

Small Nonprofits - Clarifying Board and Exec Dir/Staff Roles and Responsibilities

Typical Board Roles				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All Volunteer - Board Leads and Operates Agency (Board makes all decisions) ○ With Coordinator/Administrator as only staff member- Board Leads Agency and Directs Administrator (Board retains most decision making) ○ With Executive Director - Board partners with E.D. to lead and delegates most decision making 				
Activity	Typical All Volunteer	Typical Staff Administrator/ Coordinator (Paid or Vol)	Typical Executive Director w/ No or small Staff	Your Agency
BOARD				
Board Governance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Define organization mission ▪ Ensure mission-based decisions ▪ Develop organizational policies ▪ Create an organizational vision ▪ Create a long-range plan ▪ Hiring and Evaluating the Admin/Exec Dir ▪ Review regular financial reports ▪ Review regular reports on program participation, effectiveness, and impact 	Board	Board Leads	<i>Board Leads with increasing E.D. role</i>	
Establish and lead Board Committees	Board	Board Leads	Board Leads	
Establish annual goals and objectives to meet long-term or strategic plan	Board	Board Leads	<i>Staff Leads</i>	
Executive Committee	Makes urgent and operating decisions	<i>+ Directs work of the Administrator</i>	<i>Occasional urgent decisions, mainly plan board work w/E.D.</i>	
Develop Meeting Agendas	Board Chair	Board Chair	<i>Chair & E.D.</i>	
Board Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Define desired Board Composition ▪ New Board Member Recruiting ▪ Board Evaluation 	Board	Board Leads	Board Leads	

Board Chairperson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appoint Board Committee Chairs and Members ▪ Settle disagreements/tension between board members or board committees ▪ Work with E.D. to resolve any issues brought to attention of Board 	Board Chair	Board Chair	Board Chair	
Report on progress against annual and plan goals	Board	<i>Staff Leads</i>	<i>Staff Leads</i>	
Prepare and Distribute Board Meeting Packets	Board	Board Leads (Directs)	<i>Staff</i>	
Establish program evaluation methods/process	Board	Board Leads	<i>Shared, Staff Leads</i>	
Sign legal documents	Board	Board Leads	<i>Shared w/Approval Authority</i>	
Take minutes at Board meetings	Board	<i>Org Preference</i>	<i>Org Preference</i>	
Initiate merger or closing discussions	Board	Board Leads	<i>Shared</i>	
DAILY OPERATIONS				
Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assess community needs ▪ Research and Develop programs ▪ Assess programs 	Board	Board Leads	<i>Shared, Staff Leads</i>	
Track Board decisions thru implementation	Board	<i>Staff Leads</i>	<i>Staff Leads</i>	
Hire, train, discipline, fire staff (except E.D.)	Board	Board Leads	<i>Staff Leads</i>	
Decide when to add additional staff	Board	Board Leads	<i>Shared, often through budgeting process</i>	
Processing and acknowledging donations	Board	<i>Staff Leads</i>	<i>Staff</i>	
Recruit Volunteers	Board	<i>Staff Leads</i>	<i>Staff Leads</i>	
Develop operating procedures	Board	Board Leads	<i>Staff</i>	
Ensure daily security of facility and assets	Board	<i>Staff Leads</i>	<i>Staff</i>	
Maintain program records	Board	<i>Staff Leads</i>	<i>Staff</i>	

Telephone and office coverage	Board	<i>Staff Leads</i>	<i>Staff</i>	
Daily correspondence	Board	<i>Staff Leads</i>	<i>Staff</i>	
Address discord between staff members	Board	Board Leads	<i>Staff</i>	
Build partnerships with other organizations	Board	Board Leads	<i>Staff Leads</i>	
FUND RAISING				
Develop Fundraising Plans	Board	Board Leads	<i>Shared, Staff Leads</i>	
Implement Annual Fund	Board	<i>Often Shared</i>	<i>Staff Leads</i>	
Cultivate and Ask Major Donors	Board	Board Leads	<i>Staff Organizes</i>	
Raising visibility in the community	Board	Board Leads	<i>Staff Organizes</i>	
Researching and writing grants	Board	Board Leads	<i>Staff Leads</i>	
FINANCE				
Form a Finance/Audit Committee Determine whether an audit is required, select auditor, and receive audit report. Ensure appropriate internal controls	Board	Board Leads	Board Leads	
Ensure payment of bills and payroll Ensure routine expenditures are within budget File required Gov't forms	Board	<i>Staff Leads</i>	<i>Staff Leads</i>	
Create big-picture budget goals and parameters Assemble the proposed annual budget for approval	Board	Board Leads	<i>Shared, Staff Leads</i>	
Review/Authorize expenditures beyond budget	Board	Board Leads	Board Leads	
RISK MANAGEMENT				
Assess potential risks, implement strategies to reduce liability	Board	Board Leads	<i>Shared, Staff Leads</i>	
Obtain appropriate insurance and maintain coverage	Board	<i>Staff Leads</i>	<i>Staff Leads</i>	

Exercise Questions

- You have a new idea for raising money, what do you do with it?
- How and when does the annual budget process begin? Who assembles the final budget? Who approves the final budget?
- A member of the community comes to you with a complaint about the services they or a friend received from your organization. What do you do?
- How and when are the goals and expectations of the Executive Director established? When is she/he evaluated and by whom?
- How does the Board show its support and appreciation for the Exec Dir?
- A staff member (not the E. D.) comes to you, a board member, with a problem about the way the organization is operating. What do you do?