



APPLEGROVE COMMUNITY COMPLEX

60 Woodfield Road, Toronto, Ontario M4L 2W6

Tel: 416-461-8143 Fax: 416-461-5513

www.ApplegroveCC.ca

“TOGETHER, BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY”

AGENDA for Special Board of Directors Meeting Wednesday, March 24, 2010

If you cannot attend, please call the office with your regrets

A neighbourhood partnership fostering community
through social and informative programs for individuals and families.

This is a special short formal Board meeting, immediately followed by workshop-style discussions of meeting time management and Applegrove's monthly financial reports.

6:30

1. Call to Order/Adoption of Agenda
2. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

3. Minutes of the February 17 Board of Directors Meeting (*white*)

4. Audited Financial Statement
5. Board Nominations
6. Toronto Challenge (*goldenrod*) :for info and decision
7. SPA Alternative: for decision

6:55

8. Adjournment and start of Board of Management meeting



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Board of Management Meeting AGENDA -- Wednesday, March 24, 2010

6:55

- A. Call to Order/Adoption of Agenda
- B. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest
- C. Minutes of February 17 Board of Management Meeting
- D. Executive Director's Report (*Pink*)
- E. Information (*Cream*)
 - E.1. When you really disagree
 - E.2. Our Time Together
 - E.3. Nonprofit Dashboard

7:00

- F. Adjournment

Next Meetings

AGM, Wednesday, March 31

First Board meeting on a Monday = Monday, April 26

Orientation and buddy match-up at 6:15

Meeting starts at 7



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Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting Wednesday, February 17, 2010

A neighbourhood partnership fostering community
through social and informative programs for individuals and families.

Present: Claudia Filici-McMullan, Estelle Halbach, Alana Honsch, Diane Ing, Pierre Trudel
(Chair), Lynn Wyminga, Donald Yuen.
Regrets: Sandra Bussin, Elena Nielsen, Tricia Reid.
Staff: Susan Fletcher, May Seto (Recorder)
Guests: Drew Kelley, Jim Dalling

Date of Next Meeting

Monday, March 1 – Fundraising Meeting
Wednesday, March 24 – Board Meeting
Wednesday, March 31 – Annual General Meeting

1. Call to Order/Adoption of Agenda/Introductions

At 6:45, Pierre called the meeting to order. Quorum of 5 Directors was achieved. The agenda was accepted as circulated.

2. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

Claudia declared a conflict of interest as she has been offered the position of Parent Resource Worker with the agency. She will leave the room for any discussions involving personnel issues. Her resignation from the Board will take effect at the end of this meeting.

3. Volunteer Hours

Members provided their volunteer hours.

4. Donation Envelope

The donation envelope circulated.

5. Minutes of the February 1 Board of Directors Meeting

MOTION (Wyminga/Filici-McMullan)

To accept the minutes of the February 1 Board of Directors Meeting.

Carried.

6. Theatre Night

Jim provided an overview of the Theatre Night event. He will need 1 hour to set up before the performance and 1 hour afterwards for “tear down”. The show is 45 minutes to 1 hour in length. Jim suggested we set the ticket price but have seen people pay up to \$18. Jim will prepare a press release and email to Estelle. Food during the performance is okay. Set-up will start at 5:15 pm; doors will open at 6:15 pm and the performance will begin at 6:30 pm.

7. Finance and Fundraising

7.1. Operating Budget Update

Susan provided an update on the admin budget.

7.2. Pasta Fest

May provided details from the Pasta Fest Report and noted suggestions for the 2010 event. Its date will be Saturday, November 27.

7.3. YogaThon

Susan provided a report to the Board. Board members agreed that the event went well and liked the new location. Some Board members suggested using Duke of Connaught's gym for next year's event. if possible.

7.4. SPA Alternative

Claudia is still trying to set up a meeting with an alternative location. Members will continue to explore other venue options and discuss further at the next Fundraising meeting.

7.5. Donations

Each Board Member wrote a note to thank donors for their contributions to Applegrove.

8. Business Arising from January and February Meetings

8.1. Risk Management

No follow-up required.

