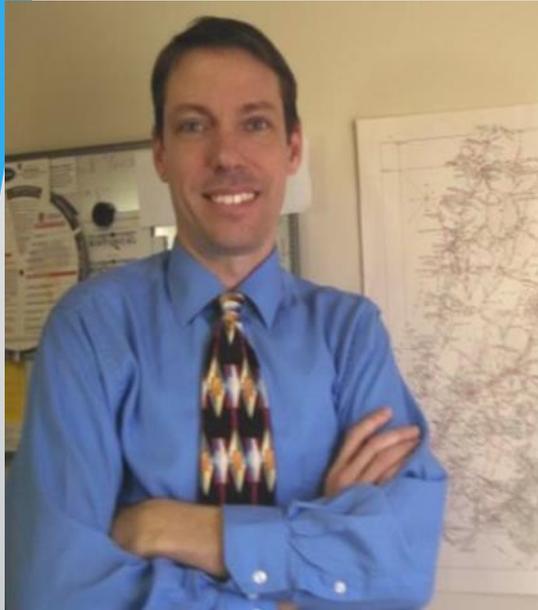




BOARD to DEATH

Working For and On Boards

About Us



Nathan Stalvey
Director
Clarke County Historical
Association



Karen L. Daly
Executive Director
NSCDA National
Headquarters
Dumbarton House



Sam McKelvey
Executive Director
Menokin

The Boards We Work For

Clarke County Historical Association:

- 15 Board Members
- Quarterly meetings
- Committee strong approach (9 committees)

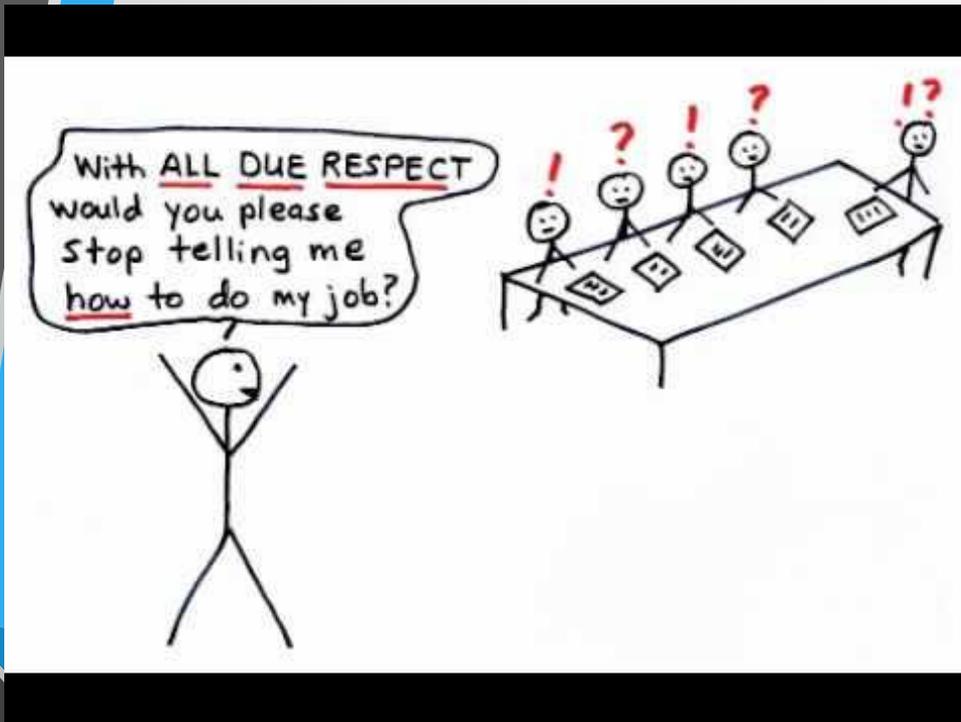
Dumbarton House:

- Two-tiered governance
 - DH = 65 members
 - NSCDA = 70 members
- Semi-annual meetings
- Governing board model with engaged committees (22 committees)

Menokin Foundation:

- 24 Board Members
- Quarterly meetings
- Committee strong approach (7 committees)

Board Roles vs. Staff Roles



- Important to know how these are defined.
- How involved is your Board when it comes to the day to day operations of your museum?
- Where is the line between Board responsibility and Staff responsibility, and is that clear to everyone?
- Is there a Strategic Plan?

Board Leads Staff Implements

- Attracts average staff
- Ministry dependent upon the board
- Common in smaller organizations

