

The Board's Governance Calendar

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A board calendar, a yearly plan of items that need the board's attention is not a new idea. It is a wonderful basic governance resource and an easy one to construct. It is an essential tool for agenda planning, committee work and ensuring that the board makes time for fiduciary, strategic and board development work. For boards that meet monthly a calendar would be table with 12 boxes each representing a board meeting and /or other board activity. Since most boards that meet monthly typically only meet 9 or 10 times a year some months might indicate "no board meeting"

The following items would normally be included in the board calendar and some might appear in more than one calendar month. The items on the calendar become items for the board agenda in the month they are scheduled:

- Date of board meetings
- Approval of budget for following fiscal year
- Midyear or quarterly review of financial performance (current budget and YTD figures)
- Board orientation
- Board self-evaluation
- Evaluation of executive director or CEO
- Review and acceptance of Auditors Report/Report of Audit Committee
- Recruitment/nominations
- Annual General Meeting
- Operational Policy Review (or review of specific policies, such as an HR Policy)
- Review of by-laws, reserves, investments (each of these could be separate item)
- Board-staff planning retreat

Other items that are useful to include in a board calendar are

- Committee meeting dates
- Executive committee meeting dates
- Special fundraising events
- Board-staff BBQ

A board calendar is a tool easily drafted by the chair or board secretary or even the executive director, distributed for suggestions, and formally adopted by the board, ideally at its first meeting of a new fiscal year. It is also an essential tool for detailed agenda planning by the executive. Boards need not be

wedded to the plan it outlines but when things change for one meeting the whole calendar should be revised accordingly. The calendar is a valuable board orientation resource as well. The table format below (example is for a calendar year) is recommended.

Annual Board Planning Calendar (Calendar Year Example)

<p>January</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Board Meeting January 25 ◆ Recruitment Committee Report ◆ Financial Report 	<p>February</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Board Meeting Feb 22 ◆ Financial Management Policy Review ◆ Nominations Committee Report 	<p>March</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Board Meeting March 28 ◆ Executive Director Evaluation ◆ Review of By-Laws ◆ Budget Approval (Next Fiscal Year) 	<p>April</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Board Meeting: April 25 ◆ Auditor's Report on past fiscal year ◆ Financial Report ◆ Nominations Committee Report
<p>May</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Board Meeting May 23 ◆ Fundraising Report ◆ Board Nominations Report (Final) ◆ Bi-Annual Stakeholder Consultation Session, May 24, 9-Noon 	<p>June</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Annual Meeting Preparation (AGM Team) ◆ Annual General Meeting June 27 	<p>July</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ <i>No Board Meeting</i> 	<p>August</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ <i>No Board Meeting</i> ◆ <i>Executive Committee meets</i> ◆ Board-Staff BBQ
<p>September</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Board Meeting September 26 ◆ <i>Board Orientation- September 19</i> ◆ Board Self-Evaluation Exercise ◆ Financial Report 	<p>October</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No Board Meeting ◆ Strategic Planning Retreat – Sunday, October 23, 9-5 	<p>November</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Board Meeting, November 28 ◆ Incorporation/Charity Renewal ◆ Financial Report ◆ HR Policy Review ◆ Risk Analysis (Risk Working Group) 	<p>December</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No Board Meeting ◆ Governance Committee Meets ◆ Holiday Party