8.2. Easter Parade

The Board decided to participate again in this year's Easter Parade. Alana and Diane will revise our existing handout for the event. Susan will register Applegrove and submit the required fee. Board members have arranged for a small group to meet to discuss further details.

8.3. Program Issues: Edgewood and HAIG

Susan provided an update on both Edgewood and HAIG. Susan will follow up with TCDSB Lawyer to inquire about extending our stay until end of June. Susan and May spoke at the HAIG Advisory meeting and informed participants of the issues. Susan attended the HAIG school council meeting and there is a parent's meeting scheduled for Tuesday, March 2 at 6:30 pm.

8.4. Annual General Meeting

Board members volunteered for various jobs at the AGM.

9. Directors' Concerns

Elena asked why Applegrove is not participating in the Beaches Kids' Annual Open House. Applegrove felt it was too early for summer camp. Some programs are full and both Edgewood and HAIG are anticipating possible changes to the program.

Board of Directors Minutes

February 17, 2010

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10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Claudia Filici-McMullan, seconded by Lynn Wyminga.

Chair

Secretary



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Minutes of the Board of Management Meeting February 17, 2010

A neighbourhood partnership fostering community through social and informative programs for individuals and families.

Present: Claudia Filici-McMullan, Estelle Halbach, Alana Honsch, Diane Ing, Pierre Trudel (Chair), Lynn Wyminga, Donald Yuen.
Regrets: Sandra Bussin, Sheila Cary-Meagher, Elena Nielsen, Tricia Reid.
Staff: Susan Fletcher, May Seto (Recorder)
Guest: Drew Kelley

A. Call to Order/Adoption of Agenda

Pierre called the meeting to order. Quorum of 5 members was achieved. The agenda was adopted as circulated.

B. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

Claudia has been offered the Parent Resource Worker position and will not participate in any discussions that relate to personnel.

C. Minutes of the January 20 Board of Management Meeting

MOTION (Filici-McMullen/Halbach)

To accept the minutes of the January 20 Board of Management meeting.

Carried.

D. Executive Director's Report

D.1. Program Presentations

The Seniors Program Worker will present in April and we will ask Helping our Babies Grow staff to present in June.

D.2. Board Training and/or discussion of specific issues.

Training topics were noted. Board members felt it was important to have a mentor for new Board members. Susan invited those interested to attend the Board orientation in April.

MOTION (Wyminga/Halbach)

To accept the Executive Director's Report.

Carried.

E. Correspondence/Information

MOTION (Ing/Filici-McMullan)

To accept the suggested actions.

Carried.

Board of Management Minutes

February 17, 2010

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F. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Diane Ing, seconded by Claudia Filici-McMullan.

Next Meetings:

Monday, March 1 – Fundraising Meeting

Wednesday, March 24 – Board Meeting

Wednesday, March 31 – Annual General Meeting

Chair

Secretary



Applegrove Events and Board / Committee Meetings –March 17, 2010
Office Phone 416-461-8143

www.ApplegroveCC.ca

Please note that Board meetings are on Wednesday evenings, usually the second last Wednesday of the month.

March Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
21	22	23	24 6:30 Board meeting	25	26	27
28	29	30 [Duke of Connaught School Council]	31 6:15 Supper 7:00 Annual General Meeting			

April Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2 Applegrove Closed for Good Friday	3
4 Happy Easter	5 Applegrove Closed for Easter Monday	6	7	8 Theatre Night	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26 Board	27 [Duke of Connaught School Council]	28	29	30	

May Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9 Mothers Day	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24 Applegrove Closed for Victoria Day	25 [Duke of Connaught School Council]	26	27	28	29
30	31 Board					

Bold = community event. *Italics* = an important change. Underline = an Applegrove special event.
 [Brackets] = another group's meeting or event that may affect you.

