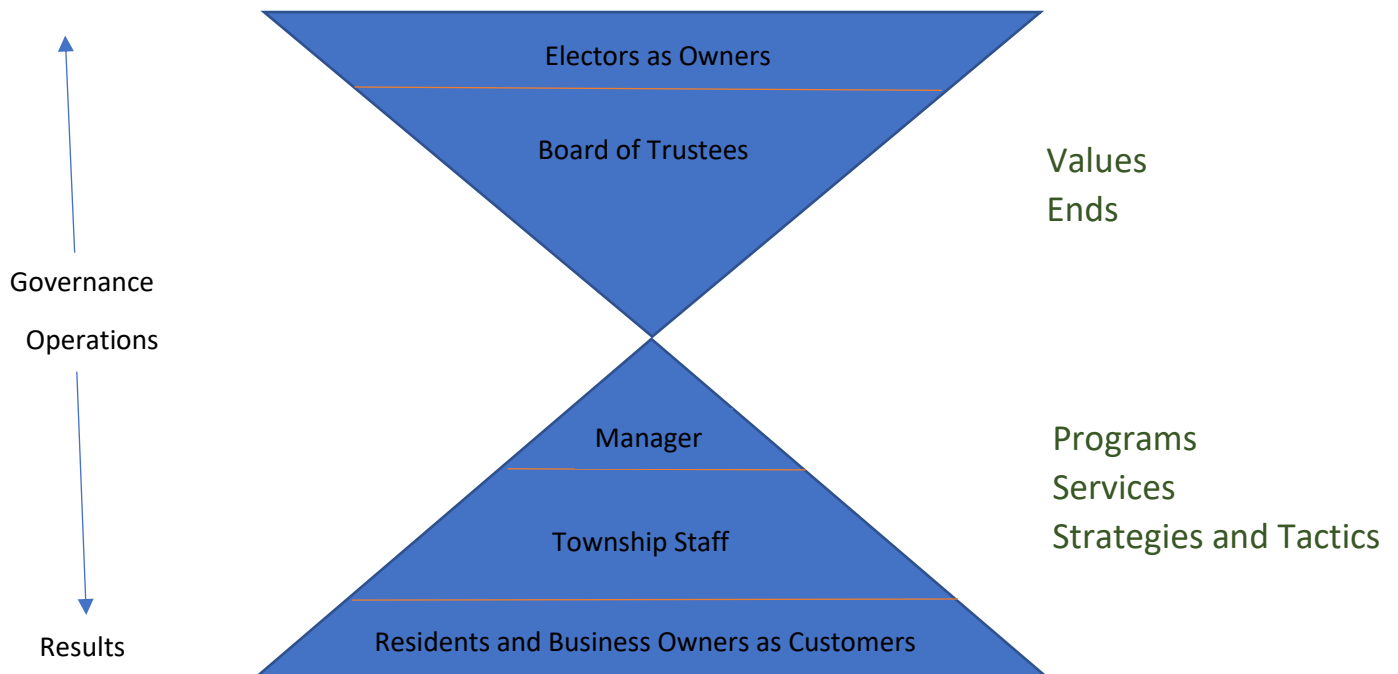
Policy Governance is a comprehensive set of integrated principles that, when consistently applied, allows governing boards to realize owner-accountable organizations.

The Board's Job:

- "Ownership" (constituents, electors, etc.) linkage
- Policy development
- Assurance of Manager's performance as directed by policy.
 - Monitoring and evaluation
 - Self-assessment
- Board does not undermine manager's accountability.

Policy Governance® Principles

1. Governance reflects the ownership's will and expectations; board role is servant-leadership
2. Board is ultimate authority.
3. Board speaks with one voice.
4. Ends Policies: What good, for whom, at what comparative worth
5. Governance means policies: Board methods, integrity and self-imposed boundaries
6. Executive limitations policies: Identify unacceptable outcomes and ethics expectations
7. Board-staff relations policies: delegation of authority is clear, unambiguous
7. Policies set at the broadest generally acceptable level
9. Manager may use any reasonable interpretation of policies
10. Performance monitoring tied to policies; supporting data and manager's interpretation



A Policy Governance® board will only allow itself to address a topic after it has answered these questions:

- What is the nature of the issue? Ends? Board Means? Executive Limitations? Delegation?
- Is this a shared concern?
- If so, given the nature of the issue, whose issue is this?
- What has the board already said on this subject and how is this issue related?
- What more do we wish to say, addressing this issue from the broadest point possible?

It is out of order for board members to talk about content until these questions of appropriateness are settled.

