

Navigating Rough Waters

Presented by ...

Frank Lancaster

CCCMA/ICMA Senior Advisor

Trustee – Town of Estes Park



**2024 ANNUAL
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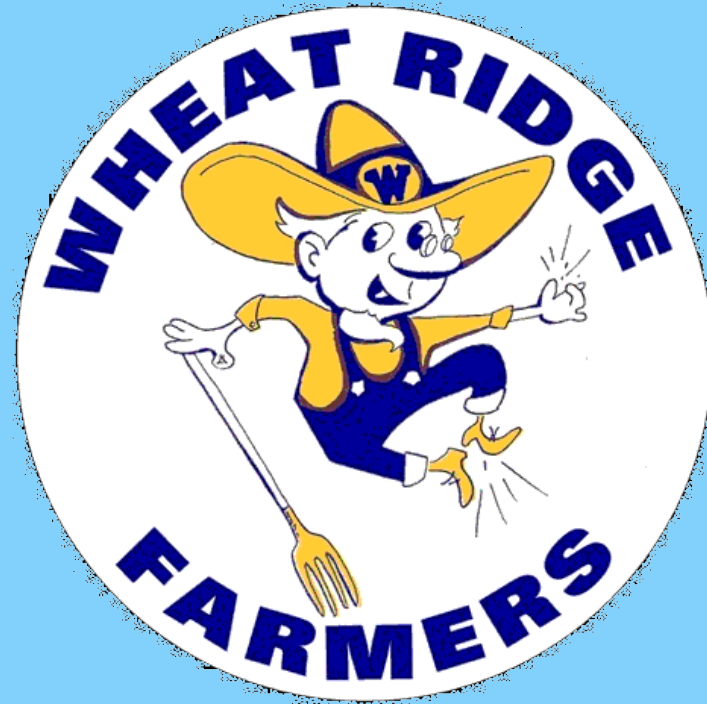
COLORADO
MUNICIPAL
LEAGUE