Applegrove Events and Board / Committee Meetings –March 17, 2010
Office Phone 416-461-8143

June	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4	5
6		7	8	9	10	11	12
13 Toronto Challenge walk/fun		14	15	16	17	18	19
20 Fathers Day		21	22 [Duke of Connaught School Council]	23	24	25	26
27		28 Board?	29 (last day of school!)	30			

July	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Applegrove Closed for Canada Day	2	3
4		5 First Day of Camp	6	7	8	9	10
11		12	13	14	15	16	17
18		19	20	21	22	23	24
25		26	27	28	29	30	31

August	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1		2 Applegrove Closed for Simcoe Day	3	4	5	6	7
8		9	10	11	12	13	14
15		16	17	18	19	20	21
22		23	24	25	26	27 Last Day of Camp	28
29		30	31				

Bold = community event. *Italics* = an important change. Underline = an Applegrove special event.
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Executive Director's Report March 16, 2010

My priorities for the last month have been HAIG and Edgewood, plus preparing for the Annual General Meeting and Theatre Night.

As the newsletter says, HAIG participants have transformed the challenge of its potential closure into an inspiration. After one participant described the program and issues to his employer, the company donated \$8,000! Combined with the ongoing \$3,000 from the Beaches-East York Early Years Centre, this will support a year of programming. The company wants to remain anonymous. But our participants are making a collage of children's hand-prints ("Thanks for giving us a hand") for their offices.

Actions inspired by HAIG's situation include:

- participants making donations.
- a monthly credit card donation that will total several hundred dollars over the year.
- parents coming together on March 18 to plan fundraising events for the next several months, and
- possibly someone interested in volunteering for the Board.

Regarding Edgewood, it has been important to act as if 2 contradictory situations applied – both that we would have to move out by March 31 AND that we would stay. Moving out requires more actions, including planning to pack, investigating alternative locations and storage options, etc. Until March 2, we expected the deal to be finalized in March and planned to ask the purchaser for an extension. Then I learned that the purchaser's deadline to fulfill conditions had been extended until the end of March. That meant that the purchaser would be unable to give permission to stay until after our deadline to move. I wrote to the TCDSB Trustee and to the provincially appointed TCDSB supervisor to request an extension. I also updated Councillor Bussin and, on March 8, updated the Edgewood Advisory Committee.

At some points, it was hard to keep the Board up to date. For example, after a conversation with Councillor Bussin, at about 10:30 on March 10, I sent out the message that it was time for advocacy for Edgewood. At about 11:30, Catherine Leblanc-Miller (local resident, TCDSB trustee for another area and Edgewood's founder) dropped in. She updated Pierre and me on her advocacy for Edgewood. Based on her work, I felt it was unwise to increase the number of people contacting the TCDSB Director of Education and local TCDSB trustee. Consequently, for the PC Advisory meeting the next morning, I asked staff NOT to ask people to contact the TCDSB. Edgewoodians who were in the meeting were understandably confused. When I explained to them how quickly things were changing, they understood.

Big thanks go to Councillor Bussin for her work on this issue.

Getting ready for the AGM has included:

- updating the calendar and statistics in the annual report,
- chasing staff for their program reports,
- planning the décor,
- obtaining door prizes,

Charitable Number: 10671 8943 RR0001

- obtaining materials and showing staff how to make paper flowers for the tables,
- preparing award certificates, and
- recruiting a special volunteer cook (on the assumption that Louise would be busy with Edgewood issues).

For Theatre Night, all I had to do was find the right labels for the post cards, design them, and design and print the tickets. Our Thursday afternoon high school volunteer cut them for me. She was surprised at the math needed for this!

We now have Theatre and 50/50 tickets ready to sell. They are different colours for easy identification.

Although the February Board meeting decided that this March meeting would be a workshop-style discussion of meeting time management and monthly financial reports, we need to do some Board business too. Franki is working hard to have an audited statement in the Annual Report. That means the draft statement needs to come to the Board meeting.

In addition, as May, Anna (the new Seniors Worker) and I discussed the June 13 Toronto Challenge, there was a question about renting a bus. However, this should be a Board decision, either whether the expense comes out of fundraised income or participants pay for their bus ride. We want to start promoting the event at the beginning of May and on May program calendars, so cannot wait until the April Board meeting. Consequently, I drafted an info sheet about the event to provide the background so the Board can decide in March.

I also included Board Nominations on the agenda. March 22 is the cut-off date for interested individuals to submit their Board info/nomination form. Since we do not have a nomination committee, the Board may need to review the nominations.

