



## **Role and Responsibilities of the Board of Directors**

The primary role of the Board of Directors shall be to lead the Association through proactive strategic planning and an effective decision making process. The board shall operate by delegating certain of its responsibilities to management and by reserving certain responsibilities to itself. Subject to the Articles and Bylaws of the organization, the board shall retain the responsibility of managing its own affairs, including determining its composition, nominating candidates for election to the board, and appointing committees.

In performing its overall responsibility of stewardship for the Association, the board shall have the following responsibilities:

### **1. Reaffirm the Mission, Vision and Values**

The mission statement should serve as a guide to organizational planning, board and staff decision making, volunteer initiatives, and setting priorities among competing demands for scarce resources. The board should assess program activities against the mission to ensure that the organization is not drifting away from its original purposes. The mission sets the stage for developing fundraising strategies and strategic planning as well as the board's other responsibilities.

### **2. Employ the Chief Executive Officer**

It is important for the board to clarify its own function as distinct from those of the chief executive and staff, including recognizing the chief executive's exclusive responsibility to select and supervise a management team without board interference. The board may offer advice and counsel to the chief executive in the execution of his/her duties.

### **3. Support the Chief Executive and assess his/her performance**

The chief executive needs consistent moral and substantive support from the board. The board should ensure that the CEO receives frequent and constructive feedback and is assisted when board members overstep or misunderstand their roles.

Annual goals and objectives that relate to the strategic plan should be mutually discussed and agreed upon and become the primary criteria for review.

### **4. Ensure effective organization planning**

The planning process enables the board and staff to translate the broad mission of the organization into objectives and goals that can be measured and accomplished. Board

members must be extensively involved in the strategic planning process if they are to help implement the plan's goals and objectives.

The board's committee structure offers helpful opportunities to engage board members in certain areas to be addressed in the plan. Committees may be either standing or ad hoc and provide the means for thorough dialogue on issues before the board along with recommendations for action.

## **5. Ensure adequate resources**

Providing adequate resources is first and foremost a board responsibility. Effective fundraising is one measure of the board's capabilities, commitment and influence. Every board member should inventory his or her connections with potentially helpful donors.

All board members should make an annual gift in line with their means. Their personal collective example is very important. Board members are better fund raisers when they know they have done their part.

## **6. Manage resources effectively**

An important part of serving the public trust is protecting accumulated assets and managing current income properly. Because Y's are granted tax-exempt status by provincial and federal agencies to fulfill public needs, the board's obligations go well beyond Y members and constituents. Helping to develop and approve the annual budget is probably one of the board's most significant policy decisions.

Board financial responsibilities include purchasing adequate liability insurance, monitoring the delegation of authority for financial decisions between board and staff, and overseeing investments. The board monitors the reserve funds and endowments and formulates investment policy and strategy. The board should seek outside investment advice when it is needed.

## **7. Determine, monitor and strengthen the Y's programs and services**

The board should determine whether current and proposed programs and services are consistent with the stated mission and purposes. Given limited resources, the board must decide among competing priorities.

## **8. Enhance the Y's public standing**

Board members serve not only as a link between the Y's staff or volunteers and its members and constituents, but also act as the Y's ambassadors, advocates and community representatives. Board members should be prepared to interpret the work of the Y and to tell the Y's story within their own particular spheres of influence.

The board's leadership should ensure that the board appropriately disciplines itself. No board member should represent himself or herself as speaking for the board or Y unless specifically authorized to do so.

## **9. Ensure legal and ethical integrity and maintain accountability**

The board is ultimately responsible for ensuring adherence to legal standards and ethical norms. By being diligent in its responsibilities, the board can protect the organizations from legal action, promote a safe and ethical working environment, and safeguard the Y's integrity in pursuit of its mission.

## **10. Recruit and orient new board members and assess board performance**

All boards have a responsibility to ensure that their makeup adequately reflects the communities that they serve. It is important, therefore, that the board pay attention to the issues of gender and ethnic diversity in the recruiting process.

Boards also have the responsibility to properly orient new board members and to periodically and comprehensively assess the board's effectiveness. There is a related responsibility to assess the performance of individual board members eligible for reelection or reappointment.

If you are interested in becoming a board member please complete the volunteer application form, attach your resume and submit to:

YMCA-YWCA of the Central Okanagan  
Association Services  
205-2000 Enterprise Way  
Kelowna, BC V1Y 9S9  
T: 250 860-9622  
F: 250 860-7918