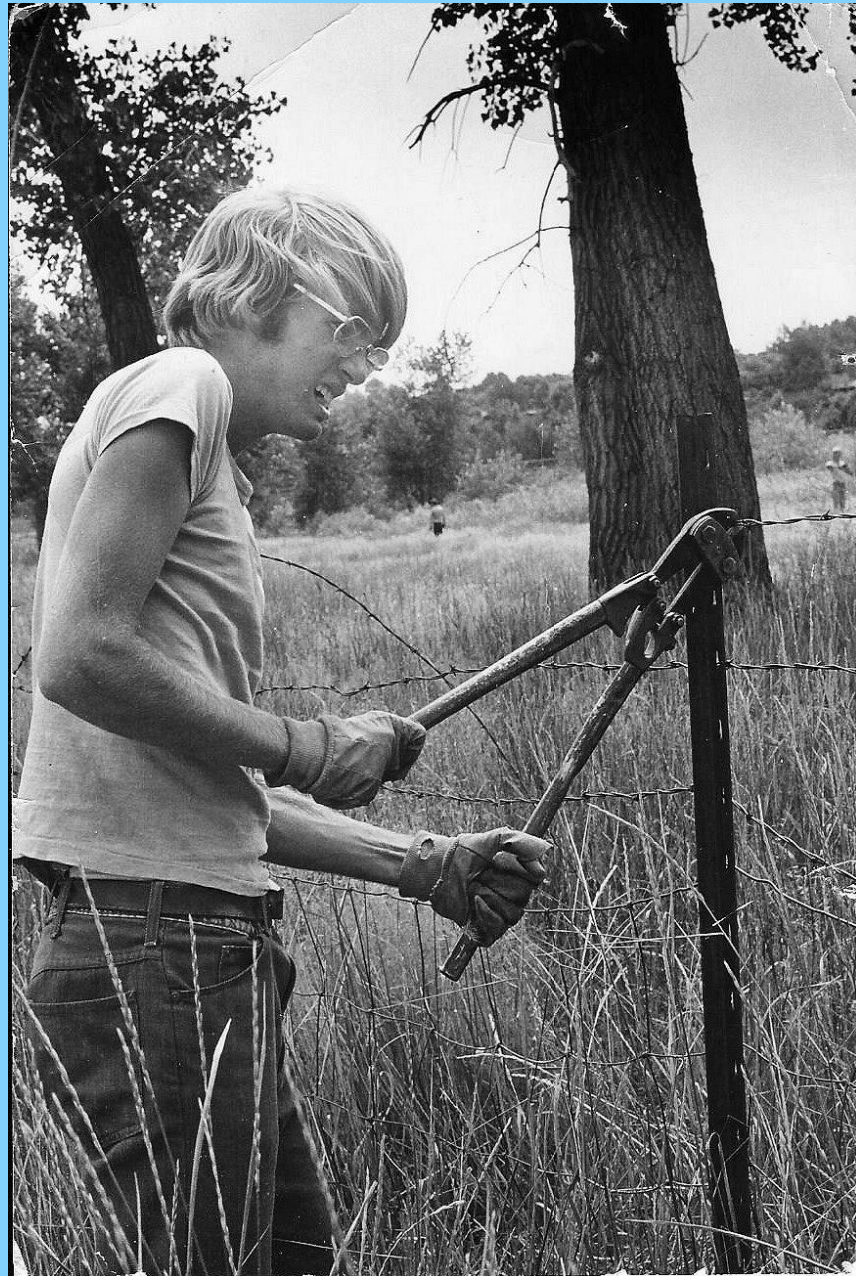
Navigating Rough Waters



Anecdotes, Quips, Quotes
& Musings of a
Local Government Manager

By:
Frank T. Lancaster







Whitewater Voyages



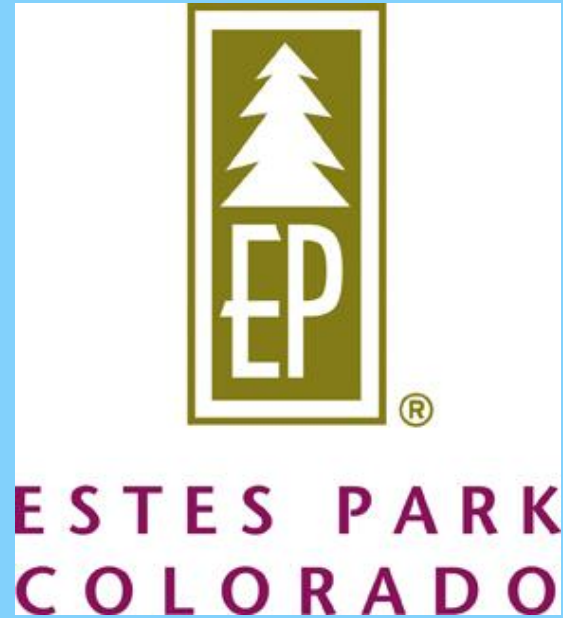
Troublemaker, South Fork American River, California



Tatshenshini River, British Columbia



Sunshine Falls, Royal Gorge, Colorado



Tribalism





Internal tribes

Cliques of employees

Departments

Management vs Front line

Staff Vs Elected Officials



Cylinders of Excellence

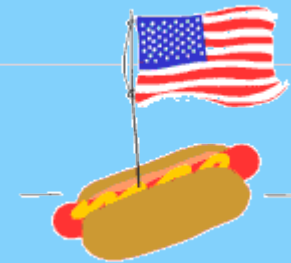


Watch for negative impacts of tribalism

- “BASHING” other cities, the County, the State

- County officials making comments about municipalities and visa versa

- Bashing the Feds, a national pastime!



The Public is full of Tribes







Learn to recognize and deal with Tribes



BE A STORYTELLER

- The area meets the engineering standards to warrant a separated sidewalk based on traffic counts on the road and pedestrian use.
- Last week I saw three 6-year-olds walking to 1st grade along the road. At times they had to walk dangerously close to the traffic because the side of the road was too muddy to walk on. Just the other day, someone slammed on their brakes to miss some kids who suddenly wandered into the road going around piles of snow on the roadside. We need a new sidewalk

DATA



STORIES

Visualize



Lochsa River Class IV-V Idaho



Big Drop – Cataract Canyon – Colorado River



Ladder of Inference

“This loop project is hurting the business in the area”

“Nobody wanted this project”

“Since no one wants the project, why is the Town and CDOT still moving ahead”

“They must have an ulterior motive to force these businesses to fail”

“They are targeting these business because they are small businesses owned by immigrants”



Ladder of Inference

“Someone must be lining their pockets!”