Finally, as I am writing this on March 16, it is not clear whether to proceed with a SPA Alternative. Depending on the discussion over the next few days, the March Board meeting may also need to make a decision on this issue.

The Board package also includes "When you really disagree". I recently read this article and thought it was good reference material for the Board. I do not believe Applegrove's Board has been in this position, at least in the recent past. This is good information, however, to have on hand in case it is ever needed.

To prepare for the meeting time management and financial discussions, the package also includes:

- *Our Time Together*. I looked for information on meeting time management. This was the most useful piece I found, and it is only somewhat related.
- *A Nonprofit Dashboard* outlining one option for financial reports.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Fletcher.



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Toronto Challenge

Information and Decision

March 16, 2010

1. Update

- Registered for \$105 for the event on Sunday, June 13.
- free parking at Metro Hall for first 300 cars
- free t-shirt for first 2,000 registrants
- Aerobic warm-up from 9 to 9:15
- 5 k run and 1 k and 5 k walk all start t 9:30 a.m. at Metro Hall (King and John Street)

2. Fees

- participants pay \$20 per adult
- \$10 for 65 and over OR 14 and under OR disabled
- family = \$40 for 2 adults and 2 children or 1 adult and 3 children
- these fees and the organizational fee cover the admin costs and benefit Toronto Long-Term Care Homes and Services

3. Registration

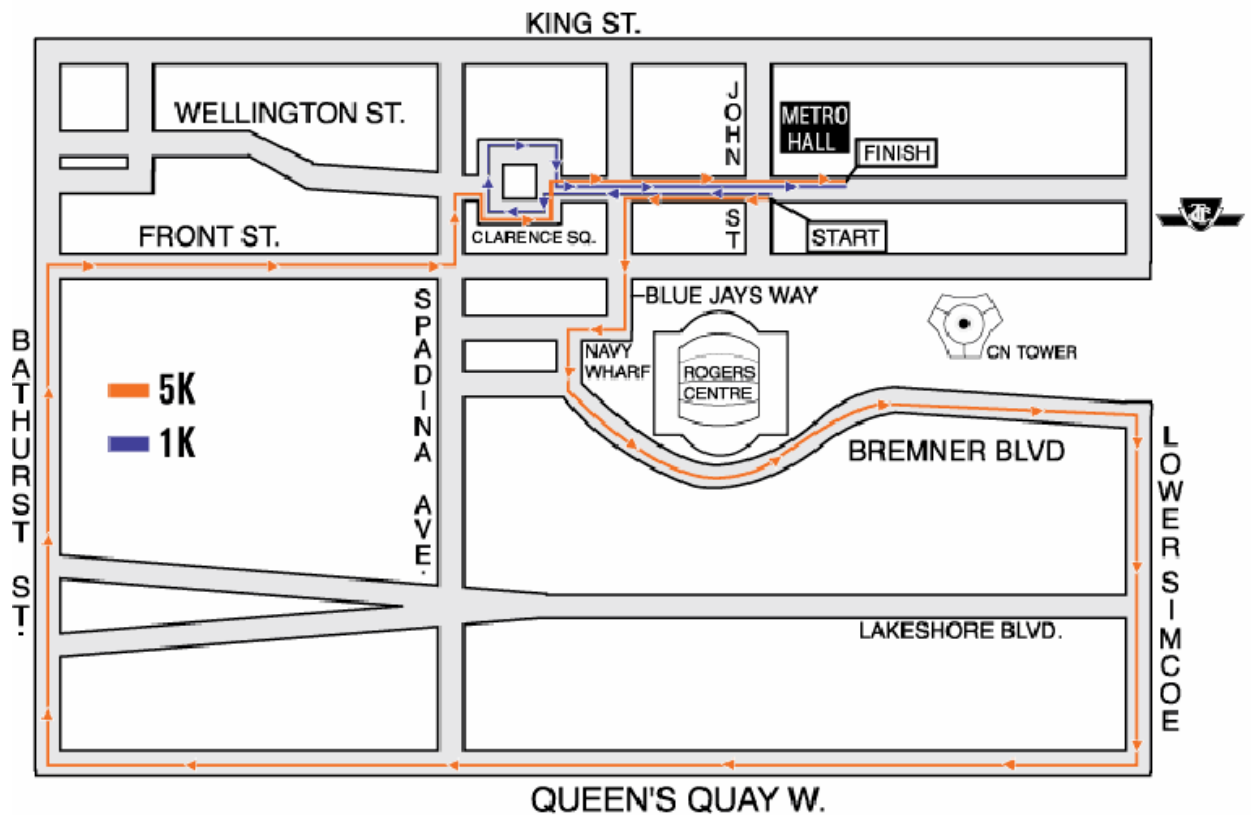
- paper forms to mail or drop-off OR on-line through link at www.toronto.ca/challenge

