

Mediation

The Role of Mediation in Public Sector Consensus Building



Collaborative Approaches to Decision Making



- Voluntary
- “Owned”
 - Participants “own” the process
- Problem Defined Jointly
 - A common definition of the problem is developed and used
- Informed
 - Parties educate one another and seek needed information together
- Creative
 - Multiple options are developed
- Consent Sought

Mediation



- The use of an impartial individual or team to assist parties in resolving their differences or in finding common ground.
- A mediator remains **impartial** throughout the joint problem-solving effort.
- A mediator may meet **privately** with parties and subgroups.
- A mediator has **no decision-making** authority.
- A mediator works for the process and **is responsible to the whole group**, not to one participant or interest.

What mediators do



- Set agendas
- Monitor groundrules
- Facilitate meetings
- Prepare meeting summaries
- Help surface underlying interests
- Help surface options, packages, constraints
- Caucus with parties to explore options, BATNAs, trade offs
- Shuttle among parties
- Summarize and synthesize options, ideas, draft agreements in writing

My Commitment to You



- Work hard on behalf of collaboration
- Work diligently to understand your needs, concerns, and ideas
- Be fair and non-partisan
- Be honest
- Protect confidentiality
- Adapt and adjust to the needs of the group

A Few Things to Consider



- Making sausage isn't pretty, so they say
- You might not always like me
- My job is to be fair, respectful, **and firm**, when needed
- I monitor the groundrules, but **enforcement** is a joint responsibility
- I'm not a judge, and can't compel parties to "do" something

Questions for Me



- What do you want me to do as a mediator?
- What do you not want me to do?
- What are your concerns about my role?