Conversations Every Pool Governing Body Should Have

**Craig Stephenson**, Board Chair  
Oklahoma Municipal Assurance Group (OMAG), City Manager – Ponca City, Oklahoma

**Mary Sholander**, Board Chair  
County Road Association Self-Insurance Fund (CRASIF), Director of Finance and Administration, Marquette County Road Commission, Michigan

**Jim deSpelder**, Administrator/CEO  
County Road Association Self-Insurance Fund (CRASIF) – Lansing, Michigan

**Jon Shull**, Chief Executive Officer  
California Joint Powers Insurance Authority (California JPIA) – La Palma, California
What is my role in the organization? (Orientation)

• Board norms, expectations, responsibilities (Trustees to Membership, Trustees to Trustees, Chair, how we conduct business)
• Expectations with and of chief executive (empowering to act, position description)
• Role with staff (personnel management responsibility)
• Working as a team – board and staff
  • Respectful dissent and speaking with one voice as a board
  • Duty to “pool” rather than duty to “member”
  • Board vs executive committee vs committees
  • Personality types discussed
  • Expectations for yourself (can’t be a subject matter expert, learning curve)
What I should know about the business? (Operational)

- Understanding the business of pooling
  - Public v private sector
  - Insurance lingo and philosophy
  - What are the regulatory authorities and the basis for our legal status?
  - Understanding the financial reports
- Foundational documents
  (pooling agreement, bylaws, etc.)
- Memoranda of Coverage
- Organizational mission, vision, values, culture
- Organizational structure (org chart, contractors/employees/service providers)
- Regular board evaluations
- Holding staff accountable by using measurable and meaningful metrics
How do I know if I am doing my job well? (Strategic)

- Strategic planning by looking forward not backward (foresight, futuring, conscious choice to re-affirm present course, not “new” focused is OK)
- Budgeting with a long-term perspective (investing in the future)
- Succession planning for staff and board (risk vs. reward, board composition, pool structure)
- Members needs are being met (how to measure)
- Professional development (board and staff, budgeting)