4. Pledges

- participants get pledges; this money comes to Applegrove
- if adults get \$200 or more in pledges, they receive a gift card for the value of their registration fee.

Pledges in the amount of:	Running Room OR Chapters gift card valued at:
\$200 - \$249	\$20
\$250 - \$599	\$25
\$600 - \$799	\$60
\$800 - \$999	\$80
\$1,000 - \$1,499	\$100
\$1,500 - \$1,999	\$150
\$2,000 - \$2,499	\$200
\$2,500 - \$2,999	\$250
\$3,000 +	\$300

5. **Training**
 - new Older Adults Walking Club will encourage members to train for the 1 or 5 k walk!
6. **Promote Applegrove**
 - banner
 - green pinnies (like Applicious)
7. **Bus?**
 - \$250 to rent a bus to go from and return to Applegrove
 - the Queen Streetcar comes about every 10 minutes on Sunday mornings and stops 3 blocks north of Metro Hall (or transfer to the King car near Broadview to stop at Metro Hall)
 - TTC = \$2.50 per adult trip (purchased in quantity) 55¢ for children,
 - TTC day pass is \$10 (1 adult and not more than 5 children/youths; OR 2 adults and not more than 4 children/youths; OR 2 adults.)
 - recommend planning to arrive at Metro Hall about 8:30, so need to leave Applegrove by 8 a.m.
8. **Other Info**
 - well-behaved dogs welcome



"Big Idea at the Board Café" <http://www.compasspoint.org/boardcafe/details.php?id=83>
THE MOST OF TIME TOGETHER

by Contributing Editor David LaGreca (Volunteer Consulting Group)

"Midway through the meeting--which was destined to last at least two and a half hours--I realized I was planning my schedule for the next week, writing notes to confirm plane reservations and wondering why I got involved with this group in the first place. Final note to myself: schedule a trip out of town to coincide with the next board meeting." --Board Member A

"Truly didn't begrudge the time at tonight's board meeting. The presentation on the local hospital's plans was really good and it felt good to work with them on a policy stand for the city. Even the fundraising discussion was engaging--focusing on 3-year strategies and how they reflect business analysis AND our values. AND we finished on time." --Board Member B

We've all attended board meetings and walked away feeling we had wasted precious time. But just what is it that allows the experiences of Board Member A to be so different from that of Board Member B? For those of us who lead nonprofit boards, it's not only our responsibility, but in our interest to make sure that board members feel good about their "investment" of time in board meetings. Some simple ideas:

1. Ask the board to decide the year's agenda. At the beginning of each fiscal year, put a brief item on the agenda where board members can say what organizational programs or community issues they would like to learn more about over the coming year. Then ask the executive director to schedule these for the year and board members will be able to look forward to topics they asked for.
2. Cancel a meeting if there's no real work to do. If the key agenda item was meeting with the auditor, and the audit isn't done, reschedule.
3. Decide something at every meeting. If there aren't enough issues for meaningful action at every meeting, consider meeting less often.
4. Try an unconventional place to meet as part of "stealth board education." If you're on the board of a performing arts organization, why not meet on stage once a year? If you're on the board of an independent school, try holding a meeting in the science lab or the school library. A food bank? Try having a meeting in the middle of the warehouse.
5. Make sure there's opportunity to get to know one another. After all, that's one of the main reasons we all joined the boards we did! Name tags and snacks before or after every meeting. Ask the executive director to add to one of the agendas that you'll be buying the first round of drinks for board members who join you after the meeting.
6. Work with the executive director to put together a readable, relevant, INTERESTING board packet that goes out to board members at least a week ahead of time.
7. Finally, make sure EVERYONE says something during the meeting. If you're chairing, invite quiet board members to speak by asking them directly for their opinions on the topic at hand. If you are not the chair, you can involve others by saying, "Sylvester, I'm wondering what YOU'RE thinking about all this."

