

When Broadband Becomes Political: A 10-Point Survival Guide

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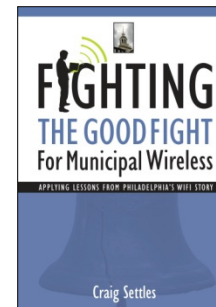
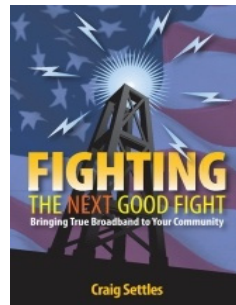
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Background

- **Industry analyst, consultant**
- **“Tech Titan on Twitter”**
- **Develops broadband business strategy**
- **Author of books, reports, blog**



Objectives

- **Understanding political and political bureaucracy issues**
- **How to build political support**
- **Tips for meeting challenges**



Polling Question #1

(use form on right side of screen >>>)

What is your role in the politics of it all?

- Elected official
- Work on staff of elected official
- Manager/staff with local/state government
- Member of broadband project team (but not with government)
- Service provider, other private sector entity
- Nonprofit organization
- Other



All Broadband is Political All Politics is Local

- **Political climate impacts before, during, after**
- **Bureaucratic process**
- **Changing of the guard**
- **Direct political conflict**



1. Understand the Political Landscape

- **Key politicians**
- **Existing legislation**
- **Rules, codes, common practices**
- **County and state legalities**



2. Understand the Power Structure

- **Who has the power**
- **Who has the popularity**
- **Which staff get things done**
- **Which way does the wind blow**



Make Political Consensus an Art Form

- **Sign on key politicians early**
- **Allow [some] influence on steering committee**
- **Frequently update**



3. Know Your Laws

- **All “bad” laws are not bad**
- **Benign laws could hurt**
- **Send in the lawyers**
- **Keep serenity prayer handy**



Get Proactive with Ordinances

- **Right of Way (rules, fees)**
- **Permits**
- **Conflicting rules**
- **Keep detailed paper trail**



4. Follow Local Elections

- **Executive branch**
- **Representative branch**
- **Insert broadband into the mix (carefully)**



5. Be Prepared for Change

- **Know who doesn't like whom**
- **Brief candidates**
- **Woo influential insiders**



Polling Question #2

(use form on right side of screen >>>)

How supportive is elected political establishment of the broadband project/idea?

- Totally on board
- Quietly supportive
- Indifferent
- Skeptical/wait and see attitude
- Hostile



Background

- **Former candidate for Congress**
- **Driving force in Greensboro Google gigabit effort**
- **Co-Founder, Communities United for Broadband**
- **Veteran of NC muni network wars**



6. Know the Players

- **Your legislators**
 - **Build relationships**
 - **Face time is important**
- **Lobbyists**
 - **Some are fighting with you**
 - **Some are fighting against you**



7. Monitor Committees

- **Know where legislation headed**
- **Track legislative schedules, be there for broadband issues**
- **Know committee schedules**
- **Most bill changes happen in committee meetings**



Laws & Legislation

- **Know existing laws, regs**
- **A bill is a bill, but names can be deceiving**
- **What matters most often hidden in unknown bills**



Trade Tools

- **Create a one pager**
- **Short fact sheet promoting issue and its value**
- **Target legislators and allies**
- **Leaving document leaves issue in their hands**



8. Build Community

- **Power in numbers**
- **Connect with others, combine efforts**
- **Use what you're fighting for**
- **Community is your biggest asset**



Press

- **Keep the press updated**
- **Make yourself available to the media**
- **Press releases keep the media AND public informed**



9. Track your progress

- **Who you spoke to**
- **What they said**
- **Where they stand**
- **Contact info, etc...**



10. Keep On Your Toes

- **Be prepared for sudden changes in legislation**
- **Things happen quickly, be like a chameleon - adapt and adjust**



Q&A



Communities United for Broadband:

www.communitiesforbroadband.com/

At Broadband Properties Magazine:

www.munibroadband.com

Broadband Properties homepage: www.bbpmag.com

View www.Muniwebinar.com to view and access all archived webinar materials in this series! *And don't forget to check back regularly for updates on future webinar events!*

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