Boards That Work:
Best Practices, Roles and Responsibilities For Land Trust Boards

Southeast Land Conservation Conference – St. Simons, GA
Thursday, March 15. 2012; 9 a.m.-12 noon

Workshop Agenda

9 a.m.	Welcome, Goals for the Morning, Introductions	Bryan, Illene
9:10 a.m.	Board Self Assessment	Illene
	Basics of Board Roles and Responsibilities	
	Excellence in Practice • effective meetings • effective committees • quality interface with staff	
10:10 a.m.	Break	
10:20 a.m.	Perpetuation of a Quality Board: Case Study • addressing issues of recruitment, retention, orientation, training, founder's syndrome	small group work
10:50 a.m.	The Experts: Panel of Board Members	Bryan facilitate
11:20 a.m.	LTA Board Services Initiative • services available • policy coordination	Bryan
11:50 a.m.	Final Discussion, Wrap Up, Evaluation	Illene

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Board of Directors' Self Assessment

This tool will help the board to identify specific areas for its own development. For each item, circle the number that best reflects your opinion: 5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = neutral, 2 = disagree, 1= strongly disagree

1. We have a good, written mission statement that is understood and followed.	5	4	3	2	1
2. The size of and diversity within our board is good for our organization at this time.	5	4	3	2	1
3. We do a good job evaluating and re-electing board members who should continue serving.	5	4	3	2	1
4. We do a good job in nominating, electing and orienting new board members.	5	4	3	2	1
5. Board members are given good and appropriate background materials for meetings.	5	4	3	2	1
6. Board meeting agendas are full of worthwhile items for discussion and focus on policy issues that are appropriate for the board to discuss.	5	4	3	2	1
7. Committees are well organized and contribute to the effectiveness of the board.	5	4	3	2	1
8. The overall quality of current board members is the quality the organization needs and deserves.	5	4	3	2	1
9. The board and chief executive are clear on their respective roles, as well as the role of other staff.	5	4	3	2	1
10. The board does a good job in setting the chief executive's performance objectives related to results/outcomes.	5	4	3	2	1
11. The board does a performance review of the chief executive each year.	5	4	3	2	1
12. The chief executive is doing well in fulfilling the board's expectations.	5	4	3	2	1
13. The board contributes what it should to the fund raising and marketing efforts of the organization.	5	4	3	2	1
14. The board leadership is planned for and effective.	5	4	3	2	1
15. The board has ownership in a good strategic plan to guide the organization for the next five years.	5	4	3	2	1
16. The chairman of the board is exercising appropriate authority and leadership.	5	4	3	2	1
17. The board is knowledgeable about the organization's current programs and services.	5	4	3	2	1
18. The board thoroughly discusses the annual operating budget of the organization prior to approval.	5	4	3	2	1
19. The board receives financial reports on a regular basis that are understandable, accurate and timely.	5	4	3	2	1
20. The board has an adequate amount of liability insurance, as well as risk reduction/ control policies and procedures in place.	5	4	3	2	1

Time commitment:
On average, how much time are you giving to the organization? _____ hours/month.

For you, is this amount about right? ____ too much? ____ not enough? ____

How much time are you willing to give? _____ hours/month.

Fund Raising commitment:
How much have you committed to give and/or raise for this organization this year?

Personal contribution $_____

To solicit from friends, business contacts, etc. $_____

Assistance with special events, advertising, etc. $_____

Other $_____

Board Responsibilities, Role and Function

The primary role of the Board of Directors is to ***fulfill, promote and perpetuate the mission of the organization***. All of the following allow the board to legally and effectively perform in this role.