You are reading the BOARD CAFÉ, published by CompassPoint Nonprofit Services, in partnership with the Volunteer Consulting Group (of New York). The BOARD CAFÉ is one component of Board Match Plus+, CompassPoint's collaborative venture with the Volunteer Center of San Francisco to help individuals serving on nonprofit boards.

What to Do When You Really, Really Disagree with a Board Decision

BOARD CAFE • BY JAN MASAOKA • FEBRUARY 22, 2010 •



Most of the time, nonprofit boards work through consensus. But what if you think a serious mistake is being made? Sometimes knowing what to do in advance if such a situation arises can help you understand the situation more clearly as it unfolds:

Have you ever been in a situation where the board has made a decision that you think is very wrong and will have severe negative consequences for the organization? Or where you think an important decision has been railroaded through?

As a board member myself and something of a contrarian, I've found myself in these circumstances from time to time over the years. For example, on the board of an organization with a sizable financial deficit, I found myself and one other board member losing a seventeen-to-two vote to take funds from the organization's endowment for current operating expenses. As a member of CompassPoint consulting group for many years, I saw more serious cases, too, such as ones where board members suspected illegal activity or a takeover of the organization by a few very aggressive (and often new) board members.

It's important to remember that reasonable people can disagree in good faith on important issues. The following situations may give you some food for thought if a case that goes beyond reasonable disagreement were to arise for you.

Question: The board I'm on is about to make a bad decision. Although the last two years have been very tight financially, they refuse to make any cuts to the expenses. But they don't want to do anything different in fundraising either! If we have another bad year, I'm afraid we won't be able to pay our bills.

Answer: Call the board chair and express your concerns. But if you truly expect that the decision will go another way, write a letter to the board that explains your reasons for voting against the budget that has been proposed. Bring this letter to the meeting at which the vote will be taken and ask to read your letter aloud and have it entered into the official minutes. You may be outvoted, but you will have shown how seriously you take the matter. Your reasoning is in the permanent record, and those who did not attend the board meeting will be able to understand your point of view.

Many years from now, someone reading the minutes may also find your comments important and informative.

Question: The board has just voted to repair our playground structures rather than replace them, but I believe strongly that repairs won't do and some child may be hurt. What can I do?

Answer: Consider asking the board for an independent, expert evaluation of the situation, perhaps by a play equipment specialist. Such an evaluation will bring professional, objective information to the decision. If board members won't do that, or if they choose to ignore a report that indicates the structures are dangerous, at least make sure that your "no" vote is recorded in the minutes. Later, if a child is unfortunately hurt and a lawsuit is brought against the organization, you will be protected if your vote by name has been recorded. After the vote,

simply say, "Please put my name into the minutes as having voted NO on this motion." When the minutes are issued, check to be sure your vote has been recorded properly.

Question: I've just been voted off the board of a nonprofit because I've been asking too many questions about the finances. I think the board president and the executive director are embezzling money. What can I do?

Answer: The first step might be to write a letter explaining your concerns --perhaps proposing an investigative committee -- and send it separately to each board member and to the executive director. Ask them to respond to you by a certain date. You can also contact the auditor (if the organization has a CPA audit) to ask for clarification or feedback on your concerns. If these steps still leave you feeling that criminal activities are taking place, you can write a letter to a few of the organization's key funders and supporters, but be aware that such a step is likely to create a large uproar that could end up backfiring. Your final recourse is to bring the charges to the attorney general in your state. That office is responsible for overseeing nonprofit organizations incorporated within the state; your local state legislator may also be helpful in making sure there is an investigation.

Question: I'm still angry and disappointed over a decision the board has made. What can I do?

