



10 reasons to love high performing nonprofit boards

By Alyce Lee Stansbury

This description of nonprofits from the National Council of Nonprofits is one of my favorites: “Nonprofits are not just organizations; they are the face of our communities. They protect, feed, heal, shelter, educate, and nurture our bodies and spirits. Nonprofits give shape to our boldest dreams, highest ideals, and noblest causes and turn our beliefs into action.”

Here are 10 sweet reasons to love high performing nonprofit boards:

1. Take work seriously

They are led by volunteers who take board service seriously, arrive at meetings on time, and come prepared to discuss important issues. They do not want to listen to reports about things that have already happened, which is a waste of everyone's time.

2. Strategic plan

Adopt a strategic plan and use it to guide the board's work including meeting agendas, committee structure, and fundraising.

3. Self-assessment

Regularly evaluate their performance by conducting a board self-assessment and make it a priority to learn more about effective nonprofit governance.

4. Recruit with focus

Recruit new board members with intention and focus and adopt a list of board member expectations that includes attendance, committee service, personal giving, strategic planning, participation in fundraising to share with prospective members.

5. Executive Director evaluation

Conduct an annual evaluation of the Executive Director that includes a documented process for awarding raises or bonuses and investing in their professional growth.

6. Build relationships

Understand an important part of their job is building and deepening relationships between the nonprofit and donors, sponsors, members, volunteers, elected officials and other key stakeholders.

7. Donor stewardship

Take donor stewardship seriously and routinely write thank you notes, call donors to say thank you, and personally patronize the businesses who support the mission and fundraising events.

8. Promote mission

Recognize the importance of advocacy and promote the mission in the community on a year-round basis. This includes introducing new people to the organization, connecting the ED to people within their sphere of influence, and seeking out opportunities to tell more people about the organization and its important work.

9. Technology

Invest in technology and use data to inform decision making in all areas including programs, fundraising, finances, facilities, and strategic planning.

10. Term limits

Adopt and abide by term limits, recognize serving as board chair requires the highest level of commitment, a unique skill set, and should be carefully selected rather than falling to someone who missed the meeting or has simply been here the longest. High performing boards understand you have the board you cultivate.

<https://www.tallahassee.com/story/life/causes/2023/02/12/10-reasons-to-love-community-nonprofit-boards-notes-on-nonprofits/69892595007/>