

Giving By Giving Back

The Basics of Board Service

October 2001

Today's Meeting



- Welcome and announcements
- Board service and responsibilities
- Role Play/Observe – Finance Committee Meeting
- Role Play – Finance Committee reports to full Board
- Wrap-up – Board Tool Kit
 - Planning board recruitment – The Nominations Grid
 - Board member job description
 - Sample board recruitment flyer
 - Sample conflict of interest statement

What Do Organizations Do?

- The “Public Good”
- Mission-based programs
 - Enhance quality of life
 - Address community needs
- Administration and planning
 - Human resources - staff and volunteer
 - Financial management
 - Bookkeeping and reporting
 - Fundraising
 - Planning
 - Strategic planning
 - Program planning and evaluation



What's Special about "Nonprofit"?

- What sets nonprofits apart?
- How does a group become a designated nonprofit?
- Incorporation vs. "tax-exemption"
- State vs. federal designations
- Governing documents
- Held to a higher standard than private organizations



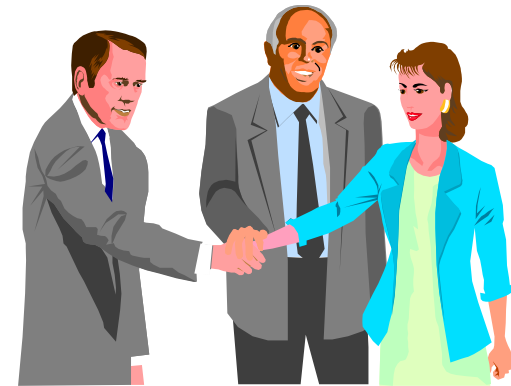
Boards Provide Governance and Oversight

- Policy governance
 - Develop strategic plan
 - Choose specific projects
- Fiduciary and legal duties
 - Adopting and updating legal structure
 - Budget, financial review, audits
- Program oversight
 - Staff evaluation



Who is in Charge?

- Officers
 - President
 - Vice President
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer
- Staff
 - Executive Director



...frequent communication is essential

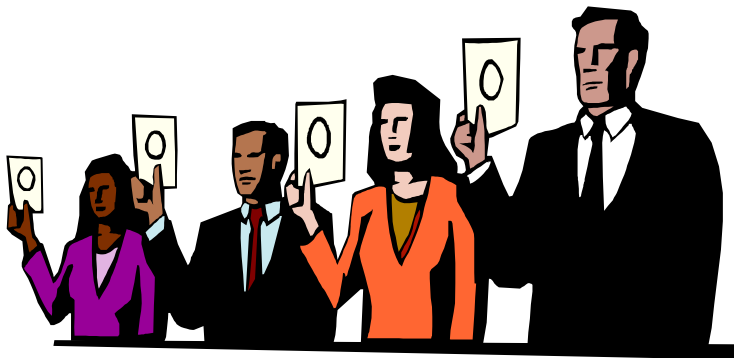
What if There's No Staff?

- Board must separate out governance from program volunteer duties
- Good (documented) committee structures are especially important



How Does One Become a Board Member?

- Election - who elects?
- “Appointment”



...Seek out appropriate people from your contacts and acquaintances of your colleagues

Personal Qualities of Effective Board Members

- Commitment to the “cause”
- Common sense (not very common!)
- Companion characteristic: “good judgment”
- Respect for group processes
- Openness — a desire to learn and grow
- Sense of humor!



Less Desirable Approaches to Board Service

- “Johnny One Note” — harps on one particular issue
- The “Over-boarded”, and hence, overcommitted
 - Up-and-coming movers and shakers are often better, more involved board members than community stars - e.g. Leadership Prineville, new community members, recent graduates, retirees
- “Devil’s Advocate” — Sanctimonious, demeaning to other board members



Knowledge and Board Service

- Understand activities of the organization you're serving
- Know how to function as an effective decision-maker
- Know the rights and responsibilities of board members
- Understand the skills/qualities needed for board service
- Understand planning process
- Understand simple financial analysis and the organization's fiscal systems
- Understand the mix of fundraising options
- Understand the legal structure of your organization



...these can all be learned

General Legal Responsibilities

- Perform to the best of your ability given your experience
- Attend meetings
- Read minutes and suggest clarifications
- New board members should receive an orientation to the organization:
 - copies of governing documents such as bylaws, mission statement, policies, and past minutes
 - mentoring and coaching from other board members or board chair
- Avoid/disclose conflicts of interest



...generally, pay attention and contribute

Ten Board Member Responsibilities

1. Determine and set the organization's mission and purpose
2. Ensure effective organizational planning - "set the course"
3. Establish and monitor programs and services
4. Select executive director if organization is to use staff
5. Support executive director; ensure performance review



Board Member Responsibilities (cont.)

6. Ensure adequate resources (fundraising!)
 - personal contribution → 100% board giving
7. Manage resources effectively
8. Enhance the organization's public image ... evangelize!
9. Serve as arbitrators
10. Assess board performance and continually develop and train the board



Effective Board Meetings

- Use a written agenda – consider adding time allocations
- Distribute materials relating to significant decisions prior to the meeting
- Establish and stick to meeting schedule
- Document meeting with clear minutes noting all decisions



...meetings don't have to be “where the minutes are kept and the hours are lost”

Above All, *Have Fun!*

- Board service is one of the most satisfying and challenging ways to serve your community and organization.
- You are needed and appreciated!

