

Political ambitions versus public good jerry kloby

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Political Ambitions versus the Public Good/ Jerry Kloby Political Ambitions

versus the Public Good is a case presented by Jerry Kloby in the book

Managing Local Government: Cases in Effectiveness. The case is indicative of exploring how a manager can assist the governing body of his community to become more efficient and result oriented. This aspect of team work and collaboration is a feature that has been pompously characterizing systems of council/manager governments. The concept implies the implementation of a theory of government whereby the council and the mayor work in a team as part time public servants. The manager is vested with the responsibility of handling the daily operational affairs of the city but this arrangement is often associated to other issues such as the governing body being involved in local politics. The case study puts forth circumstances, which illustrate that that the different facets of change, even if they relate to the most coherent reasons, cannot always be implemented easily by governing bodies (Kloby, 2009). In having faced a crisis situation in the accessibility of reasonably priced housing, Green Mountain established a task force to deal with affordable housing and recruited a consultant who came up with a 72 page strategy for affordable housing that made specific recommendations for policy changes. The consultant's report concluded that the issue of providing affordable housing to citizens was a serious problem because housing zones that conventionally catered to providing low cost housing to citizens were gradually being taken over by wealthy people, thus depriving the poor and medium class from buying affordable housing. Therefore, there is great risk

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to affordable housing in the city and the housing options for senior citizens have become extremely restricted. Of the housing that is currently accessible, very few houses are available at market rates to low income families. Moreover, there has been considerable increase in prices during the last three years, which has hit the middle income families the maximum. It is true that Mayor Lang has been espousing the notions of affordable housing strategies, but it is also true that under his direction the town council has hardly taken any of the actions that were recommended by the consultant. The Mayor did take initiatives to establish a housing commission but no provision was made for creating the position of a housing specialist. The Council had passed an inclusionary zoning ordinance but it proved to be very weak relative to the minimum that was recommended. The council and the mayor did not take any initiatives to make the rent arbitration board stronger or to reconstitute the same or to establish a community land trust. In his report, the consultant had included a separate note that endorsed the introduction of moderate rent regulation but it was conveniently ignored. Therefore, the city manager is faced with two pertinent issues; what should be done about the housing problems and how he should work constructively with the mayor. Manager Michael Bradford understands that implementing changes takes time but he has been waiting patiently for three years without any positive results. The town council has not enacted the consultant's affordable housing strategy nor has any action been taken on his recommendations. A new mayor is slated to take over soon and the manager has to choose on how he will manage the affordable housing problem, especially when Green Mountain is on the verge of getting a new administration. Manager Michael Bradford has over twenty years experience

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in town management and understands that it is very important for elected officials to be efficient and astute. The required results can be achieved only if he further raises the issue of affordable housing before the new council and convinces its members and the new mayor of the importance of adopting the consultant's recommendations. Manager Michael Bradford should push the resolution for the creation of Green Mountain housing commission so that the commission gets authority from the municipal government to oversee the implementation of the affordable housing policy, the setting up of the rent arbitration board and the yearly rent monitoring survey. He can also consider taking up the case by recommending that the housing commission should implement the recommendations of the consultant that have been ignored by the town council. It is very important to establish a full time position of a housing specialist who will constantly pursue implementation of policy recommendations. A clear procedure needs to be established to resolve disputes by a strong rent arbitration board. A community land trust needs to be sponsored that uses non-profit ownership as a system to ensure affordability of housing in the long term. List of References Kloby, Jerry. (2009). Political Ambitions versus the Public Good in, Newell, Charlean. (Editor). (2009). Managing Local Government, Cases in Effectiveness, International City/County Management Associates