Advisory Board Handbook

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"One of the keys to success for any community initiative is strong leadership at the helm. The people who serve as project advisors should be business and community leaders, clients from the community served by the project and professionals in areas related to the project who care about the effort and will devote time to helping achieve project goals. Community Partners strongly encourages project leaders to select advisors with expertise in strategic planning, program development, service delivery, fundraising, staffing, community organizing, membership, and leadership development, and financial/organizational management."

- Community Partners

INTRODUCTION

Developing an effective Advisory Board is a critical step in the formation of a viable nonprofit organization that will be successful in meeting a particular need in the community. That is why Community Partners requires that each project have an Advisory Board and provides training and technical assistance to help create one.

Why is an Advisory Board Important?

A nonprofit organization's mission can only be accomplished with the involvement of individuals with different talents and expertise. Members of your Advisory Board augment and complement your own skills, strengthening the expertise of your organization. Your Board will add to the stability, development, reputation and the ability for your project to succeed.

The assistance that is provided to your project by properly using your Advisory Board will be great. Board members should make themselves available to staff to participate in a variety of fundraising and planning activities; offer advice and their assistance outside Board meetings; and make themselves available throughout the year as volunteer advisors and workers.

By seeking and having new Advisory Board members, energy and ideas will constantly be flowing. Besides setting policies and making critical decisions, your Board should be used as a means to channel these new energies. A vision can begin with just one person, but it takes many individuals to turn the initial vision into reality.

Community PARTNERS

Overview of Two Primary Types of Nonprofit Boards

In nonprofit organizations, there are two primary types of Boards: Governing Board and an Advisory Board.

All nonprofit organizations when they incorporate must have a Governing Board made-up of volunteers to be legally responsible for the organization and accountable for the organization. As a Community Partners project, the Board of Directors of Community Partners fills this role.

Then, there are Advisory Boards. These Boards can have many different responsibilities depending on the organization, since the governing Board of Directors delegates them. The Board of Directors can never delegate the legal responsible for oversight of the organization to an Advisory Board.

The Board of Directors of Community Partners has delegated to Project Advisory Boards the responsibilities for conducting the program, promoting the program, developing the human and financial resources to support the program and providing accountability to Community Partners. From the perspective of Community Partners, the responsibility is more than just acting as advisors to the founder of the project.

On page four of this packet, you will find the Responsibilities of a Board of Directors, a governance Board. The following page lists and example of the Responsibilities of an Advisory Board of Community Partners. Note that major responsibilities such as planning and development, resources development, community relations and Board development are included in the responsibilities of a Community Partners' Advisory Board. The Board of Directors of Community Partners assumes the responsibility for the legal and financial components for all project operations and has delegated the other responsibilities to the Advisory Board.

The size of any of the types of Board is typically between 12-18 members. However, for our Advisory Boards we have found that a Board of between 6-8 members is ideal for a developing organization. Typically, a project will begin quite small and add new members as needs and individuals are identified.

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Primary Types of Boards in Nonprofits

Governing Board

Legally responsible and totally accountable for all the activities of a nonprofit 501(c) (3) organization, particularly in the areas of:

- ☐ Policy Administration
- ☐ Finance
- ☐ Public and Community Relations
- ☐ Human Resources
- ☐ Evaluation

Advisory Board

Can have many different functions and responsibilities delegated to it by the Board of directors of the organization, but it is not legally responsible for the oversight of the organization.

- ☐ Can be positioned anywhere in the organization as long as it is Formally attached to some "proper" organizational element.
- ☐ Optional
- ☐ Has only as much authority as the legitimate organization chooses to grant

Responsibilities of the Board of Directors

Purpose:
To determine policies for the conduct of the organization, to raise funds to finance the organization and its programs, to oversee the financial management, to be accountable for the organization to the community, and to monitor and evaluate organizational performance.

Key Responsibilities:

1. Planning and Development
   - Sets and reviews the organization's mission, philosophy and goals;
   - Plans for the organization's future on long and short term basis;
   - Determines which services/programs organization will provide;
   - Evaluates organization's programs and operations on regular basis.

2. Resource Development
   - Assures that adequate financial resources are available to meet organizational needs which have been identified and agreed upon;
   - Assures that fundraising serves the mission of the organization;
   - Solicits funds from individuals, businesses, foundations and government.