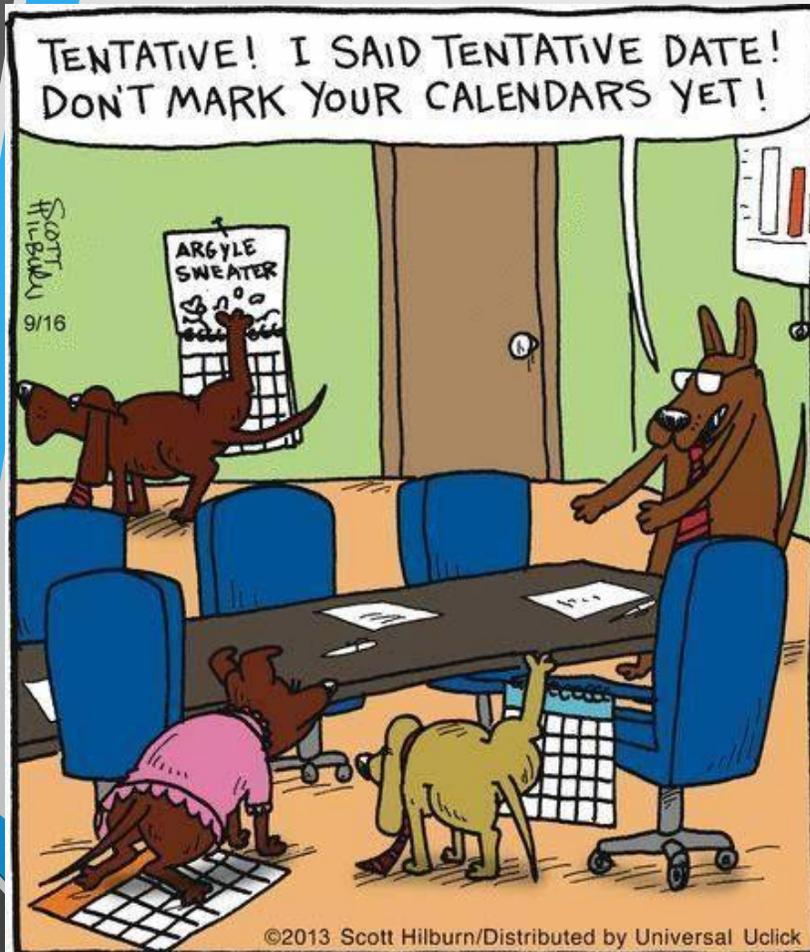
Staff Leads Board Governs

- Requires skilled board and staff
- Necessitates mutual trust
- Greater accountability
- Common in growing organizations
- Decisions take longer

Director Leads Board Advises

- Often hierarchical and high control
- Common with founders
- Often lacks accountability
- Decisions made more quickly

Board Meetings



- Depending on the by-laws, Board meetings vary in frequency.
- Make sure that a clear agenda is spelled out, noting old business and new business.
- Written reports sent out with the agenda are a good idea. (Director's report, committee reports, etc.) This frees up more time for discussion rather than reporting.
- Minutes need to be very clear about discussions, votes, report summaries, and attendance.
- Do the lengths of each meeting balance with the frequency in which the Board meets?
- Keep it active!

Committees



- Committees help a museum in more focused areas.
- Committees mandated in the by-laws usually include Executive, Operations, and Finance/Treasury.
- Ad-hoc committees are established by the Board to meet other organizational goals. Always led by a Board member, these committees can usually include non-Board members. Examples: Membership, Buildings and Grounds, Nominations.
- Must have a clear purpose.
- Directors usually serve on all committees.
- How are roles defined? Are committees responsible for day to day tasks, or do they operate more in the “big picture?”

Traditional Nonprofit Organizational Structure



Expectations of Board Members



- Board members should join to make a difference to your museum, not to have something on their resume.
- Must have an understanding of your organization's mission and vision.
- Most Boards have an attendance requirement that, if not met, can result in removal from the Board.
- Board members should always serve on at least one committee.
- Some Boards have a financial requirement in order for people to serve on the Board (membership at a certain level, minimum donation requirement).
- Members must be willing to serve at least one full term.

Conflicts of Interest

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DEFINED

- A situation in which a person is in a position to derive personal benefit from actions or decisions made in their capacity.
- A situation in which a person or organization is involved in multiple interests, financial interest, or otherwise, one of which could possibly corrupt the motivation of the individual or organization.

Source: Oregon State Dept. of Human Services

Conflicts of Interest



CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No need to chase ambulances when you're the one who calls them

motifake.com

- Whether joining a Board or recruiting members to a Board you work for, a Conflict of Interest form must be signed.
- Board members should not profit, either individually or through a company they own, from the organization in which they serve on the Board.
- Try to avoid having family members on the Board at the same time.

Board Recruitment



- Board Nomination Committees are tasked with finding new Board members.
- Put out a public call for new Board members (mailings, e-mail, newsletter, etc.).
- What specific skill sets does your Board look for in new members? What areas are they lacking?
- Are there ad hoc committee members who are not members of the Board?
- Look beyond skill sets: Is it likely this person can attend regular Board and committee meetings? Would this person make a good officer in the future? What is this person's reputation in the community?
- Board Diversity: Who does your board represent?

So You Want to Join a Board. Why?



- When you serve on the board, you have the honor, challenge, and responsibility of understanding how everything needs to work together for an organization to accomplish its goals.
- Learn more about fundraising, which can help you implement strategies with your own museum's Board of Directors.
- Your voice is likely to be heard – and it has impact. You'll hear the impactful voices of others, too.
- You'll care more than you thought you could. The more you care and contribute, the more you grow.

Source: Colleen Dilenschneider

How to Decide on Joining a Board

- Give yourself time to be a Director first, establish yourself in the community.
- Research the Board that is recruiting you.
- How often does the Board meet, and will you have the time to attend regular meetings?
- What are the financial/volunteer requirements?
- How long are term limits?
- Do you believe in the Board's mission?
- What type of Board is it?
- Is there a Strategic Plan?
- Are member and committee roles clearly defined?
- Are there any conflicts of interest?
- What is the financial status of the organization?
- Do you bring a set of skills that is needed by the Board, or are they just looking to put a warm body in a seat? Will your voice be heard?
- Can you balance the requirements of serving on a Board with your own job duties?
- Can joining a Board help with your career?
- Will you be able to make a difference to the organization and the community?

Conclusion: Takeaways from Working For and On Boards



- A better understanding of Director/Board relationships.
- Provides a more holistic knowledge of museum governance and operations.
- Allows you to have a unique perspective from both sides of the glass.
- New ideas that you can incorporate across Boards and from other Directors that report to you.