



Welcome! Please take a moment to complete the poll and tell us a little about yourself:

- Where are you logging in from today?
- How much do you feel you already know about this topic?
- What are your goals for this session?
(Choose all that apply)

NeighborWorks.org
Copyright 2023 NeighborWorks America. All rights reserved.



1



**Understanding
Public Policy:
Influencing
Policy Making**

CB008WT



@NeighborWorks



2

Intellectual Property Notice

The materials presented in this course are property of NeighborWorks® America. This includes all outlines, content, examples, and graphics.

All rights are reserved. No part of these materials may be reproduced, distributed, shared, or repurposed without written permission from NeighborWorks America.

NeighborWorks.org

Copyright 2023 NeighborWorks America. All rights reserved.



3



Becky Sherblom

Principal and CEO, B. Sherblom Consulting

- Independent consultant (*16 years*) supporting nonprofit organizations to increase capacity and impact through strategic business planning and impact measurement.
- Special interest of integrating the public policy perspective into a program outcome framework.
- Was Executive Director of the Maryland Center for Community Development (MCCD) for 8 years, a statewide organization for the community development and affordable housing groups in Maryland, where I managed programs and lobbying.
- Spent 7 years working for 2 different national trade associations focused on public policies and practices regarding community development, housing and homelessness issues.
- Spent 6 years at the local level, doing community organizing and local advocacy on a variety of issues affecting disenfranchised communities.

NeighborWorks.org

Copyright 2023 NeighborWorks America. All rights reserved.



4



5

Politics, Policy and Community

What can we do for ourselves?

Community Building and Organizing

What can we do with a little help from outside?

Organizing and Partnerships

What requires that we rely on someone else?

Advocacy to Influence Policy Changes

6

Community Organizing & Politics

Community organizing is about relationships

In communities

- Relationships are dynamic and
- Relationships are multi-faceted

Benefit from being able to build on commonalities among people, think about what others need/want

Politics is about relationships

In politics

- Relationships are more role-based, often based on power and access

Need to be Strategic, understand others' perspective and position

7

Levels & Branches of Government

3 Levels of Government

- Federal
- State
- Local

3 Branches of Government

- Executive
- Legislative
- Judiciary

Policies are set by people in 3 roles

- Elected officials
- Appointed officials
- Hired staff

8

Where are all the policies made?

Among the more than 50,000 local boards, districts, and authorities that operate at the local level in addition to the more than 3,000 local counties, cities, towns and townships.

NeighborWorks.org

Copyright 2023 NeighborWorks America. All rights reserved.



9

Who makes these policies? -People do-

People who are elected - who made a decision to run for office;

People who are appointed - appointed by the executive or legislative branch to a board of some type that helps the government manage services;

People who live, work, have family and friends, worship, socialize in a community.



NeighborWorks.org

Copyright 2023 NeighborWorks America. All rights reserved.




10



To get elected, a person needs to run a Campaign

A successful Campaign requires planning and strategy, people power, time & money

NeighborWorks.org
Copyright 2023 NeighborWorks America. All rights reserved.




11

You want to run for Office?

- Would your family be in support of it?
- Can you raise enough seed money & people power? At least 25 people who might donate and 30 people to volunteer?
- What other groups might support you?
- What are unique characteristics of your district? And how do you align with those characteristics?
- What do constituents care about/ believe in?

NeighborWorks.org
Copyright 2023 NeighborWorks America. All rights reserved.



12

To Run for Office, part 2



- How many votes do you need to win?
- Who might be persuaded to vote for you? Why vote for you?
- Who do you know with skill to be your Campaign Manager, and your Treasurer? Are they willing to do it?
- Are you willing to spend several weeknights and every weekend for 2-3 months going door-to-door & on phone?



NeighborWorks.org

Copyright 2023 NeighborWorks America. All rights reserved.



13

For a Candidate of color - more Challenges and Barriers

Lacking access to money & power

Motivating infrequent voters & non-voters

Pressure to adjust identify & appearance to meet dominant cultural expectations

Can you form alliances with unexpected allies?

Risk being typecast as a token –perceived or portrayed as a token candidate

Work with white allies without being coopted by them

Racist public scrutiny & personal attacks (safety concerns for candidate and family)

NeighborWorks.org

Copyright 2023 NeighborWorks America. All rights reserved.



14

Opportunities for Community Influence?

- Assist community members to become leaders and run for office
- Volunteer on campaigns of candidates, to gain understanding and access
- There are any number of conflicting demands on an elected official to act, so where possible be informed and build bridges
- When possible, be collaborative rather than competitive

NeighborWorks.org

Copyright 2023 NeighborWorks America. All rights reserved.



15

Competing Interests

- Elected Officials have multiple, often competing, demands for their attention and action.
- How can your organization/community build a case that your issue should get attention?

NeighborWorks.org

Copyright 2023 NeighborWorks America. All rights reserved.

16

HOPE believes school staff discipline students of color disproportionately. They are tired of the school calling police on students & parents, and immigrant families fear police calls lead to deportation.