3. Financial Management
   - Ensures that resource allocation is based on clear programmatic goals;
   - Ensures financial accountability of the organization by overseeing process of budget development, approval and review, and monitoring financial activities on an on-going basis;
   - Manages and maintains the organization's properties or investments.

4. Community Relations
   - Ensures that the organization appropriately serves the community and client needs;
   - Public relations with the community through individual Board members acting as emissaries of the organization in the community;
   - Determines occasions for cooperative action with coalitions and other organizations.

5. Legal
   - Exercises fiduciary role to ensure that the organization is properly managed;
   - Ensures that all governmental requirements for nonprofit corporate status are performed;
   - Maintains minutes of Board meetings, attendance and all other legal documents that may be required.

6. Board Development
   - Recruits new Board members; orients them; evaluates existing Board members.
   - Elects Officers

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Community PARTNERS

Community Partners Advisory Board Responsibilities

Purpose:

To determine policies for the conduct of the organization, to oversee the implementation of its programs, to raise funds to finance the organization and its programs, and to monitor and evaluate organizational performance.

Key Responsibilities:

1. Planning and Development
   • Sets and reviews the organization's mission, philosophy and goals;
   • Plans for the organization's future on long and short term basis;
   • Determines which services/programs organization will provide and how to provide them;
   • Evaluates organization's programs and operations on regular basis.

2. Resource Development
   • Assures that adequate financial resources are available to meet organizational needs which have been identified and agreed upon;
   • Assures that fundraising serves mission of the organization;
   • Solicits funds from individuals, businesses, foundations and government.

3. Community Relations
   • Ensures that the organization appropriately serves the community and client needs;
   • Public relations with the community through individual Board members acting as emissaries of the organization in the community;
   • Determines occasions for cooperative action with coalitions and other organizations.

4. Advisory Board Development
   • Recruits new Board members; orients them; evaluates existing Board members.
   • Elects officers

5. Financial Oversight
   • Ensures that the resource allocation is based on clear programmatic goals;
   • Ensures financial accountability of the organization by overseeing process of budget development, approval and review and monitoring financial activities on an on-going basis;

Community PARTNERS

What Advisory Board Members Bring to an Organization

- Expertise in a variety of technical areas

- The sanction of the various external publics

- Knowledge the community

- Continuity of policy and program

- Ability to be a spokesperson

- Influence to attract financial resources, human resources and public resources

- An objective point of view of operations; the capacity for critical review

- Ability to affect change in the organization

- Collective wisdom

Community Partners Advisory Board Member Position Description Sample

I.   **Purpose**

The Advisory Board is responsible for the conduct of the organization including raising funds to finance the organization and its programs, overseeing the implementation of the programs and developing relations with the community.

II.   **Key Responsibilities**

1. Planning and Development
    - Sets and reviews the organization's mission, philosophy and goals;
    - Plans for the organization's future on long and short term basis;
    - Determines which services/programs the organization will provide;
    - Evaluates the organization's programs and operations on regular basis.

2. Resource Development
    - Assures that adequate financial resources are available to meet the organizational needs which have been identified and agreed upon;
    - Assures that fundraising serves the mission of the organization;
    - Solicits funds from individuals, businesses, foundations and government.

3. Community Relations
    - Ensures that the organization appropriately serves the community and client needs;
    - Strengthens and maintains public relations within the community through individual Board members acting as emissaries of the organization;
    - Determines occasions for cooperative action with coalitions and other organizations.

4. Advisory Board Development
    - Recruits new Board members; orients them; evaluates existing Board members.

III.   **Requirements**:
    - An interest in and commitment to the purpose of the organization;
    - A willingness to share expertise and participate on the Board, a committee, and other organizational activities or events;
    - Contribution to the financial stability of the organization;
    - A willingness to represent and serve as a spokesperson for the organization to the community.

IV.   **Term of Office**   (number of years)

V.   **Meeting schedule, times, dates and locations**

Recruitment

"To help your nonprofit organization advance and grow, it is critical to develop a strong, effective and productive Board. Such a Board is potentially the organization's most important instrument for helping the organization advance and grow."(Nelson, 1991)

Although most of the guides on recruitment relate to a governing Board, in the case of Project Advisory Boards, it is as crucial to be thoughtful and targeted in selecting the membership and the same methods apply.

Keep in mind that as the project/organization moves through the organizational developmental life cycles, the composition of the Board will need to be adapted to meet the new situation.