9. Preparing for Future Goal Setting

A. Policy Governance “Ends”

Board’s Ends define in writing:

- a. What good?
 - i. Results, changes, or benefits that should come about
 - ii. How this good serves the township’s reason to exist and would constitute organizational success.
 - iii. Always in terms of “customer”/beneficiary.
- b. For which beneficiaries?
 - i. Specified recipients, customers, or otherwise defined impacted groups, and
- c. At what cost or relative priority?

B. Traditional Goals in Strategic Planning

Traditional goals connect to township’s vision, mission and values.

Goals indicate what the township intends to change from the status quo in priority areas, consistent with its vision, mission and values.

They answer the question, **“What are the most important things we can work towards within the next 3-4 years to ensure we achieve our vision?”**

Consist of the top 5-6 township desired results, defined broadly and prioritized according to constituent needs, expectations, and values.

Be SMART: strategic, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely.

Vision

A vision statement describes the desired future; what success would look like:

What could our community look like in five years and beyond if we achieve our vision?

- Clearly state what success will look like.
- Be aspirational, powerful, and compelling.
- Align with community and customer needs, expectations, and values.
- Assist township staff and community understand and communicate what the township will achieve.

Meridian Vision Statement:

Our vision is to achieve and maintain a sustainable and welcoming community with the highest quality of life for our residents. This encompasses protecting our natural environment and our health and safety, and enhancing our prosperity, cultural heritage, diversity and recreational opportunities.

Mission

- A mission serves as a guide for achieving the vision and gives the organizational purpose. It sets parameters for identifying and prioritizing specific goals. **What is our purpose?**

- What is our purpose?
- What are we accountable for? To whom are we accountable?
- What do we provide for our customers and the community?
- Succinct, practical, descriptive and clear in intent to a reasonable person.
- Understandable to the general public.
- Define the purpose and scope of township program and services.
- Reflect the consensus and shared ownership among the responsible parties.

Meridian Mission Statement:

Our mission is to provide a safe and welcoming, sustainable, prime community.

Values

Values are an organization's shared principles and standards of behavior; what is important in what is done and how it is done.

- Contain judgements as to what is right, good, or desirable. Increase organizations' chances of attracting, recruiting and retaining top talent.
- When aligned with customer/stakeholder values, increase satisfaction.
- Boost employee engagement and motivation
- Strongly influence attitude and behavior. Serve as a compass for employee conduct in the workplace and evaluating the actions of others.

A values statement should be memorable, actionable, and timeless.

What do we stand for?

What behaviors do we value over all else?

How will we conduct our activities to achieve our mission and vision?

How do we treat members of our own organization and community?

Potential Organization Values

Transparency
Inclusiveness
Dependability
Flexibility
Service
Acceptance
Integrity
Innovation
Commitment
Collaboration
Teamwork
Passion
Honesty
Fairness
Accountability
Diversity
Inclusion
Equity
Duty
Selflessness
Fiscal stewardship
Strategic alliances
Respect
Responsibility
Resiliency
Loyalty

Appendix

Sec. 10. Township superintendent; appointment; delegation of powers and duties of township supervisor

The township board in each charter township shall have power to appoint a township superintendent and may delegate to him any or all of the following functions and duties which functions and duties, unless so delegated, shall be exercised by the supervisor:

- (a) To see that all laws and township ordinances are enforced;
- (b) To manage and supervise all public improvements, works, and undertakings of the township;
- (c) To have charge of the construction, repair, maintenance, lighting and cleaning of streets, sidewalks, bridges, pavements, sewers, and of all the public buildings or other property belonging to the township;
- (d) To manage and supervise the operation of all township utilities;
- (e) To be responsible for the preservation of property, tools, and appliances of the township;
- (f) To see that all terms and conditions imposed in favor of the township or its inhabitants in any public utility franchise, or in any contract, are faithfully kept and performed;
- (g) To attend all meetings of the township board, with the right to take part in discussions, but without the right to vote;
- (h) To be a member, ex officio, of all committees of the township board;
- (i) To prepare and administer the annual budget under policies formulated by the township board and keep the said board fully advised at all times as to the financial condition and needs of the township;
- (j) To recommend to the township board for adoption such measures as he may deem necessary or expedient;
- (k) To be responsible to the township board for the efficient administration of all departments of the township government;
- (l) To act as the purchasing agent for the township or, under his responsibility, delegate such duties to some other officer or employee;
- (m) To conduct all sales of personal property which the township board may authorize to be sold;
- (n) To assume all the duties and responsibilities as personnel director of all township employees or delegate such duties to some other officer or employee;
- (o) To perform such other duties as may be prescribed by this act or required of him by ordinance or by direction of the township board, or which are not assigned to some other official in conformity with the provisions of this act.