

What are the motivations for becoming public servants? What is the mission of public administrators? Are public administrators just to ensure that budgets are balanced and the organization is protected? What is their calling and how is people's work to be done?

Reflecting on his long and rewarding career in local government, Mr. Shaffer will explore some of the vexing questions facing public administrators today. He uses the debacle of Flint as an example of how democracy is rejected and the system incentivizes "managing" rather than "serving." This case shows how stripping a community of its rights and prioritizing budgetary success at the expense of citizens' well-being can lead to a catastrophe.

Emergency Management Law and the Public Servant

Laurence Shaffer

City Manager, City of Portage, Michigan

Laurence Shaffer's career as a city or town manager spans from Amherst, MA, to Jackson and now Portage, MI. Starting as a town administrator in New Hampshire and then Connecticut, Mr. Shaffer's responsibilities as the city manager of Portage have grown to \$78 million in budget covering 49,000 residents. Previously, he was appointed to the Historic Preservation Council and Economic Conference Board in Connecticut.

Recipient of the New Hampshire Rotary International and Assessor's Leadership awards, Mr. Shaffer holds Bachelor of Arts and Master of Public Administration degrees from the State University of New York at Oneonta and Albany respectively.



When: November 14, 2018

Refreshments at 5 p.m. Talk from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Where: 1710 Sangren Hall

Students: Please note that attending this event counts toward WMU Signature Program (with the chosen focus areas listed on your transcript and diploma) where you attend a total of 18 events and reflect on your experience (www.wmich.edu/signature)