The Recruitment Process

Who

Who will be responsible for the identification, cultivation and recruitment of new Advisory Board members?

Nominating Committees of 5-6 people usually exist when Boards reach 15-20 members. Prior to Advisory Boards reaching this proportion, it is suggested that the whole Advisory Board be involved in the nomination process with one or two people monitoring the steps. Determine the way that works best for your project, making sure that everyone is clear on their responsibilities.

What - The Recruitment Plan

Develop a simple one-page recruitment plan, which has the activities involved, people who will be responsible and the deadline dates. Remember, everyone in the organization is responsible for identifying and cultivating people for Board membership. The following steps should be included in the plan.

Step One - Determine Board's membership needs

Look at who is currently on the Board and determine what the gaps are.

- What representation or expertise do you need on the Board?

- What are the short and long-range goals of the organization that may require additional or different representation/expertise on the Board?

- What diversity is needed: age, gender, ethnicity, geography, physically challenged, etc.

- What characteristics are needed: interest in mission, leadership ability, willingness to give time, ability to contribute financially, ability to solicit funds, community power and influence, networking capabilities. Other characteristics that may be important to your Board are:
    - People who will work;
    - Well-known people who may lend only their names;

Advisory Board Handbook   *Community* **PARTNERS**

- People who are "on the way up" in the community, but not already over committed
- Well-positioned community leaders who will contribute "time, talent and treasure," or "work, wealth, and wisdom;"
- Leaders who can and will "give and get."

- How many new Board members are needed? Who will be rotating off the Board in the coming year and how much do you want to grow the Board?

  Something to consider:

  Terms: Most projects do not have term limits for Board membership. Most established organizations do and find them very helpful. Typical terms are three years with the membership staggered so only 1/3 of the Board is rotating off at any one time. Many organizations allow two, 3-year terms for six consecutive years. Some organizations allow the member to return after one year of being off the Board.

  Grid: There is a sample of a Grid used for determining the characteristics of the current membership and can be used in analyzing the prospective Board members. Many organizations use a software spreadsheet program and determine what characteristics are important for that particular Board at its stage of development.

Step 2 - Develop recruitment materials

This does not need to be fancy. It does need to be done nicely - no typos, clearly written.

- Description of organization: mission statement, vision, strategic plan, funding sources, financial information;

- Job Description: purpose of the Board; responsibilities of a Board member, meeting times, and tenure. Volunteers must know exactly what is expected of them;

- Any selected news articles; copy of newsletter, if you have one; programs from special events; photographs; list of contributors;

- Brochure, if you have one;

- List of current Board members.

Step 3 - Identify a list of potential Board members

This list should cover the needs of your nonprofit for the next several years. Put in priority order those you wish to cultivate. Update as necessary.

Methods to generate names:

- Individual Brainstorming Exercise

  At a Board meeting on a piece of paper have each Board member draw a small circle with them in the middle. Then from the central circle draw a spoke with a circle and in the circle write the name of each organization, foundation, church, professional group, neighborhood, nonprofit, school, or business that they are associated with. Then from each of these circles draw spokes with the names of people who might be good potential Board members.

  Combine the names generated by each Board member.

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- Ask knowledgeable people from different backgrounds and experiences (including Board members of other nonprofits) for suggestions and information about potential Board members.

- Read local newspapers and magazines or programs at special events for the names of people who are making things happen in your community.

- Overlooked sources
    - Graduates from leadership training programs such as Coro Southern California's Fellows Program here in Los Angeles or Leadership Southern California, or the Los Angeles Junior Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Program, or United Way of Greater Los Angeles -Kellogg Training Service Leadership Program;

    - Professional organizations;

    - Asking the Community Affairs Department at large corporations if they have volunteer programs which might include placing middle-level or upper-level employees on the Boards of small nonprofit organizations;

    - Junior Leagues;

    - Some universities are actively placing their educators and staff with nonprofit organizations in order to have a community presence.

- Board members fill out Prospective Board Member Form for each prospect

Step 4 - Cultivate the people on the list of prospective Board members.

"Cultivate" is a term used to refer to the process of helping a prospective Board member learn more about and become involved in the organization through informing, educating, entertaining, and providing opportunities to build relationships. At this time, it is important to determine the needs and expectations that the prospect has for their volunteer involvement.

