

Board of Directors Job Description

United Way of Southeast Minnesota



UNITED WAY
Southeast Minnesota

Purpose

The Board of Directors provides strategic leadership and vision through the creation of the strategic plan and policies in which the President executes the strategic plan. The business of the corporation shall be monitored by the Board of Directors. The Board shall have the authority and responsibility to ensure that the purposes and goals of the Corporation are achieved.

Responsibilities of Board Members

1. Support the organization in developing resources necessary to fulfill its mission:
 - a. Support United Way of Southeast Minnesota by making an annual financial contribution within your ability, and when possible, at a defined leadership level.
 - b. Share your resources with the organization, including making connections with your networks to secure financial and other types of support.
 - c. Actively advocate for the organization within your circles of influence — personal, business, faith, civic, etc.
 - d. Participate in donor cultivation and stewardship activities—eg. attending donor meetings with staff, writing thank you notes, etc.
 - e. Promote and engage with the organization by attending organization events.

2. Meet the ethical and fiduciary duties of a Director:
 - a. Understand United Way of Southeast Minnesota’s mission, vision, and values and use them in decision making.
 - b. Understand and approve United Way of Southeast Minnesota policies.
 - c. Be fiscally responsible for the organization, monitoring compliance with United Way of Southeast Minnesota’s budget and financial policies.
 - d. Act with the care and loyalty required of board members, putting the interests of the organization first.
 - e. Maintain and promote high ethical standards, including good-faith board decision making, confidentiality, and avoiding any actual or perceived conflicts of interest.
 - f. Promise to preserve the investment of time and money made over years by all the donors and volunteers who created this organization and brought it to this point.

3. Prepare for and participate in board and committee activities:
 - a. Attend all regular and special board meetings and actively participate in proceedings.
 - b. Prepare for each board meeting by reviewing all materials in board agenda packet.
 - c. Contribute your experience and knowledge of the community to inform board decision-making.
 - d. Respond in a timely manner to requests for information required by policy or at the board’s direction.
 - e. Serve on and fulfill associated expectations on at least one designated board or staff committee throughout each year of board term.
 - f. Participate in new member orientation.

Time Commitment:

- The Board of Directors meets monthly on the 3rd Tuesday of each month from 11:30-1. Other meetings are occasionally scheduled as needed.
- Board members are expected to prepare for meetings by reviewing meeting materials in advance. Additional materials, surveys, or items requiring a response may be sent between meetings. Board members should expect to spend approximately 30 minutes each month reviewing and responding to materials independently. Committee assignments have additional requirements.
- Board members are expected to contribute their time to the organization by participating in a board committee, volunteering with UWSEMN programs or staff committees, assisting with donor

stewardship activities, and/or attending UWSEMN events throughout the year.

- Members are asked to serve a 3-year term and are eligible to serve 2 consecutive terms.

Staff Support

President, Vice President of Administration

Skills and Qualifications:

Strong candidates for the UWSEMN Board of Directors will:

- Live or work within the organization's service area.
- Possess credibility and influence within communities, sectors, or networks that contribute to the success of United Way of Southeast Minnesota and its mission.
- Be willing to advocate within their spheres of influence to increase support for United Way of Southeast Minnesota.
- Have vision and an appreciation for what is possible.
- Be flexible, with the courage to reconsider their own perspectives, to suspend judgment, to think and act in new ways.
- Be able and willing to share life experiences and knowledge with the organization to inform action.
- Seek to understand diverse experiences and viewpoints as a means of organizational learning and change.
- Take responsibility for creating a culture where people of different identities and experiences belong and can thrive.
- Demonstrate the strong listening, analytical, and communication skills necessary for prudent board decision making.

Governance Model - Executive Summary

Definition: Policy Governance®, an integrated board leadership paradigm created by Dr. John Carver, is a groundbreaking model of governance designed to empower boards of directors to fulfill their obligation of accountability for the organizations they govern. As a generic system, it is applicable to the governing body of any enterprise. The model enables the board to focus on the larger issues, to delegate with clarity, to control management's job without meddling, to rigorously evaluate the accomplishment of the organization; to truly lead its organization.

In contrast to the approaches typically used by boards, Policy Governance separates issues of organizational purpose (ENDS) from all other organizational issues (MEANS), placing primary importance on those Ends. Policy Governance boards demand accomplishment of purpose, and only limit the staff's available means to those which do not violate the board's pre-stated standards of prudence and ethics.

Within this model there are 4 policy types:

Governing Process: The Board will govern lawfully, observing the principles of policy governance. The Board will:

- focus on community vision rather than internal preoccupation
- encourage diverse viewpoints, lead strategically instead of concentrating on administrative details
- distinguish clearly between Board and President roles and responsibilities
- make collective rather than individual decisions
- look to the future rather than past or present
- proactively make decisions

Board-Management Delegation: The Board will observe policies that define the interactions and relationship between the Board of Directors and the United Way of Olmsted County Staff. The Board will:

- have authority only as a group
- be responsible for governance with a focus on strategic issues and policy development
- will connect with the organization only through the President
- define the values, mission, vision, and desired results and evaluate the President's performance based on those
- results

Executive Limitations: The Board will establish executive limitation policies for the President. The Board will:

- maintain control of internal operations for accountability purposes
- establish boundaries of prudence and ethics that allow the President to use all means that fall within those boundaries to obtain optimum performance
- establish the boundaries of acceptable actions, even when prohibited actions may be more effective
- allow the President approval for any staff decision or activity that does not violate a policy
- define policies at the most general inclusive level

Ends Policies:

- the intended and actual results in people's lives for which the organization exists
- the intended actual persons or populations (beneficiaries) who experience those results
- the cost of those results

(There are no activities or methods in the "ends" concepts.)

To read more about the Carver Governance Model, see UW Board Orientation Presentation and "Boards That Make a Difference", Carver, John.