Fiduciary – Financial well-being of organization

- Develop and administer financial policies
- Provide for and review periodic financial statements and annual audit
- Maintain appropriate level of risk management
- Manage assets of organization

Governance – "Big Picture" direction and oversight

- Determine and approve policies – financial (above), programs, personnel, operations
- Establish organizational identity
- Provide continuity, including perpetuation of board
- Provide for accountability of program and management
- Set boundaries for staff and operations
- Set standards and evaluate board performance, both individually and as a group

Planning

- Create a vision for the organization and its future
- Set goals, objectives and work plans to further the mission of the organization
- Monitor the progress of goals, objectives and work plans

Outreach

- Educate the community, including specified target audiences, regarding the organization and its mission
- Determine and "sell" the organizational image
- Monitor the progress of outreach plan

Fund Raising

- Financially support the organization
- Actively participate in the fund raising process, including meeting with funders, connecting organization to resources, asking for money, etc.
- Monitor the progress of fund raising plan

Staffing

- Hire and fire Executive Director
- Set and evaluate performance standards for Executive Director
- Identify expected outcomes that staff is to achieve
- Support work of staff

<u>In the course of performing these functions….</u>

- Manage the board itself
- Know the organization
- Share expertise and leadership; make self available for consultation

Assessment of Board Make Up/Recruitment Needs Identification

Names, Demographics and Qualifications of Current/Potential Board Members										
Age:										
Youth										
21-35										
35-60										
Senior										
Gender:										
Male										
Female										
Geography:										
east end of county										
west end of county										
urban										
suburban										
rural										
Other										
Expertise:										
Program Development										
Human Resources										
Risk Management										
Legal										
Accounting										
Other										
Involvements:										
Business										
Service Club										
Church										
Country Club										
Other										
Resource Development:										
Can give $										
Can get $										
Can get in-kind										
Can get volunteers										

New Board Member Orientation: Sample Content/Agenda

- Overview of Organization
  - Mission
  - Niche in Community
  - Structure for Doing Our Work
  - Programs

- Fiscal Considerations
  - Budget
  - Fundraising

- Board Structure
  - Members
  - Officers
  - Committees
  - Relationship to Staff
  - Meetings

- Expectations of Board Members
  - Personal Commitment
  - Involvement, Attendance
  - Contributions – Expertise, Contacts, Financial
  - Conflicts of Interest

- Resources
  - Board Notebook
    - Articles of Incorporation
    - Bylaws
    - Mission Statement
    - Goals and Objectives
    - Policies, Procedures
    - Program Information
    - "What is an Easement?" or other technical information
    - Strategic Plan, Land Management Plan, Stewardship Plan
    - Minutes from Previous Board Meetings
    - Budget and Financial Information
    - Promotional Materials
    - Board, Staff Telephone Lists
  - Monthly Mailings

- Other/Questions and Answers

Board Member Expectations Agreement

New Board Member Name_____

Phone _____ FAX_____ E-Mail_____

Mentor's Name _____

Phone _____ FAX_____ E-Mail_____

(Mentor and candidate should read the questions, define the expectations and should discuss implementation strategies.)

_____ Mission -- I understand and can promote the organization's mission.

_____ Orientation and On-Going Training -- I am willing to participate in at least one activity annually affording me the opportunity to observe and better understand the organization's activities/services and people it works with.

Name of Activity _____

Date /Location of Activity _____

Contact Person/Phone _____

_____ Additional training -- I may need additional training in:

_____

_____ Mentoring – My mentor/buddy board member will provide the support I need to build my confidence and capabilities by (describe activities):

_____

_____

_____ Time - Knowing that good board participation requires _____ hours a month, I am prepared to dedicate the time.

_____ Meetings -I will be prepared for the meetings by doing the following:

_____

_____ Assignment - I am prepared to accept a committee assignment:

_____

_____ Schedule - I have a schedule as to when the board/committee meets:

_____

_____ Outreach -- I am willing to make one call per month on behalf of the organization and host one outreach (breakfast) meeting annually

Schedule first three contacts and identify mentor/partner:

Contact_____Mentor_____When_____

Contact_____Mentor_____When_____

Contact_____Mentor_____When_____

_____ Money - I am willing to make a financial contribution. $_____

_____ Ending - I know when my assignment ends.

Date_____

Assessing my other commitments at work, school, home and other activities, I have given this involvement careful consideration, asked questions and decided to serve on this board of directors.

_____ I understand the requirements

_____ I can be held responsible to meet the expectations

Any Other Special Conditions_____

_____

Signed_____ _____

New Board Member Board Chair

Date_____