- Establish what the priorities are for the coming year;

- Develop a cultivation strategy for each person to be recruited;

- Determine whom the best person to begin the cultivation process is and who needs to be brought in as the process continues.

Step 5 - Recruitment

- In the recruitment meeting (preferably at lunch, breakfast or dinner), explain that the organization would like the individual to consider having his or her name placed in nomination to be a Board member. Acknowledge that the Board makes the final decision based on perceived needs of diverse qualifications and skills required by the Board at that time. Hurt feelings can occur if the Board rejects the prospective Board member, so before this step there should be some surety that the Board will approve the individual.

- For a Community Partners' Project Advisory Board with limited resources, it may be better to have a less formal process where the Board agrees to approve the top five prospects. At

the recruitment meeting, the individual can be asked to be on the Board and know that they have already been approved for membership.

Step 6 - Finally, welcome new Board members ideally at a Board orientation meeting and, provide any additional information, which has not already been given in the recruitment process, and involve them as soon as possible.

Sample email to start the conversation:

Dear John,

We have missed your presence at After School Wonders. I am starting my second year as After School Wonders Board President, and this year holds a lot of potential for positive change, exploring new opportunities and strategies to better serve our community. One of those opportunities is to expand and strengthen our advisory board.

James Wilcox, the executive director, and I met last week and we agreed enthusiastically that you would be a wonderful addition to our Board. You were such an asset to the organization. Your experience in the field, your education and your prior volunteer experience with After School Wonders would be invaluable in the important conversations to come. I'm excited to engage the board in these big picture issues and your voice could make a huge difference.

I would love to get together with you to discuss the possibilities. Are you available in the next couple of weeks to meet up with us, maybe for lunch or after work, to discuss this further?

LinkedIn Sample Language

Sample InMail:

- "I am writing to see if you're open to a conversation about joining the advisory board of a local after school tutoring program called After School Wonders. From LinkedIn, I see that we both know John Jay and Kelly Shin, and that you have years of experience on [topic, job] and an interest in [education in underserved communities.] Let me know if you have 15 minutes for a chat."

Sample Introduction

- "Hi John, I hope you're doing well. I want to introduce you to Lupe Solorio, the executive director of After School Wonders, a great tutoring program that I've worked with for the past 4 years. They're currently recruiting 2 people to join their board. Given your experience in education and fundraising, I think you'd be a great fit. I encourage you to connect with Lupe and explore the possibilities!"

List of Characteristics for Potential Advisory Board Members Sample

Expertise/Professional Skills

Areas of expertise/professional skills, which the Board needs at this particular time in its organizational life cycle:
- Business/corporate
- Finance
- Government
- Legal
- Representation of clients served by the nonprofit
- People recognized as experts in the organization's field of service

Diversity
- Age
- Gender
- Race/Ethnic background
- Geographical location
- Disability
- Sexual orientation

Financial Position
- Self-employed
- Salaried
- Philanthropic reputation
- Connections to corporate, foundation or government funding

Personal Characteristics
- Interest in mission
- Leadership ability
- Willingness to give time
- Ability to contribute financially
- Ability to solicit funds
- Community power and/or influence
- Networking capabilities

Other characteristics that may be important to your Board are
- People who will work
- Well-known people who may lend only their names
- People who are "on the way up" in the community, but who are not already over committed;
- Well-positioned community leaders who will contribute "time, talent and treasure," or "work, wealth, and wisdom;"
- Leaders who can and will "give and get."

Prospective Board Member Referral Form - Confidential

Date: _____

Your Name: _____

Telephone: Day (_____) _____ Evening (_____) _____

FAX: (_____) _____ E-mail: _____

Name of Prospective Board Member: _____

Title: _____ Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____State: _____Zip Code: _____

Telephone: Day (_____) _____ Evening (_____) _____

FAX: (_____) _____ E-mail: _____

Please provide the following information about this individual.

Professional Skills: _____

_____

Type of business: _____

_____

Interest in our organization: _____

_____

Special Interests: _____

_____

Education: _____

Other affiliations with individuals, corporations and foundations: _____

_____

Other Board experience: _____

_____

Known levels of giving: _____

Personal characteristics and skills: _____

Please include the reasons why you think this person would be a good Board member of our organization:

_____

_____

_____

_____

People whom you suggest might meet, cultivate and recruit this prospective Board member and their relationship to the candidate:

_____

_____

Adapted from Nelson, 1991

[Your Project]
Contact Information

Advisory Board Member Application

Thank you very much for your interest in serving on [project's] Advisory Board.

