

GOVERNANCE

Phase II: Stabilizing Governance



Activity 11: Position Descriptions for Elected Leaders

Goals

1. Create, update, or confirm position descriptions for elected leaders
2. Help elected leaders and community members understand the roles and responsibilities of each elected position
3. Facilitate succession planning

Prerequisites

None

Who Should Participate?

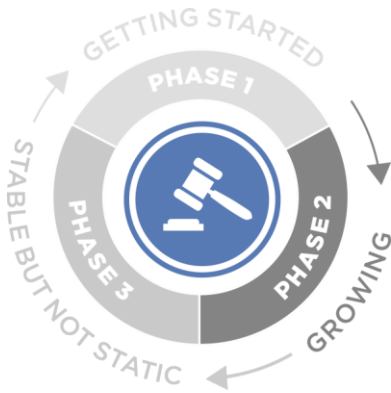
Current Governance participants

Length

90-120 minutes

Activity Instructions

1. Determine what positions are necessary as the program continues to mature.
 - a. Review the core decisions that the team has to continue to make
 - b. Review the current decision-making model
 - c. Determine if your program needs more or fewer elected leaders to be responsible for making those decisions
 - d. Roughly determine who will be responsible for what in order to avoid overlaps or gaps in functions
2. For new roles or existing roles that don't have position descriptions, create position responsibilities for elected leaders. Sample elements are included on pages 2-4.
3. For existing roles that already have position descriptions, review and revise position responsibilities for elected leaders as necessary. Make sure to have leaders in those roles weigh in on what they actually do, in addition to what is in the official description.
4. Add additional details to ensure program continuity such as:
 - a. Term length and limits
 - i. It may be best to have shorter, one-year terms given your community. Or it may be more helpful to have longer terms especially if there is more complexity in the role that people need time to master and become comfortable.
 - b. Required qualifications, if any.
 - i. Consider your goals. Do you want high level strategic thinkers with extensive financial experience? Do you want more tactical people or those with a specific skill set?
 - c. If this leader is not available, who can make decisions during an emergency?
 - d. Do you want to have "Chair Elect" or Vice Chairs that automatically ascend to become Chair? That can provide continuity or can limit options.



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Activity: Position Descriptions for Elected Leaders

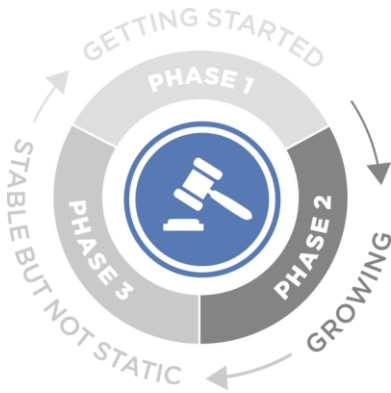
Sample Position Responsibilities for Elected Leaders

Note: The word Council can be swapped out for Advisory Group, Board, Steering Committee, Executive Committee, Leadership Circle, or other term used by your project or program. The word Committee can be swapped out for sub-Council, a specifically named Advisory Group (e.g. Technical Advisory Group), or other term used by your program.

Program Manager is used to denote the non-elected staff person who manages the day-to-day operation of the project or program; this person may also be called the Program Director, Product Owner, or Project Manager, or may not exist at all for your project or program.

Potential Council Chair Responsibilities

- Is a member of the Council
- Is a partner with the Program Manager in achieving the program’s mission
- Provides leadership to the Council of Directors, who sets policy and to whom the Program Manager is accountable
- Chairs meetings of the Council after developing the agenda with the Program Manager
- Encourages Council's role in strategic planning
- Appoints the chairpersons of committees, in consultation with other Council members
- Serves ex officio as a member of committees and attends their meetings when invited
- Discusses issues confronting the program with the Program Manager
- Helps guide and mediate Council actions with respect to program priorities and governance concerns
- Reviews with the Program Manager any issues of concern to the Council
- Monitors financial planning and financial reports
- Plays a leading role in fundraising activities
- Formally evaluates the performance of the Program Manager and informally evaluates the effectiveness of the Council members
- Evaluates annually the performance of the program in achieving its mission.
- Performs other responsibilities assigned by the Council



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Potential Vice Chair Responsibilities

This position is often the successor to the Chair position. In addition to the responsibilities outlined in the Committee Member job description, this position:

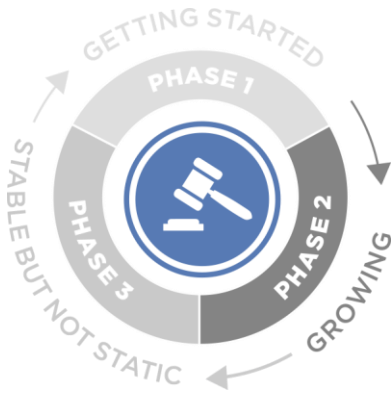
- Is a member of the Council
- Performs Chair responsibilities when the Chair cannot be available (see Chair Job Description)
- Reports to the Council's Chair
- Works closely with the Chair and other staff
- Participates closely with the Chair to develop and implement officer transition plans.
- Performs other responsibilities as assigned by the Council

Potential Council Secretary Responsibilities

- Is a member of the Council
- Maintains records of the Council and ensures effective management of program's records
- Manages minutes of Council meetings
- Ensures minutes are distributed to members shortly after each meeting
- Is sufficiently familiar with legal documents (articles, by-laws, IRS letters, etc.) to note applicability during meetings

Potential Council Treasurer Responsibilities

- Is a member of the Council
- Manages finances of the program
- Administrates fiscal matters of the program
- Provides annual budget to the Council for members' approval
- Ensures development and Council review of financial policies and procedures



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Activity: Position Descriptions for Elected Leaders

Potential Council Member Responsibilities

- Regularly attends Council meetings and important related meetings
- Makes serious commitment to participate actively in committee work
- Volunteers for and willingly accepts assignments and completes them thoroughly and on time
- Stays informed about committee matters, prepares themselves well for meetings, and reviews and comments on minutes and reports
- Gets to know other committee members and builds a collegial working relationship that contributes to consensus
- Is an active participant in the committee's annual evaluation and planning efforts
- Participates in fund raising for the program

Potential Committee Chair Responsibilities

- Is a member of the Council
- Sets tone for the Committee work
- Ensures that members have the information needed to do their jobs
- Oversees the logistics of committee's operations
- Reports to the Council's Chair
- Reports to the full Council on committee's decisions/recommendations
- Works closely with the Program Manager and other staff as agreed to by the Program Manager
- Assigns work to the Committee members, sets the agenda and runs the meetings, and ensures distribution of meeting minutes
- Initiates and leads the Committee's annual evaluation