Answer: Once a decision has been made, don't keep bringing it up again or try to take your case to others. For example, if the board has just adopted a budget that you think is unrealistically optimistic, don't continue the argument by trying to convince staff or others that the decision should be overturned. If you feel that other board members understand your point of view but still disagree, and you feel that you could not openheartedly work within that decision, consider resigning from the board and state your reasons clearly in a letter to the board. If, however, you can reluctantly live with the decision, make your disagreements clear, but also make clear that you will work with the decision.

And finally . . .

Too often board members feel uncomfortable with a decision as it's being made but decide to remain silent. In some cases it's fine to let the meeting roll on, but in other cases it's an indication of a board that may later be described as "asleep at the wheel." An underlying but too-common reason is that there's an implicit feeling that questioning the staff (or the majority) is being distrustful or not acting as a team member.

If you find yourself experiencing such thoughts, take a few seconds to think it through. There are more choices than simply keeping quiet or being disruptive. Be sure that you take the board's decisions as seriously as the organization needs them to be taken, and doing so will sometimes mean being clearer than is ordinarily necessary.



www.blueavocado.org

731 Market Street, Suite 200, San Francisco, CA 94103
editor@blueavocado.org 415.722.4703

A Nonprofit Dashboard & Signal Light for Boards

A REPRINT FROM *BLUE AVOCADO*

By Jeanne Bell and Jan Masaoka

The dashboard in a car gives an instant update on many important factors: speed, gas left in the tank, engine temperature, whether the air conditioner is on. If your dashboard isn't working, it's unnerving and upsetting. But at the same time, when it is working, you glance at it from time to time but you don't look at it constantly.



A nonprofit dashboard is similar: it gives important information to decision makers such as executives and boards in a quick-read way. But a dashboard has limitations: it doesn't tell you if you're taking the right road to Chicago, or more importantly, whether you should be going to Chicago at all!

The idea of making data -- especially financial data -- easily readable for board members is not a new one. Building on that basic idea, we've added two critical features:

- **Action lights:** When the oil pressure red warning light goes on, we know we need to do something. By adding Red, Yellow and Green lights, this Dashboard is oriented towards actions for the board to consider.
- **Changes over time:** A dashboard is useful if it just shows where things stand at this moment. But it becomes far more powerful when board members can see a trend line: Are things getting better or worse?

Let's start by looking at financial reports. Nonprofit board members can be bewildered by complex financial presentations, and as a result, tend to ignore them. If, instead of the usual spreadsheets, think about what the reaction might be to the following instead:

1. Finance			
	Target	6 months ago	Now
Days of unrestricted cash on hand	45 days	65 days	18 days
Net surplus or deficit YTD compared with YTD budget	Within 25K or better	\$42,500 worse than budget	\$28,000 worse than budget-to-date
Government funding year-to-date (52% of budget)	Within 3%	\$39,000 worse than budget	\$3,200 worse than budget, 24 days
Days from end of month to financial statements	24 days	87 days	48 days

Board members would quickly turn their attention to the areas needing attention, and praise staff where progress has been made. The use of Red/Yellow/Green helps the board interpret the material, and the inclusion of prior information provides a feeling for direction.

The metrics in these examples may not be appropriate for your organization. In one Dashboard workshop, a participant noted that they try to keep their outstanding line of credit to below 5% of investments. It was easy to convert this unusual measure into a dashboard: Above 5% was red; 4 - 5% was yellow; Under 4% was green. This was far more useful for the board than their previous reporting only of the outstanding balance.

Fast reporting on program metrics

In contrast to finance, one of the least discussed metrics on boards is typically program implementation: the information is often unintentionally buried in multiple staff reports. Instead, consider adapting the following examples of human service, theatre, and advocacy programs:

2. Program and Impact			
	Target	6 months ago	Now
Number of first-time clients enrolled	360 this year	160	205
GED certificates obtained	90%	70%	82%
E-petition signatures	5,000	Not started yet	6,400
Paid seats per theatre performance	90% of performance space	85%	75%
Presentations to churches, companies, neighborhood groups	15 for year	7 YTD	7 YTD

A dashboard for "our greatest asset"