Date _____

Name _____ First

        MI   Last

Primary Contact

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Employer Name: _____

Your title: _____

Please tell us why you are interested in joining [project's] advisory board?

_____

_____

_____

_____

How do you feel (project) would benefit from your involvement on the Board?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Are you currently serving on a nonprofit board? **Yes | No**

If yes:

_____

Organization   Role/Title   Dates of Service

Have you served on a nonprofit board in the past? **Yes | No**

If yes:

_____

Organization   Role/Title   Dates of Service

_____

Organization   Role/Title   Dates of Service

_____

Organization   Role/Title   Dates of Service

Please list any groups, organizations or businesses that you could serve as a liaison to on behalf of **(name of org).**

_____

_____

_____

_____

Expertise/Skills/Interest Areas (Please circle all that apply)

Belief in/Support of Mission	Industry Knowledge
Board of Director Experience	Leadership
CEO Succession Planning	Legal
Community Affiliation/Access	Lobbying
Compensation	Marketing/PR
Financial	Organizational Management
Fundraising	Risk Management
Grant Writing	Strategic Planning
Human Resources	Technology/IT
	Other _____
	Other _____

[Insert organization Logo]

Advisory Board Member Contract

[NAME OF ORGANIZATION]
DATE

I, _____ agree to support and uphold the mission of [organization name].

The mission of the *[organization]* is to *[insert mission]*

By agreeing to serve on the Advisory Board, I am committing to:

- Respect, uphold and model the organization's By-laws, process, values, and commitments

- Attend meetings of the Advisory Board regularly per stipulations of the organizational By-laws. When I am unable to attend, I will notify the Executive Director in advance

- Serve on at least one committee per year. I understand that this will require meeting attendance and active participation

- Participate in fund raising and public relations activities annually. I will make a specific commitment at the start of each fiscal year and will follow through on them throughout the year

- Make an annual personal financial gift to [organization] of no less than $XXX00 *($XXX in cash and the balance in in-kind or assistance in raising the additional funds)*. I will complete my pledge payments before June 30th, the end of the fiscal year

- Attend the annual Board Retreat, where training, guidance and planning for the year will take place

_____   _____

Signature, Advisory Board Member   Date

_____   _____

Signature, Chair of the Advisory Board   Date

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Maintaining Your Advisory Board

Once you have identified and recruited your Advisory Board members, the real work begins. As stated before, this body has tremendous potential to help your project realize its goals. Unfortunately, we have heard all too often the complaint, "My Advisory Board members just don't help with anything." While many reasons for indifference on behalf of Board members may exist, some helpful hints may assist you to manage potential challenges.

Build good relationships

Practice Active Listening

Practically everything we do as social entrepreneurs depends on building good, solid relationships. Project leaders are eager to discover the talents that Board members will bring to their organization. It is important not to forget that Board members have their own interests as well. Listen carefully to their issues. Identify not only what they will be bringing to your organization, but also what you will be giving to them. Listen for opportunities to engage the Board member in a way that might deepen his participation on your Board

Maintain Consistent Communication

As a volunteer it is critical that all Board members feel that they are always kept "in the loop" of information. In addition to timely receipt of meeting notices, agendas and minutes, a friendly update conversation goes a long way in keeping the Board member excited about your project. Sure, it makes more work for the project leader, but a well-informed group feels invested and is more likely to support your project even when times get tough. Remember to always be as professional as possible in following up with all of your communication. If Board members expect a phone call or a letter, do not forget!

Build Relationships among the Board

Board members have committed to your organization because they see the need for your project and the potential benefit it will have in the community. While motivated by this higher philanthropic goal, Board members also have a need to develop good relationships among their peer group, the Board. Perhaps an unarticulated motive for a Board member to join your organization was his desire to develop relationships with other more "powerful" members on your Board. Make sure to create opportunities for Board members to socialize and network.

Manage Expectations

Nothing is quite as defeating as to assume all will be well and discover that a disaster is in the making. From the onset of formalizing your Advisory Board it is critical to have your Board members understand their role and, in turn, for them to understand what they can expect from you as the project leader. Many projects have had great success by providing their new Board members with a role description *and* a simple letter of commitment to be signed by the Board member. Do not assume that after one or two meetings your Board members will be up to speed with your project. New member orientation meetings are a straightforward strategy that ensures your Advisory Board members will all be on the same page. It also helps them to develop their relationships with each other.

