Florida Association of Special Districts Annual Meeting

June 10, 2010

Vinoy Hotel, St. Petersburg, Florida

Conduct of Board Meetings

Presented by: Lennart E. Lindahl, PE

Definition of Conduct

- Standard of Personal Behavior
- Act or Process of directing an event

Rules of Engagement

- Be respectful of one another even when we disagree
- Direct all comments to the issues
- Avoid personal attacks
- Reserve the right and obligation to change your mind when all facts are presented and understood
- Politeness cost so little (Abraham Lincoln)

Components of a Board Meeting

- Board Members
- Agenda
- Staff/Consultants
- Constituents
- Media
- Location/Facilities
- Institutional Integrity

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Board Members

- Conduct of Board (Members) is fundamental to the conduct of a meeting

Core Principles of Conduct

- Elected or appointed public officials
- Responsible for preserving public trust
- Accountable for being custodians and stewards of good (better) government

Ingredients of a Successful Board

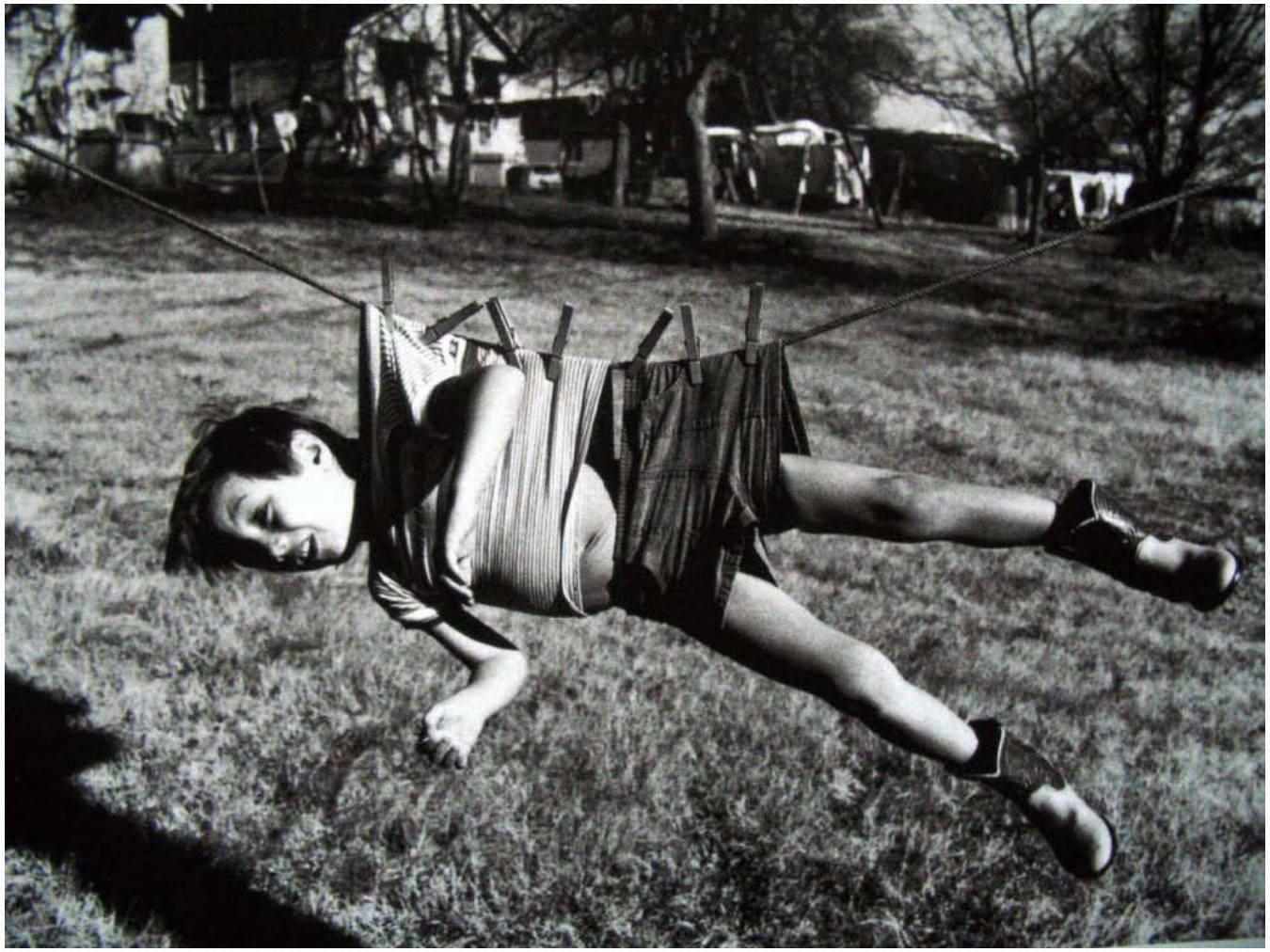
- Collegial Body
- Respect to diversity and differences of opinion
- Consensus and resolution of issues
- Thoughtfulness and “work at it” attitude
- Informed

Role of the Board Member

- Policies/Procedure
- Program/Projects
- Financial accountability
- Decisions on constituent issues
- Outreach

Structure of Agenda

- Consent items
- Public items
  - Hearings
  - Significant issues
- Action items
- Reports
- Discussion items



Conduct and Expectations of Staff

- Board member vs. general manager/ staff
- Board directives to staff
- Staff response to Board
- Board operational guidelines for staff
- Board members utilization of staff for conducting an effective and successful meeting

Constituents

- Be pro-active at keeping in touch
- Constantly educate at what the Board can and cannot do
- Be a good listener
- Establish a positive, open forum for commentary
- Stated problems should have stated solutions
- If necessary or desired, use speaker cards and time limits for comments
- Utilize a “group spokes-person” in lieu of multiple, repetitive speakers
- To the extent possible, let all speakers complete their comments before bringing the item back to the Board
- Avoid uncontrolled comments between Board members and constituents
- The good, the bad and the ugly

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PRESS

Media

- Board's expectations of the media
- Media's expectations of the Board
- Interviews
- Written questions and answers
- Meeting decorum

Location/ Facilities

- Safe, easy access
- Inside/ outside area of jurisdiction
- Size and accommodations
- Arrangements of Board, staff, recorder, audience

General Comments

- Do's and don'ts
- Observed experiences
- Closing remarks