HIGHLIGHTS AND HURDLES IN HAMLETS: IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Justin Weiland
City Administrator, Dell Rapids, SD

October 21, 2019
• Dell Rapids, SD – Population 3,800
  ➢ Growing community, proximity to Sioux Falls (largest metro in South Dakota)
  ➢ State of South Dakota Total Population < 900,000

• Small State with isolated geographical communities

• South Dakota City Managers Association – Our Local organization of 35 professional managers and growing
  ➢ State is slowly moving in the direction of accepting professional management.
Small Community Specialists

• It is truly us and only us – We are “Small Community Specialists”

• The list of responsibilities is virtually endless; City Manager, Clerk, Zoning Administrator, Floodplain Administrator, Economic Development Director, HR Director, IT Director, Parks and Recreation Director, Utility Manager etc…

• We are the hired professionals. We are the experts.

• We don’t have the luxury of delegating these duties.

• With the multitude of responsibilities comes the stress and pressures of making and recommending decisions.
ENGAGE OUR COMMUNITY TO MAKE THE DECISIONS

Community Deliberation and Engagement to inform decisions.
Remove pressure from decision making.
Create community ownership in issues.
DELIBERATIVE ENGAGEMENT IN THEORY

Figure 1: The Cycle of Deliberative Inquiry

Create a Culture of Engagement and Deliberation

- Budgeting
- Ordinance Development
- Future Planning
- Wicked Problems
- Perceived simple issues (i.e. Main Street Parking, Choosing playground equipment)
- Create a culture by starting simple and building collaborative environment between City Hall and our communities.
WE ARE ALREADY DOING THIS

• We don’t have the option to not engage – We can’t hide.
• Goal to continue education in facilitation techniques and processes.
• I personally am in the early stages of implementing more engagement in my community.
• Engagement builds trust, respect and support for our decisions.