Advisory Board Member Orientation Manual: Recommended Documents

Purpose:

- To provide new advisory Board members with information about the organization and their roles and responsibilities on the Board.

Suggested Items:

- Ten Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards
- Advisory Board Member Orientation Manual
- Advisory Board Handbook
- Advisory Board Member Roles & Responsibilities
- Advisory Board Overview Page
- Advisory Board Officer Roles and Responsibilities
- Advisory Board Committees and Key Responsibilities
- Advisory Board Member Contract
- Advisory Board Recruitment
- Advisory Board Member Directory and Biographies
- Overview of Community Partners
- Overview of Fiscal Sponsorship Program
- Organization Mission and Vision Statement
- Organization Promotional Materials (Brochures, Flyers, etc.)
- Organization Program Descriptions
- Organization Budget
- Organization Staff Listing
- Organization Annual Calendar

[Insert organization logo]

Advisory Board Officer Roles and Responsibilities

CHAIR

The Chair of [*organization name*]'s Board is the chief volunteer officer

- Works in partnership with the Executive Director in achieving the mission
- Chairs the Executive Committee
- Develops Board and Executive Committee agendas in conjunction with the Executive Director
- Appoints in conjunction with the Executive Director, the Vice Chair and with the approval of the Executive Committee, the chairs of all committees
- Plays a leading and visible role in fund development activities
- May serve ex-officio on all committees and task groups, but is not required to attend meetings
- Represents the organization at internal and external events
- Serves a two year term

VICE CHAIR

The Vice Chair is the co-chief volunteer officer

- Presides over Board and the Executive Committee in absence of the Chair
- Works in partnership with the Executive Director in achieving the mission
- Develops Board and Executive Committee agendas in conjunction with Chair
- Advises on the appointment of committee chairs
- Plays a leading and visible role in fund development activities
- Coordinates the work of the committees
- Serves on committees as needed
- Represents the organization at internal and external events
- Serves a two year term

SECRETARY & COMMUNICATIONS CHAIR

- Ensures proper notification is given of Board meetings
- Chairs the Marketing Committee
- Is responsible for the recording, accuracy, availability and distribution of Board meeting minutes
- Proposes policies and practices
- Maintains Board member term limit records
- Represents the organization at internal and external events in absence of Chair or Vice Chair
- Presides over Board meetings in the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair
- Serves a two year term

TREASURER

- Chairs the Finance Committee

- Works in conjunction with the Finance Committee and Executive Director to present the budget
- Represents the organization at internal and external events in absence of Chair or Vice Chair
- Assumes other responsibilities as needed
- Serves a two year term

DEVELOPMENT CHAIR

- Chairs the Development Committee
- Drives fundraising, "friend-raising" and non-financial, in kind giving to the organization
- Works with the Marketing Committee to coordinate marketing and development efforts
- Works with the Finance Committee & Strategic Planning Committee to create a Fundraising Strategy & Plan reflective of the organization's strategic and programmatic goals
- Works with the Executive Director, and fiscal sponsor to ensure that all fundraising is done within fiscal sponsor guidelines
- Works closely with the Executive Director to support development and relationship-building efforts
- Oversee the planning and execution of all fundraising events
- Maintains records on Board member contributions
- Serves a two year term

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- Guides the mission and vision of the organization
- Liaisons with the Board to set the creative goals and tone of the organization
- Is responsible for the programming of the organization
- Adheres to budgetary constraints and programmatic goals
- Oversees management of staff and operations
- Does not have a term limit

[Insert organization logo]

Advisory Board Committees and Key Responsibilities

Executive Committee

- Is empowered to act between Board meetings to set the Board agenda
- Can be delegated with specific authority to act in particular areas on behalf of the Board
- Is made up of the Board officers, and standing and organization committee chairs

Development Committee

- Sets fundraising strategies to meet organizational needs that have been identified and agreed upon
- Assures that fundraising serves the mission of the organization
- Solicits donations from individuals, foundations and government entities
- Oversees planning & execution of fundraising events
- Oversees all special projects that raise funds

