

SIGNS OF TROUBLE

Your Appointment Was Not Unanimous
Annual Reviews Delayed/Not Unanimously Approved
Unexpected Executive Sessions Without You Included
"I/'We' Aren't Being Informed"
"Only the Mayor is Being Told"
"Too Many Secrets Around Here"
"Why Do We Do Things This Way?"
Sharp Public Questioning on Relatively Mundane Matters
Chastising Staff at Public Meetings
Complaints of Being Unresponsive to an Individual Request
Usually Calm, Pedestrian Budget Meetings Have Become Hostile
Minor Annual Audit Management Letter Item is "a cause celebre"
Drastic Change in the Makeup of the Governing Board
Elected Officials Have Had No Experience/Involvement in Local
Government or Community Affairs Before Coming on the Council
Single Issue Candidate Is Elected
Mayor is Isolated from the Other Council Members
An Elected Official Asks, Perhaps Jokingly, "Were Any of Us
on the Council When (Put in Your Name) Was Hired as
Manager?"
Governing Board Fights among Itself on Routine Things: Approval
of Meeting Minutes, Authorization of Council Member Expenses
Elected Official Wants to See Staff Performance Reviews
A "Favored" Department Head, Local Business, Resident
"Meddling"
Second-Guessing Your Decisions
You Are an Election Issue
You Are the Subject of a Newspaper Editorial
You are Losing the Passion
You Care Too Much
You Feel Out of Synch
You Think: "The New Mayor/Council Will See How Good I Am"
You Dread Going to Council Meetings
You Want Out of the Fishbowl
You Don't take Vacations

STEPS TO TAKE

Don't Hunker Down

Know Yourself and Be Yourself

Always Be Professional Even If "They" Aren't

Adhere to the ICMA Code of Ethics

Let Elected Officials Take the Credit

Always Take the Call from the Mayor/Councilperson

Request Feedback

Don't Break the "No Surprises" Rule

Don't Dismiss Lightly Any of the Signs

Have a Solid Employment Agreement

Be Responsive and Document the Response

Double Your Efforts to Provide ALL Elected Officials the Same

Information at the Same Time, Timely and FREQUENTLY

Play No Favorites

Don't Forget Your Supporters

Remind the Council of Precedent

Don't Underestimate the Tyranny of the Minority (Even One)

Affirm Your Staff Support

Don't Be Afraid to Ask for Help-e.g. Range Riders; Colleagues;

Family

Have a Thorough Orientation Session for Newly Elected Officials

and invite the veterans

Provide ALL Candidates for Office Information such as Council

Meeting Agendas, Budgets, etc. and Offer to Meet with Them

Don't Let the Problem Fester

Suggest a Team Building Session

Develop a Work Plan that All Agree To

Don't Criticize a Candidate or a Sitting Elected Person Publicly or

Privately

Continually Remind Yourself that the Council/ Manager

Relationship is Boss/Subordinate

Don't Overstep Your Authority

Consider Every Newly Seated Council as One You Must Impress

Know When and How to Prepare for a Transition

