

Governance Group Activity

Discuss...

1. What actions/strategies would you share with the Board?

2. Who is responsible?

Agency A, governed by an 18 member tri-partite board, is a 40 year old local community based nonprofit serving five (5) counties in State A.

Over the past three years, the agency’s budget has doubled. This was accomplished by diversifying the agency’s funding base, developing an endowment program, and streamlining client/consumer assistance. Agency staff and executive director are experienced and knowledgeable in all facets of raising money. However, staff has had little experience in implementing a donor program and no additional staff for new or expanded programs.

The Executive Director has been with the agency 25 years and plans to retire soon. The agency is experiencing turnover because key Senior Management staff are retiring. As the ED receives notice, positions are posted and filled. The job market is tight and the agency is having difficulty finding qualified individuals. One position has turned over twice in six months.

The agency meets monthly but frequently lacks a quorum to conduct business. In the past year, they were only able to take care of business at 6 of the 12 board meetings. A new Board Chair has been elected. Prior to board meetings, the Chair converses with certain board members, but not all, about agenda items. Half the Board “rubber stamps” Executive’s recommendation, while half disagree. The Executive and Chair are at odds with each other and the board is divided into competing factions. The Chair, unbeknown to the Executive Committee and full board, sent a letter requesting an agency wide audit due to misuse of funds allegations from a fired employee who is suing the Agency and Executive. The request is turned over to the Attorney General who decides to investigate and charge the agency \$40,000 for the audit.

The agency while not well known before, due to media coverage of the AG investigation, is now on the front page of the local paper. The news articles question processes and procedures used by the agency. Reporters are citing statements from board members.

Agency B is a \$30 million agency and still growing. The Executive Director leads a competent staff of program directors that oversee consistently expanding programs. Programs created are based on Needs Assessment and requests from the community. Agency has weekly photos in local newspapers regarding agency services. Agency staff collaborates with other service providers and is active in the community.

The 12 member Board has heavy participation in communities and voluntarily participates on committees. All new board members receive an Agency Board Member Handbook. The Board Chair and Executive Director meet jointly with new members to educate them on the agency and board functions. The agency staff and Board are recognized as an Agency of Excellence.

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