*The town board and staff
are all corrupt!*



“NEVER BLAME ON A CONSPIRACY
THAT WHICH CAN BE EXPLAINED BY
INCOMPETENCE OR OTHER
CIRCUMSTANCES”

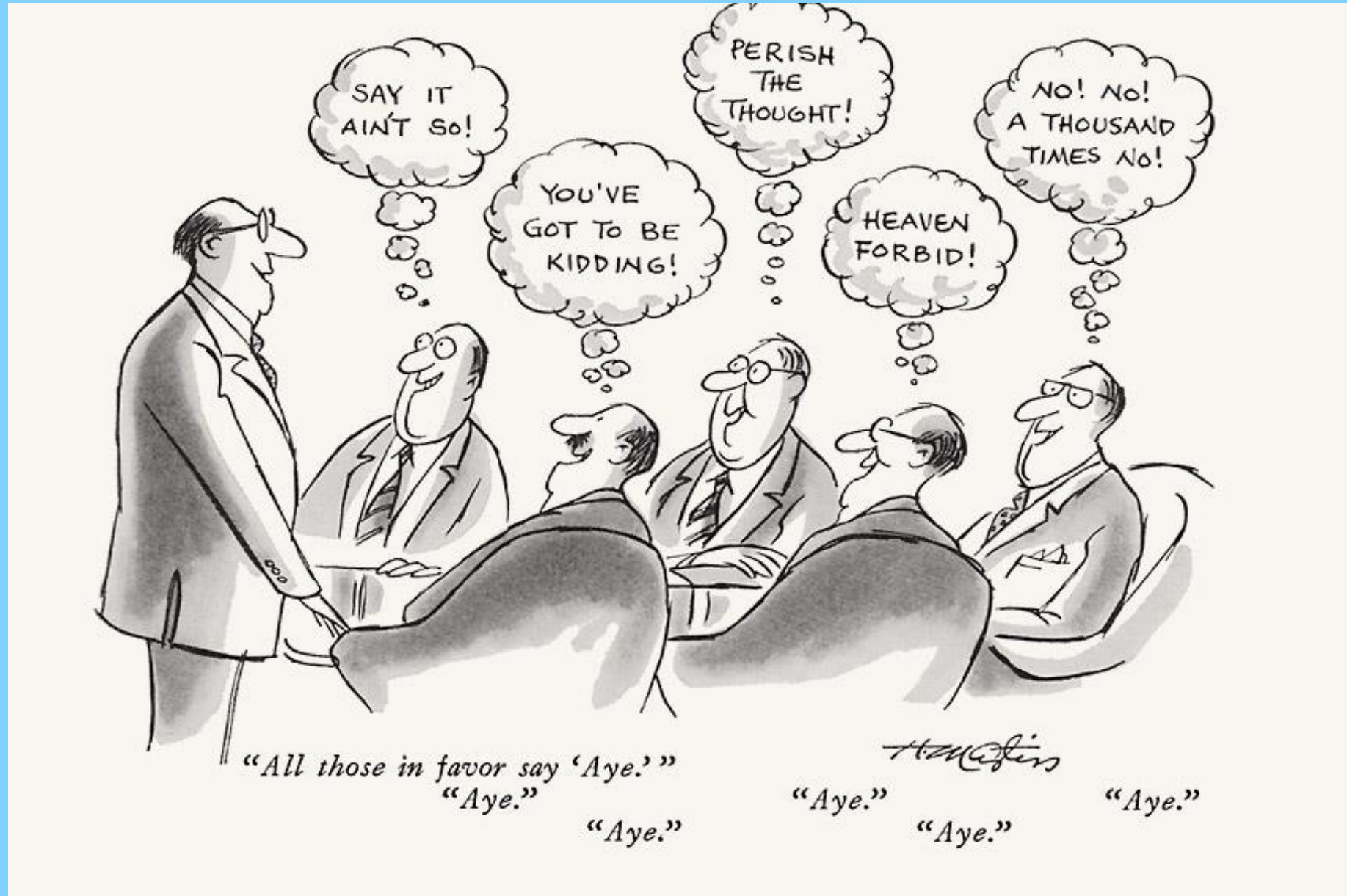


The Abilene Paradox

When groups take action that contradicts what the members of the group silently agree they want or need to do.



