



SUGGESTED CONTENTS FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS HANDBOOK

A. The Board

1. Board member names and contact information
2. Board member bios, using a standard format (not formal resumes)
3. Board member terms
4. Statement of board responsibilities
5. Board member individual responsibilities
6. Committee descriptions

B. Historical references for the organization

1. Brief written history and/or fact sheet
2. Articles of Incorporation
3. IRS determination letter
4. Listing of past board members

C. Bylaws

D. Strategic framework

1. Mission, vision, and values statements
2. Strategic framework or plan
3. Current annual operating plan
4. Programs list

E. Finance

1. Prior year's annual report
2. Prior year's audit report
3. Chart outlining financial growth (sales, memberships, programs, etc. for the past five to ten years)
4. Current annual budget
5. IRS Form 990
6. Banking resolutions
7. Policies related to investment, reserves, endowments, etc.
8. Risk management policies

F. Policies pertaining to the board

1. Policy on potential conflicts of interest
2. Insurance coverage
3. Legal liability policies
4. Travel/meeting expense reimbursements

5. Accreditation documents if applicable
6. Whistleblower policy
7. Others

G. Staff

1. The chief executive's job description
2. Staff listing (at least senior staff and those with whom the board might interact)
3. Organization/team chart

H. Resource development

1. Case statement
2. Current funder list
3. Sample grant proposal
4. Sponsorship policy

I. Other information

1. Annual calendar
2. Programs list
3. List of common acronyms and terms with explanations
4. Current brochures
5. Web site information

J. Procedures to update board handbook

It would be helpful to have this information available and regularly updated on a secure board page on the organization's Web site.

SOURCE:

Lahey, Berit M. (2007). *The Board Building Cycle: Nine Steps to Finding, Recruiting, and Engaging Nonprofit Board Members* (p. 33). Second edition. BoardSource.