

THE EL EVATOR

Volume 1 Issue 2: March 2019

Introducing The Elevator

A newsletter buzzing about board governance and management of condo and not-for-profit boards.

Are you longing for spring, like we are? Daylight savings saw our clocks spring forward, but spring is anything but here. March arrived like a raging lion bringing snow, freezing rain, fog, rain, and more snow to add to our ice encased world. Surely March will leave quietly - like a lamb - and let us get on with spring.



Heike seems to think spring has arrived. She has started to suffer from her seasonal allergies necessitating an unwelcome visit to the tub for an allergy reduction shampoo.

Bill is nonchalant about the weather. He instead focused on his preparations for St. Patrick's Day and celebrated by sharing the luck of the unicorn with his fans and friends. Did you know Bill is very active on Instagram and Twitter?

The weather is fine for newsletter writing, so Bonnie and Pat had no excuses. This issue's theme is make your board meetings "no nonsense". Sounds appropriate for a March edition. Same as the boardroom perhaps? Working with a board means that you never know if any given meeting will be more of a lion or a lamb.

One tip to keep things on track is to make sure that the meeting stays focussed on the business at hand - not interpersonal conflicts, long-standing unresolved issues, or board members speaking to interests other than the best interests of the organization. The Chair can help set the tone in their opening remarks by reminding directors to 'wear their board hat' and not promote or represent any other special interests while the board is meeting. Read on for other ideas.

Our newsletter theme for 2019 continues. No one has proposed any suggestions. Heike and Bill are not clues; don't be distracted by them.

Pat Crosscombe & Bonnie Oakes Charron,
Co-Editors

1st Floor: Paperwork for Compliance Review

Last month we had a look at not overdoing it on the paperwork for your compliance framework - if you should be doing it, just do it. One worthwhile component of that documentation though is a clear reference to the authority for scheduling an agenda item, or the 'why' behind what the board is reviewing. Authorities come from the board's governance framework - legislation and regulations, bylaws, policies, etc. These authorities confer powers on the board, and authorize it to undertake certain activities, or direct it to take specific actions. For example, many boards begin meetings with Declarations of Conflict of Interest. If this is the case, they likely have a Policy on Conflict of Interest in the organization (perhaps coded COI-001?).

The Agenda, with authority references, would look like:

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Declarations of Conflict of Interests (Ref: COI-001) or
2. Declarations of Conflict of Interests (Pursuant to: COI-001)

This practice should help to do away with any agenda items that aren't necessary and could be draining the board's time. In this way, the board's governance framework becomes the driver of any board business, ensuring a laser focus on mission, and an effective use of meeting time.

"If you should do it, just do it." (And add a reference notation so that everyone knows 'why' you are doing it).

2nd Floor: Wearing the right hat: Managing condo owners' expectations



Picture this: It's a sunny Saturday morning, and a condo board director has just stepped out to grab the morning paper before settling in for a relaxing breakfast. As she turns to go back inside, a neighbor starts a long-winded rant about the most recent condo board decision. Sound familiar? For condo board directors, chances are this is a familiar situation. One of the biggest challenges of being on a condo

board is finding a way to manage condo owners' expectations of directors. Condo board directors are owners too, so this can be tricky!

One very annoying situation that directors complain about often is usually something to the effect of "I hate when owners come up to me in the hallway with a problem." So how can this be dealt with?

[Read more](#)

3rd Floor: Get on Board: How to Increase Engagement Now



Recruiting a well-informed and well-adjusted board of directors is a strategic undertaking and a lot goes into moving from 'Meet n Greet' to 'Board Seat'. Looking at the process across four phases can help bring a strategic lens to identifying and selecting new directors. The first phase is engagement, followed by recruitment, onboarding and orientation. This month, we'll start with engagement - head over to the Boardspace Blog for the top four ways to get owners engaged with condo affairs, and on the not-for-profit side, how to get supporters engaged with the organization and its work:

[Read more](#)

Rooftop: Getting Unstuck & Sparking Creativity

Keeping the board meeting on track is the role of the Chair, but every director can support him or her by maintaining focus on the organization's mission. The mission should act as a guidepost - nothing should be on the agenda that doesn't support and advance it. Make sure these words aren't just recorded in an annual report and put away on a shelf. Placing the words front and centre at every meeting will help orient the group. Here are a few ideas:

1. Put it on the cover page of the meeting materials/boardbook.
2. If short, include them in the footer of each document.
3. Place it at the top of the Agenda.

The idea is to stay aligned with the reason your organization exists - and avoid veering off toward other agendas, issues, or ideas. No mission? No problem. Consider using your Vision, Values, or other Guiding Principles.

Resources

The University of Ottawa offers a course in Building Your Chairperson Skills through its Professional Development Institute. The course description elaborates on the duties of a good chairperson:

1. Getting agreements and ending the meeting on time.
2. Synthesize and summarize information well “on the spot”.
3. Listen to both sides of a discussion impartially.
4. Deal effectively with various kinds of interruptions and discord.

If you are interested in increasing your effectiveness as a chairperson, more information is available. [Find out more](#)

Yours in good governance
Pat & Bonnie



Follow Pat on social media!



Follow Bonnie on social media!

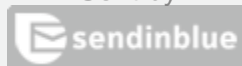


The views and opinions are those of the authors and do not constitute legal advice.

This email was sent to bill@boardspace.ca
You received this email because you subscribed to The Elevator.

[Unsubscribe here](#)

Sent by



© 2019 BoardSpace