

The Board's Governance Calendar

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A board calendar is a wonderfully useful tool. It is a yearly plan of items that need the board's attention. It is easy to construct, modify, and use. It is an essential for agenda planning. It can help ensure that a board builds into their work the consideration of items that are part of their fiduciary, strategic and board development responsibilities. It has no downside.

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 items on the calendar become items for the board agenda in the month they are scheduled. Some might appear in more than one meeting. The usual item include:

- Date of each board meetings
- Approval of budget for following fiscal year
- Midyear or quarterly review of financial performance (budget, YTD figures, etc.)
- Board orientation
- Board self-evaluation
- Evaluation of executive director or CEO
- Review and acceptance of Auditors Report/Report of Audit Committee
- Board recruitment/nominations (perhaps candidate review)
- Annual General Meeting
- Policy review (or review of specific policies, such as an HR Policy)
- Review of by-laws

Some of the above might come before the board more than once over the course of a year. Other items that are useful to include in a board calendar are:

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

A board calendar is a tool easily drafted by the chair or board secretary or by the executive director. It can be distributed for suggestions, and formally adopted by the board, ideally at its first meeting of a new fiscal year. Then it is to be used for detailed agenda planning by the chair and executive director or the executive committee.

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 visual table format below (example is for a calendar year, it could be 18 months) 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 ◆ Goal # 3 update 	<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 Cmтт Report ◆ Goal #1 update
<p>May</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Board Meeting May 23 ◆ Fundraising Report ◆ Board Nominations Report (Final) ◆ Bi-Annual Stakeholder Consultation 	<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) ◆ Goal # 4 update 	<p>December</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No Board Meeting ◆ Governance Committee Meets ◆ Holiday Party

Boards may want to consider a focused review or progress report on one or two of the organization's **strategic goals** in some months. This too is reflected in the above calendar