Finance Committee

- Drafts annual budget, ensuring that resource allocation is aligned with strategic plan (organization's mission, vision, programmatic goals, and short and long-term goals), and review and approval process
- Ensures financial accountability of the organization by monitoring financial activities on an on-going basis
- Responsible for meeting financial compliance requirements of funding sources
- Liaisons with fiscal sponsor with respect to financials

Marketing Committee

- Guides Board members to be ambassadors for the organization
- Governs organization's brand identity, including adherence to logo, style guide and brand principles
- Develops key messaging about organization to be used in all public relations, marketing, web site, media, and press materials

Board Development and Nomination Committee

- Uses civic reach to recruit and orient new Board members
- Evaluates existing Board members
- Ensures Board roles and responsibilities are fulfilled and oversees updates to Board manual

Community Relations Committee

- Ensures that [*organization*] is serving the community
- Develops relationships with patrons, stakeholders, funders, and the community at large
- Liaisons with staff to best engage volunteers in community activities

Community Partners Fiscal Sponsorship

Through our Fiscal Sponsorship program, Community Partners provides infrastructure, experienced counsel, and civic reach to help community leaders cultivate visionary ideas, build effective programs, and succeed as agents of change.

Infrastructure*:* Our operational and financial back-office services allow nonprofit initiatives to benefit from our economies of scale and free project leaders to advance their ideas and build their programs.

Counsel*:* We work alongside project leaders as a coach and advisor, providing perspective on challenges, offering technical assistance, and advising on resource development strategies.

Civic Reach*:* Through our extensive network of relationships across the civic landscape, we work with project leaders to identify valuable positioning and networking opportunities.

A Closer Look

Our standard fiscal sponsorship services include:

- Charitable tax-exempt status as a project of Community Partners
- Financial and accounting services
- HR and payroll services
- Insurance, tax, audit and other services to ensure projects are in compliance with local, state, and federal regulations

For complex projects run by established leaders, we provide high-level support including:

- Strategic consulting
- Introductions to critical opportunities and people

For emerging projects, we provide an incubator for new ideas through:

- Experienced counsel
- One-on-one coaching and skills development
- Training and peer-learning opportunities
- Identification of developmental and networking opportunities

Conduct Effective Meetings

As busy people, Advisory Board Members need to feel that their time is being used wisely. A meeting that has a clear agenda with specific identifiable outcomes will win you praise and respect from your Board members. The following pages discuss several important considerations in planning and executing your Advisory Board meetings.

Purpose of Meetings

There are many purposes for holding a meeting and some meetings may have more than one purpose. Below is a list of some of the most common ones:

- To exchange information;

- To resolve a conflict;

- To provide an opportunity to collaborate, co-ordinate and communicate;

- To develop strategic plans;

- To improve on-going work;

- To inspire and motivate (an example is an organization's annual meeting);

- To work on group problems;

- To make plans and set goals;

- To make group decisions.

Logistics of Meetings

If you take a minute to think about the worst meeting you have ever attended, you will probably find that many of the following characteristics were not considered in the planning process.

People

All meetings involve people whether there are only three people meeting or thousands. It is important to look at the composition of the group and the differences among the participants. In addition to the obvious differences, such as gender, age, ethnicity, there are also concerns such as who is highly motivated or coming as a matter of duty, the degree of involvement, and what the problems might be in bringing this group together.

Purpose

The purpose of the meeting must be considered in the planning of it.

Atmosphere, Climate

What kind of atmosphere needs to be created to facilitate a productive meeting? The atmosphere is affected by; physical surroundings, arrangements such as refreshments, the temperature of the room, patterns of greeting, seating and meeting people, and the patterns of involving people during the meeting.

Place and Space

It is important to consider the following characteristics:
- Size
- Access
- Parking
- Room set-up
- Equipment
- Lighting
- Access to restroom facilities
- Furniture - particularly for a meeting longer than an hour and a half, is it comfortable.
- Temperature
- How people feel about the space - is it in a part of town that is not easily accessible to everyone?

Time

- Length

  How much time is needed to complete the purpose of the meeting?
- When should a meeting be held? Time of day is an important consideration.

- It is important to consider how long it takes the participants to travel to and from the meeting and what time of day will they be making the commute.

Materials

- Anticipate whatever materials the participants will need to have in advance of the meeting and during the meeting to make the meeting effective and not stalled because something is missing.

- Include mailing out agendas and minutes one week prior to the meeting.