While it's commonly said that "our people are our greatest asset," board members often are unsure how to pay attention to the area of human resources without inappropriate meddling in management matters. As a result, the area is too often ignored all together, but an HR Dashboard can help reassure the board that the area is being handled well:

3. Human Resources			
	Target	6 months ago	Now
Performance evaluations completed on time	90%	Had not started counting	82%
Truck accidents per year	0	3	1
% People of color in exempt positions	55%	20%	32%
Open workers compensation claims	No more than 8	15	6

Using a dashboard for board accountability

It's often difficult for volunteer board members to keep track of what needs to happen from year to year. Having a dashboard for the board makes it easy to communicate yearly responsibilities to a new board chair, and for her to keep it updated for the rest of board, thereby reminding everyone.

4. Board of Directors			
	Target	6 months ago	Now
Attendance at board meetings	75%	75%	85%
Executive Director performance evaluation completed on time	By February 15	Not applicable	Done by February 13!
New board members	4 new board members by Sept 30	2 new board members by June 30	August 15 still the same 2

Fundraising Dashboard

Fundraising metrics are frequently reported to boards, but this makes them easy to see in a consistent way:

5. Fundraising			
	Target	6 months ago	Now
New foundations or corporations	10 this year	5	6
New individual donors	100	11	18: need to re-think

Dashboard for easily overlooked compliance and risk management

Few organizations have compliance or risk management committees on either the board or the staff, and it's often easy to overlook these important matters. Adding a simple dashboard for these matters helps remind the staff of them, and reassures the board that these areas are getting enough attention.

6. Compliance and risk management			
	Target	As of January 30	As of November 1
Form 990 filed on time	By November 15	Not applicable	Applied for extension 10-25
Annual safety drill conducted	By March 31	Not applicable yet	Not applicable

The engineering behind the dashboard

In the car, when your gas indicator points to "Empty," you probably don't know exactly how much gas is left. Behind the scenes, an engineer has decided that, for instance, that it will point to Empty when there is one gallon left. Similarly, board committees can work with staff to determine what will be classified as Red, Yellow or Green. This calibration is crucial: by changing it you can make any situation look terrific or terrible. Most of the time the reader will trust the calibration choices behind the dashboard, so be sure that it is reviewed annually.

For instance, the Finance Committee might decide that having less than \$90,000 in unrestricted cash puts payroll at risk, so they classify that as Red. A year later after layoffs, the staff might be smaller so that having \$50,000 is actually enough: \$50,000 becomes Red, while \$90,000 becomes Green.

Summing up

What makes this Nonprofit Dashboard powerful are some key features that many organizational dashboards lack:

- **Signal lights:** showing red, yellow and green rather than simply numbers helps board members focus on potential actions
- **Trend lines:** by showing the Dashboard over a period of time, improvement or decline is easily seen . . . often more important than simply the current status. When you start your Dashboard, don't try to go back and fill everything in. Just keep the data going forward.

And finally . . .

Imagine getting a dashboard like this at every board meeting. With a glance, board members could see how the organization is doing and start asking the important questions. The board would also be able to discuss what indicators should be added to the dashboard and which might not be necessary. Board committees and task forces could develop their own dashboards for particular projects.

And remember the limitations of a Dashboard: it may not be helpful on bigger matters such as: Has X Program become stale? Should we be considering a merger? What does our constituency need us to be doing right now?

It's hard to imagine driving a car without quick, ongoing access to a speedometer, fuel gauge, or gear position. An organizational Dashboard can be the same, fast way to check in on basics . . . so you can pay more attention to where you're going.

About the authors

Jeanne Bell is CEO of [CompassPoint Nonprofit Services](#), and co-author of [Financial Leadership: Guiding Your Organization to Long-Term Success](#). **Jan Masaoka** is Editor-in-Chief of [Blue Avocado](#) and author of *Best of the Board Cafe* (Second Edition to be released in August, 2009).

See also at <http://www.blueavocado.org>:

- [A 360-Degree Look at the Organization: Seeing Ourselves as Others See Us](#)
- [The Nonprofit Board's Role in HR](#)
- [A Board Member's Guide to Nonprofit Insurance](#)
- [Finance Fear Factor Ratios](#)

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