



Dickinson Township's Operating Principles

Adopted: August 6, 2007

In every way, our business is the center of people's lives. Our work includes the roads people drive on, the buildings they live and work in, the parks they play in and the water they drink. No person in the Township of Dickinson, whether a resident, a business, a tourist, or a shopper, is untouched by our work. We are in the business of creating and protecting community. Few businesses are involved in work so closely tied to life and living.

We are proud of what we do. We take it seriously. As a government, our township organization is guided by elected officials. And while politics play an important role in choosing our leaders and charting our priorities, politics will play no role in choosing how we treat people.

This document is about our operating principles as a township organization. It speaks of how we expect to act today and everyday. Against these operating principles, we will measure our decisions, our actions, ourselves.

No doubt some of what is important is not mentioned here. We can add to these operating principles. We will not subtract from them, though. These values are ground rules, not options. They reflect what we stand for—and what we won't stand for. They are a fundamental part of the way we do business. Our commitment to them means that all of our actions and relationships—whether involving citizens or ourselves—are based on these seven uncompromising values:

STEWARDSHIP

The community of Dickinson Township entrusts us to care for its assets: its roads, its funds, its buildings, its parks, its equipment, its land, its water, its trees and its reputation. We are stewards even of its future. We must never gamble with it. We must conserve and enhance it, or we will have failed in our fundamental responsibility.

We will plan imaginatively and pursue opportunities for tomorrow's citizens and their needs, recognizing that tomorrow comes too quickly. Still, we will not let these plans and pursuits take precedence over, nor get in the way of, our commitment to today's community and its needs.

INTEGRITY

Integrity in the broadest sense must lead our actions in all relationships, including those with citizens and each other. On a daily basis, every one of us makes choices about how to behave—whether to do the right thing or simply the easy thing.

We are a government. Often, people look at government with suspicion. We cannot simply be right in our decisions; we have to look right, too. Taking advantage of loopholes, quick fixes, and taking shortcuts can compromise public trust in us. We won't allow it. We must do the right thing, even when it is painful or difficult.

We must never base our decisions or actions on what we think we can get away with. If it involves going below the belt, behind the back, or under the table, we won't do it. We will rethink the situation and take a different path. A moment of choice is a moment of truth. It's the testing point of our character and competence.

RESPECT

We will always treat every person with respect and dignity. Our workplace is to be a shelter from violence, threats, harassment of any sort, discrimination, retribution, bullying, and abuses of all kinds. It is to be a place where respect is built by showing respect.

Every person who comes in contact with a Dickinson Township elected/appointed official or employee, including other elected/appointed officials and employees, can expect honesty, fair dealing, and courtesy. No amount of authority, status, or power can excuse anyone in our organization from treating another with rudeness, humiliation, or disrespect.

RESPONSIBILITY

Personal accountability is a basis of our commitment to each other and to the community. We honor our commitments and obligations to each other and to citizens. We keep our word, and if circumstances prevent us from doing so, we don't pass the buck or make up excuses.

Our commitment to accepting responsibility comes before our personal moods. We alone are responsible for how we act, and we can choose to act responsibly.

We are honest with each other. We know that we carry a burden for helping others around us to succeed. We can watch silently as others act against these operating principles or we can step up and say what we see. Personal responsibility means doing the right thing when others aren't.

COOPERATION

Together we can create solutions and outcomes that are far more creative, more fitting, more workable, more rewarding than any solution or outcome we could ever come up with on our own. In almost all situations, cooperation is far more productive than competition.

Either-or, we-they, and win-lose thinking has no place in our organization; we must go beyond it. We acknowledge our contribution to problems and work for solutions. Though we may work in different departments, and though there may be doors and walls between us, we must cooperate as if we have no separations or barriers. We are 'ONE' Township.

We mean to involve our employees in workplace governance, relying on employees for input, guidance, and advice. The counsel of all employees, from part-time workers to managers, is weighed with the same scale: to be considered, it must be consistent with our stated values. We support decisions even if they are not ours.

We encourage and recognize both individual and group achievements. We freely join with colleagues across organizational and municipal boundaries to advance the interests of the community. We communicate frequently and honestly.

We strive to treat citizens as partners with us. We not only listen to them, we seek their input.

LEADERSHIP

We recognize the difference a manager/supervisor can make in the lives of workers and the results of work. Therefore, we recruit, select, and retain managers/supervisors based on their ability to make a positive difference and demonstrate these values in their decisions and actions.

We require leadership marked by directness, openness to ideas and willingness to not be negatively influenced, commitment to the success of others, and trust. Not only must we model these behaviors, we must coach others to adopt them. We must always be positive change agents.

We require leadership that increases the authority and responsibility of those closest to the task and encourages employees to stretch their abilities to solve problems at their level.

REPUTATION

It is not enough to act consistent with our operating principles. We must be seen as being consistent if we hope to earn the confidence of the whole community.

We will strive to become known for our successful commitments to a safe, friendly, challenging, inspiring, productive, rewarding, value-driven, and fun workplace.

We will strive to be known as the best township government, based on what the community says about its township and what our employees say about their workplace.

In the end, our success will be measured by our reputation both for what we do and how we do it. That reputation is built by the small, daily acts of each employee in how we treat citizens and how we treat each other.

We are our reputation.

–The Soul of our Organization Resides in the Spirit of our People.