Senior Center has residents who are afraid to exit their building after the school lets out because of “rowdiness” of students and parent cars lining street.

Elm St Neigh Devel does housing projects, and neighborhood organizing activities. Neigh feels there is a lack of parking, and green space, and they want City to turn over vacant lots to abutting property owners and want a vacant lot across from Senior Center turned into park/basketball court.

One Politician

Three community organizations:

1. House of Peace & Education (HOPE)
2. Senior Center
3. Elm St Area Neigh Devel Corp


Would your Message or Strategy Change...

- If you knew this politician had been in office for 30 years?
- If you knew the politician was white in a district now only 35% white?

If a younger neighborhood resident, a person of color, decided to run against this politician in the next election:

What message would that candidate need to use to get your organization’s constituents attention?

What message would you have for that Candidate on behalf of your organization’s constituents?



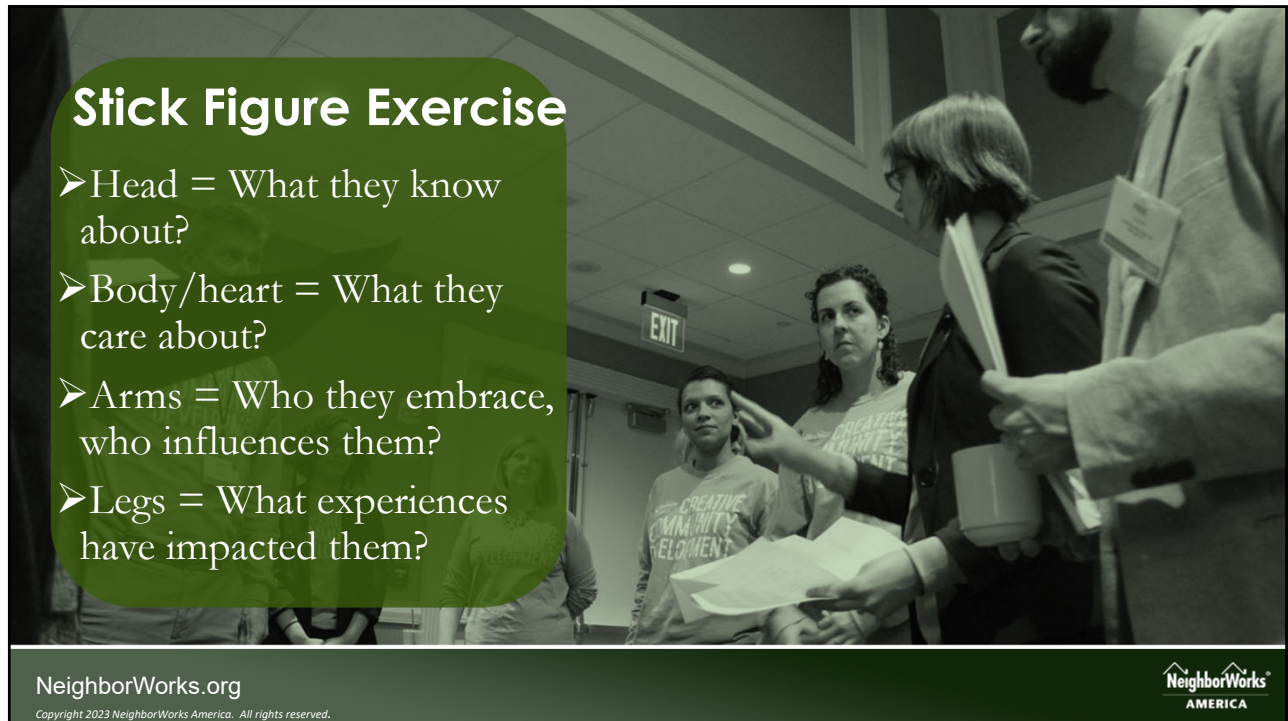
Stick Figure Exercise

- Think about an official you want to influence
- Draw a stick figure w/:
 - Head
 - Body
 - Arms
 - Legs

NeighborWorks.org
Copyright 2023 NeighborWorks America. All rights reserved.

NeighborWorks
 AMERICA

19



Stick Figure Exercise

- Head = What they know about?
- Body/heart = What they care about?
- Arms = Who they embrace, who influences them?
- Legs = What experiences have impacted them?

NeighborWorks.org
Copyright 2023 NeighborWorks America. All rights reserved.

NeighborWorks
 AMERICA

20

Questions? Take-aways?

Any final questions, thoughts, observations?

Feel free to unmute and speak or put it into the chat box.

Any take-aways?

- Something that filled in a gap or reaffirmed something you knew?
- Something that changes how you think about politicians now?
- An action you will take now?



NeighborWorks.org

Copyright 2023 NeighborWorks America. All rights reserved.

NeighborWorks
AMERICA

21

Thank you!

NeighborWorks.org

Copyright 2023 NeighborWorks America. All rights reserved.

NeighborWorks
AMERICA

22