



Knowing Your Community Leaders (Revision date 1-12-2013)

Your Local School Board

Many times calls come in from those who want to know what they can do. For many, the demands of family and their careers barely allow enough time to fix dinner and eat together as a family. Most of us have experienced those demands and certainly understand the limited time younger families have to give to this effort.

Nevertheless, these individuals are still as concerned and want to be influential in the sphere that they are in at this time in their life. So, with that said, what is there for that family or individual that cannot give much time?

Usually, these are families with school age children; therefore, their logical place of influence can be at their own child's school. Parents need to read the textbooks that their kids are required to read and study. If you find something objectionable, you have every right to express your opinion to the teacher. If you are still unsatisfied, you can talk to the Superintendent. You could even press further and go to the School Board if you are concerned about curriculum.

For instance, in the state of Wyoming, when President Obama decided to talk to every student in America via CSPAN, 77% of the states' student body did not attend school that day.

In 2008, a Bay Area elementary school decided to have a three-week study of Islam. Students were required to dress in Islamic fashion, take Islamic names, read from the Koran, and eat Islamic food. Over half of the parents of those students pulled their kids out of that program. That is your right as a parent.

By the way, do you know who represents you on the Board of Education in your district? If you do not, you need to find out. That is the first thing you should do. You can get that information from your child's school.

You may want to go to one of their meetings. Did you know that they are open to the public and you have every right to be there? Parents can take turns going so that there is a parent home to help with homework and other family duties. Get to know those who are setting the standards and choosing the curriculum that is influencing as well as educating your children. It may be great. Then again, it may be destructive and in conflict with your values. Sometimes I think that the main obstacle to making change in our schools is our persistent belief that everybody is like us. Believe me, they are not. As Ronald Reagan said, "Inspect what you expect."

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Your Mayor and City Council Members

For most American voters, politics has become like a four-letter word. A book that came out back in the early 1990's was titled, "Why Americans Hate Politics." That is not surprising and it is even truer today. The current political system has erected a curtain around the Washington Beltway that insulates everyone inside from the views of the average person. They scorn those who disagree with them and when they continue to disagree, they resort to calling them names and claim that they are un-American.

America is a great country, not because of a bunch of people in Washington have told people what to do, but because people have been free to do great things on their own. One group that still is open and is not insulated from the average person is your local City Council.

Most cities have two meetings per month and will publish their agenda on the internet 24 to 72 hours prior to the meeting. Carefully read their topics and decide if you need to be there. Fiscal matters will most assuredly affect you and your family. These individuals are spending your tax dollars.

What if you disagree with what they are doing? Well, you have the right to voice your opinion. You also have the free will to vote them out at the next election if they continue to follow a path of fiscal irresponsibility. They have an abundance of powers of the purse and determine which projects may or may not be allowed to happen within the city. They set laws that affect your dog, cat, and your personal property.

Do not think that the City Council or your Mayor does not matter? Diane Feinstein and Barbara Boxer both began their political careers by serving on the City Council. Then, we have San Francisco's mayor, Gavin Newsom now the Attorney General of California and slated to be our next governor.

These positions do matter and you have a say if they serve or not. Get to know them so you are informed.

Do you know who your mayor is? Do you know who serves on the City Council? If you do not, you had better find out. Everything begins at the local level and works up.

The County Board of Supervisors

Question: Who sits on your County Board of Supervisors?

These men and women are responsible for improvements within the county areas that are outside the city limits. Roads, sub-divisions, and commercial development is approved or denied by the County Board of Supervisors. Their requirements also involve many other government agencies in order to move forward with any project that would require a permit. They set the speed limits in certain areas and apply restrictions on things that they decide should have those restrictions. They control where new schools will be built and regulate the zoning of properties.

Essentially, your County Board of Supervisors is the final say in what happens in your county, even regarding your own private property. If you want to do something to improve your property, and that



improvement is, different than the restrictions that were in place when your home was built then you will be required to obtain approval from this board.

With all of this power, should not you know who is making these decisions? Should we be aware if there is fiscal waste? Should we be aware if the county government is over reaching into our personal liberties? Absolutely!

As is with the City Council meetings, your County Board of Supervisors usually have two meetings per month and will publish their agenda 24 to 72 hours prior to their meeting on the internet. Do not feel that you need to attend every meeting. Of course not! However, when you read what they will be covering at their meeting and it reveals spending that you are unsure of or over reaching with their governmental arm, it is imperative that you attend.

I ask you again, who sits on your County Board of Supervisors? If you do not know, find out now.

Who serves on your Water Agency Board?

Here is another agency that can waste taxpayer dollars by the millions and go un-noticed. These agencies also hold monthly meetings and you have every right to sit in on them. After all, you must vote for those who claim to represent you on this board, you certainly have the right to know what kind of a job they are doing.

None of these agencies are small change. They are, in fact, extremely influential in your community. They have the power to raise fees, taxes and over regulate you to a point that you can no longer call your property your own to do with as you please.

These agencies also have the ability to implement Agenda 21 (there is an entire section on this, check the directory). Agenda 21 will remove all property rights and give them to the hands of the government.

Get involved in your local government.