Five Ingredients of an Effective Meeting
(Adapted from Doyle, Michael and Straus, David *How to Make Meetings Work*. New York: The Berkeley Publishing Group 1993.*)*

1. There must be a common focus on content.

   This is the "what". What is the purpose of the meeting? There must be outcomes.

2. There must be a common focus on process.

   Every meeting of more than four or five people needs a leader who can take charge of getting through the agenda and facilitating the participation of everyone and being the timekeeper. Process control can result in content control because the leader/facilitator can determine largely what is going to happen. The leader/facilitator must maintain a neutral, objective attitude During the meeting.

3. Someone must be responsible for maintaining an open and balanced conversational flow.

   Think of a traffic cop who manages how the traffic flows and ensures that everyone has a turn. The same is true of the leader of a meeting whose responsibility it is to cut off long-winded individuals and solicit the input of other participants.

4. Someone must be responsible for protecting individuals from personal attack.

   Participants will only speak-up if they feel that they are in a safe environment. It benefits the group thinking and decision-making process if divergent views are expressed.

5. In general, for the duration of the meeting everyone's role and responsibility must be clearly defined and agreed upon.

   Effective groups will often spend a few minutes at the beginning of the meeting determining what the expectations are of each group member. If the group is going to be meeting over a period this is particularly important. Examples of expectations: Everyone will arrive on time; the meeting will end on time; materials will be mailed out one week in advance of the meeting; participants will come prepared for the meeting.

Collective Wisdom for Effective Meetings

- Plan the meeting in advance - the who, what, when, where, how.

- Agenda

    - Prepare an agenda and send out the agenda in advance;
    - Indicate the time allotted for each item on the agenda, giving more time to the more important items;
    - Put the most important matters at the beginning of the agenda;
    - Review the open items or actions which were not completed by the last meeting or were to be completed by this meeting, as the first item of the agenda, ensuring that things do not fall between the cracks;
    - Reports should be at the end of the meeting;
    - Approval of the minutes are near the end of the meeting;
    - Always include next steps;
    - Set-up a schedule for taking the minutes and note on the agenda whose responsibility it is, particularly if the responsibility rotates;
    - At the current meeting, develop a preliminary agenda for the next meeting;
    - Meeting evaluation is the very last item on the agenda and should be done at each meeting.

- Get the minutes of the meeting to everyone within days of the meeting with the agenda for the next meeting. Minutes will have a record of who is suppose to do what before the next meeting and people need to see again, what they committed to do.

- The leader comes early and makes sure the meeting room is set-up properly.

- Start meetings on time even if most the people are not there. Next time they will be on time.

- End meetings on time, even if the agenda has not been completed. If the meeting is at a critical point, the leader may ask the group for an extension but this is not to become a common practice.

- Meeting schedule is set in advance over the time that the group will be meeting with the times and locations. Meetings should NOT be longer than 2 hours and typically, an hour and a half is the best.

- Participants must RSVP if they CANNOT attend, otherwise everyone is expected to attend. Always call to confirm attendance of those who have not responded.

- If matters not on the agenda are raised, refer them to committee for recommendations unless the new business is urgent.

[Insert organization logo]

Advisory Board Meeting Agenda

[*Insert Organization Name*]
Advisory Board Meeting Agenda
[*Insert date*]
[*Insert time*]

Objectives:
* Approve action plan for spring event
* Set next steps for creation of program plan
* Committee chairs report on progress/ upcoming events

In planning any agenda, it is important to determine what you would like to accomplish at the meeting. Create two to three objectives to direct the flow of the meeting.

	Agenda/Item	Time	Speaker
I.	Welcome/Check-In	6:00 - 6:05	Board Chair
II.	Approval of Minutes	6:05 – 6:10	Secretary
III.	Report on Finances	6:10 – 6:20	Finance Chair
IV.	Action Items	6:20 – 7:10	Executive Director

This is the bulk of your meeting and should always be at the beginning of the agenda. Items requiring Board discussion and/ or approval are discussed here. For example, the first two objectives listed above would be appropriate agenda items. Be sure that if a planning item is discussed the next steps are clearly identified (who will do what and when).

V.	Reports	7:00 – 7:30	Committee Chairs

This section includes committee reports as well as program staff reports

* *Committee reports:*
    * *Development*
    * *Program*
    * *Membership*
* *Executive Director*

V.	Adjourn	7:30	Board Chair

Next meeting [*insert next meeting date, time, and location*]