Abilene paradox



Growing Corn







*How does
this grow
corn?*



Growing Corn in your communication

- Ask yourself “Will my words grow corn?”
- “Will it further my position to get to where I need to go?”

Systematic Development of Informed Consent



<https://consentbuilding.com/>



Bleiker SDIC Life Preserver

Whatever you do, write, or say, make sure your public commits to a positive conclusion on these four points:

1. This is a serious problem or opportunity that just has to be addressed
2. You are the right entity to be addressing this problem... In fact, it would be **IRRESPONSIBLE** for you not to address this problem
3. The way you are going about it, the approach you are using is reasonable, sensible and responsible
4. You are listening, you do care. If what you are proposing is going to hurt someone, it's not because you don't care; it's not because you're not listening.

Elected Officials

Leadership vs Management

GOVERNANCE

The failure of many managers and elected bodies (i.e. firing or resignation) often comes down to ill defined roles, stepping out the roles

Working with Elected Officials

KEY CONCEPTS

- Be apolitical yet politically astute
- “No one elected me...”
- The Board IS responsible for the performance of the manager
- As manager, you are not responsible for the performance of the board

As manager, you are not responsible for the performance of the board

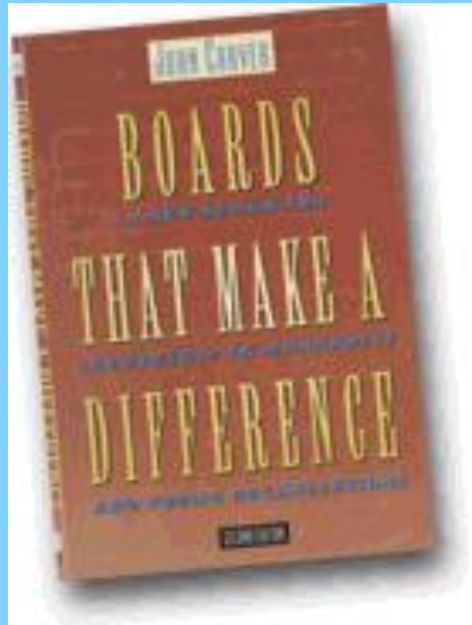
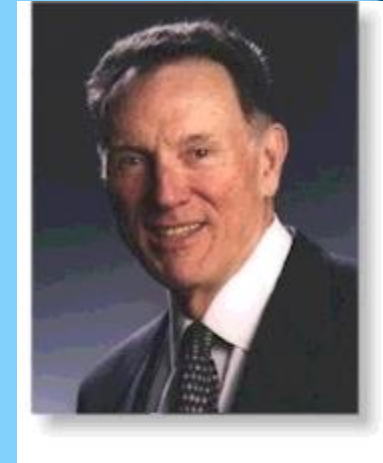


“It’s my job to warn you if you are about to jump off a cliff, it is not my job to stop you.”

Policy Governance

based on the work of Dr. John Carver

Boards That Make a Difference (Jossey-Bass, 1990)



Develop and adopt a set of official governing policies which:

- Defines the role of the Board
- Defines the role of the manager
- Articulates the board code of conduct
- Board focuses on policy or *Ends*
- Staff focuses on implementation or *Means*



Staying on line



Grand Canyon, Colorado River

Legacy Standard





“Frank, always remember, when the Generals start fighting, it’s the Colonels that get shot.”



When things go wrong....



Lava Falls, Grand Canyon



Lava Falls, Grand Canyon



Lava Falls, Grand Canyon





Lava Falls, Grand Canyon



Lava Falls, Grand Canyon





Cache La Poudre, Colorado



Main Salmon River, Idaho



Spontaneous Cooperation



Spontaneous Cooperation



Spontaneous Cooperation





Alsek River, Alaska



Cache la Poudre, Colorado



Shotover River, New Zealand

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