

REGION () IDAHO REGIONAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH BOARD

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE REGIONAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH BOARD(RBHB)?

This document provides good information concerning board development. When first forming, RBHBs will not have matured to the point where all aspects of this document pertain to them. However, it is a good guide to where they are headed.

Board Relations: The Board is a part of the structure it serves. Participation as a Board member is not a recreational activity, is not a place to meet cronies and is not a place for “honorary appointments”.

INFORMATION NEEDS OF A RBHB:

1. History of the organization
2. Bylaws and Policy Statements
3. Organizational relationships with other community organizations and groups
4. Annual reports and financial statements
5. Physical facility condition and needs
6. Written definition of purpose, goals and objectives, mission, vision, values
7. List of Board members and committee chairs
8. Master schedule of Board and committee meetings
9. Organizational chart
10. Personnel policies and job descriptions
11. Financial structure and budget
12. Meeting agendas and minutes —prior to meeting
13. Established procedure for selecting and training new Board members
14. Knowledge of parliamentary procedure

EFFECTIVE BOARD MEMBER FUNCTIONS:

1. Become visible and understand community and population needs
2. Understand Board functions and management techniques
3. Understand how the board works and its information needs
4. Accept goal-centered leadership using the consensus concept — once a vote is taken it is the board’s decision and all board members must back the decision
5. The board is singular/members are plural

LEGAL LIABILITIES:

Board must be accountable for its actions and acting in “Good Faith”. Liability suits will be forthcoming if a Board can be proven to have acted in a negligent manner. Individuals are liable for willful or fraudulent breaches of trust or negligence as well as acting out of a conflict of interest.

The Board can also be sued for lack of “prudent judgment” – the Board must exercise ordinary and reasonable care in performing the duties of the Board.

Conduct which creates legal liability on behalf of the board:

1. Repeated non-attendance at meetings
2. Lack of reasonable care in appointing chair, or members
3. Inattention to policy and budget

A GOOD BOARD MEMBER ASKS:

1. What do we want to accomplish?
2. What is the road map (3-5 year plan)?
3. How will we pay for it?
4. How do we reach these goals?
5. Did we succeed or fail?

BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Establish all policy
2. Participate in the development and approval of the Strategic Plan
3. Review and approve the budget
4. Appoint committee chair people
5. Review and act on committee recommendations
6. Share responsibility for assuring action on policy
7. Review monthly financial statements
8. Abide by the decisions of the Board even when voting against the majority
9. Disassociate personal interest from Board considerations
10. Represent all members in Board decisions
11. Attend meetings regularly
12. Must be thoroughly informed on policy and programs
13. Learn to say NO

PURPOSE OF BOARD MEETINGS:

1. To hear about progress in organizational objectives
2. To make policy decisions
3. To provide a vehicle for Board members to meet with management staff
4. To maintain control of the organization and to give guidance to committees
5. To legitimize, communicate, coordinate, organize and plan
6. To meet legal requirements for Board Meetings.

TO ESTABLISH GOOD BOARD-STAFF RELATIONS:

1. Outline areas of responsibility
2. Establish lines of communication and authority
3. Understand the difference between policy making — Board; and Board policy execution — staff.

REASONS ORGANIZATIONS FAIL:

1. Weak Board and/or weak staff
2. Board doesn't know its specific responsibilities
3. The executive is not competent for the position
4. Books not kept properly
5. Program results are not measurable
6. The board is unaware of its legal responsibilities

A BALANCE ORGANIZATION:

1. Has competent staff and board
2. Has a board that deals with policy issues and planning
3. Has an executive that carries out administrative details with staff
4. Has responsibilities that are well defined, goal oriented and achievable
5. Conducts ongoing orientation and training programs for Board members
6. Insures that leadership is constantly evolving from the Board.