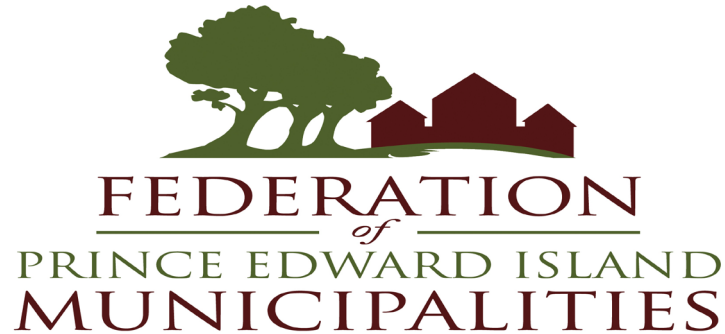


2021 Federation of PEI Municipalities Annual Meeting



MUNICIPALITIES
build Communities

George B Cuff, FCMC
April 26th 2021

Introduction to George

- Management consultant since 1979; own firm since 1984
- Experience in a variety of professions/occupations: banking, oil & gas accounting, recreation administration; communications; politics; consulting
- Speaker/advisor/consultant to approximately 1150 municipalities and boards across Canada & internationally
- Former Mayor, President of provincial and federal associations of local government leaders
- Advisor to Provincial Government on ABCs & Provincial departments
- Author of 10 books and approximately 400 articles on local government



Some Basic Observations

- This local government experience can be a major blessing
- It can also be very challenging to the point of frustration
- How it is measured in your eyes is very personal
- The question at the end of the day (or year or term) is this: “was I value-added? Were we?”
- Whether you are or not depends on how well you grasp the following:

“One can lead with no more than a question in hand”

(Source: *A Survival Guide for Leaders*

Ronald Heifetz & Marty Linsky, HBR June 2002)

If They Told You Nothing Else

1. Council members elected to govern the community(remember the 3 key words: Council-govern-community)
2. Members provided with legislation as a guidebook; this sets the parameters; what can you do; must you do; could consider doing
3. You are not expected to memorize this; your staff is responsible for knowing the key & applicable parts to every situation

If They Told You Nothing Else

4. There are certain key roles to be performed by the Mayor and Councillors; you should have a broad understanding of these:

guide, guard, govern

OR (stated another way)

reflect, represent, lead

If They Told You Nothing Else

5. There are certain key roles to be performed by your CAO and management

Advise Council

Implement decisions of Council

Assist in determining priorities

Direct administration in discharging roles

Ensure municipality's resources effectively & efficiently utilized

If They Told You Nothing Else

6. The CAO is expected to be your key advisor and ally; she/he will provide managerial apolitical advice on all business issues going to Council; you should absolutely expect this; as a result, any item of business that requires a decision of Council is not acted on by Council unless the CAO has included an RFD (Request for Decision)

If They Told You Nothing Else

7. Council should have an updated Strategic Plan which is a major guiding document to all aspects of community life
8. The Strategic Plan should lead the Business Plan/budget on an annual basis

If They Told You Nothing Else

9. The operating budget should be quite straight-forward (in most “normal” years); i.e. do we increase expenditures by 1,2,3%; this pandemic-influenced year may be different
10. Council’s number of meetings and what type is governed by your Procedural Bylaw; most larger centres hold two regular meetings a month (e.g. second & fourth Mondays); and two committee meetings per month (e.g. first and third); smaller communities may hold no less than 6 per year
11. The agenda is normally set by the CAO; I favour an Agendas Committee so that Council also influences its own meetings

If They Told You Nothing Else

12. All of Council's decisions set by bylaws, resolutions and policies; no decisions are made by hallway chatter, social media, parking lot discussions, a Councillor's or the Mayor's musings; governance model is critical

13. A wise and progressive use of policies is essential; these describe "what" is to be done; the CAO (and management) then set out "managerial directives" which outline "how" these decisions happen

14. The Mayor & Councillors are expected to largely focus outward/externally; that is where and how you were elected; the CAO & management focus up to Council with their advice and then into the organization to make it all happen

If They Told You Nothing Else

15. The moment you as elected officials start focusing inward three things happen: one, management becomes confused; two, management becomes less adept at managing because you are assuming their authority & duties; and three, any issues with how policies get translated into action are yours; your management become clerks
16. Council manages management through their direction to the CAO & their trust in that person; this role is critical to the success of the organization
17. Every year Council conducts a performance review of the CAO; this is done according to a standardized format (Cuff can provide one if needed)

If They Told You Nothing Else

18. Council approves direction through its plans, bylaws, resolutions, policies; communicates with the community; recruits, appoints, guides, assesses the CAO; the CAO recruits, appoints, supervises, assesses his/her staff
19. All of what transpires during your term of office is yours; what you achieve on behalf of the community; how you communicate out; how well you get along; you are accountable

If They Told You Nothing Else

20. Your legacy should include:

- updated Procedural Bylaw
- updated/new policies
- updated/new Strategic Plan
- public engagement policy/plan
- Governance Model that works for you
- reviewed, renewed orientation process
- transparency
- Council which functioned reasonably well
- sense of accomplishment!

Some Additional Thoughts

A Council that wants to lead accepts wise counsel

A session like this that does not provoke a question or two in your minds i.e. “why aren’t we doing this?” should cause you to ponder “are we that good?” or “did I quit thinking about improvements some time ago?”

The Government should seriously consider a new model of government and governance likely based on one in practice today

Some Additional Thoughts

Staff needs vary based on services provided, but, ideally, a municipality should have a sufficient tax base to afford a CAO, finance manager, maintenance worker or small crew, volunteer fire service, and contracted development control and bylaw enforcement.

Every Council should consist of interested and engaged elected officials who are keen to learn and willing to serve

If you as a community or a Council are struggling due to a lack of resources, learn to think creatively: who could we partner with to gain access to more resources/people/services?

Some Additional Thoughts

Unincorporated areas generally lack local representation & are disadvantaged compared to populations within this Province & compared to other Provinces

Everyone on the Island should have relatively equal access to services and local government; If not, what is being done to change this imbalance



"You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete"-

Buckminster Fuller

Please Remember

- Videos on www.georgecuff.com website for your Council
- Mission to Romania: assistance to a children's camp: contact George if you are interested in how you can help (www.rootsinromania.com)
- Questions: contact George at george@georgecuff.com
- Thank You!!

Questions??