

High Impact Board Meetings & Communication

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Timing & Location

- Standing meeting time vs. as needed
- Frequency
- Flexibility and compromise
- Chapter house, campus, or outside location
- Travel reimbursement



How Long?

- Balance between business and personal interaction
- Agenda is the key tool
 - What is the purpose of the meeting?
 - Is the agenda appropriate?
 - How skilled is the board chair?
 - Are the materials helping board members to be prepared?



Building the Agenda

- Focus on the future
- Avoid trivial matters that could be handled via e-mail, phone, or by committee
- Use the strategic or long-range plan as the guide
- Gear discussions toward the next phase – where you want to be



Using a Consent Agenda

- Standard, regular, and routine items “packaged” under one vote
 - Committee, officer and house director reports
 - Approval of minutes
 - Routine documents
 - Previously deliberated items needing final vote
- Board packet is key to success



Decision Making

- Parliamentary procedure
- Deliberation
- Consensus
- Devil’s advocate
- Voting
 - Majority or super-majority
 - Proxy
 - Split vote
 - Abstention



Minutes

- When, who, and what happened
- “Memory” of the meeting
- Readable and understandable
- Sent in a timely manner
- Keep members accountable
- Legal document
- Minutes book with reports & documentation



The Board is a Team

- Engaged Board Members!
 - Responsibility
 - The work itself
 - Achievement
 - Recognition
- Accountability
- Set Deadlines



Communicate about Communication

- Discuss Methods
- Discuss Expectations
- Allow for Reporting
- Provide Recognition



Key Questions

- Before the meeting
- During the meeting
- After the meeting
- Other underlying issues



Board Meeting Evaluation

	Well Done	Needs Improve-	Suggestions
Agenda was clear and reports and documents were circulated in advance of the meeting			
Board members were well prepared to address the issues			
Reports provided needed information			
The board avoided micromanagement			
A diversity of opinions were encouraged			
The chair guided the meeting effectively and members participated appropriately			
The next steps were identified and assigned			
All board members were present			
The meeting began and ended on time			
The meeting room was conducive for work			

Notes/Observations:

Source: Dambach, C.F. (2003). Structures and Practices of Nonprofit Boards. Washington, DC: BoardSource.

**Alpha Zeta House Corporation of Sigma Kappa Sorority
Meeting Minutes**

Meeting: Corporation Board	Date: May 12, 2010
Present: Susan Sigma, CB president; Kathy Kappa, CB vice president; Donna Delta, CB secretary; Barbara Beta; Theresa Theta; Lindsay Lambda, chapter president; Tessa Tau, chapter house manager; Georgia Gamma, house director	Location: Alpha Zeta chapter house 1298 University Ave. Collegetown, USA
Presiding: Susan Sigma	Recording Secretary: Donna Delta
Called to Order: 6:00 p.m.	Adjourned: 7:15 p.m.

Agenda	Information/Discussion	Conclusions	Follow-Up
Consent Agenda	Beta asked that the decision regarding the donation of old artwork be moved to the regular agenda.	Motion #11-09: Moved by Beta, 2 nd by Tau, to approve the consent agenda (attached). Passed	
Financial Report	Delta reviewed the corporation's current income statement, profit and loss statement and aging report. Due to the high balance in operating cash, she recommended that the corporation transfer \$10,000 to reserves to that a higher interest rate may be earned.	Motion #11-10: Moved by Delta, 2 nd by Kappa, to transfer \$10,000 from the operating account to the reserve account. Passed.	Delta to contact NHC to request the transfer.

<p>Summer Renovations & House Improvements</p>	<p>Theta, Lambda, and Gamma presented the list of suggested summer renovations and house improvements that the building & decorating committee put together. The board discussed the items on the list and the bids that have been received for each. Due to the fact that the total cost of all items would go over the amount budgeted for repairs, maintenance, and furnishings, the board reached consensus that the new furniture for the study lounge should be postponed until next year.</p>	<p>Motion #11-11: Moved by Tau, 2nd by Delta, to approve the revised list of summer renovations (attached). Passed.</p>	<p>Sigma to send list and bids to our Corporation Coordinator for approval. Once approved, Kappa and Gamma will work together to coordinate completion of the projects.</p>
<p>Donation of Artwork</p>	<p>Theta had researched possible places to donate artwork that was removed from the walls during last summer's redecorating. Beta has learned of a new thrift store opening in town that will support the Alzheimer's unit at a local nursing home and has suggested the donation be made there as it will support one of Sigma Kappa's philanthropies.</p>	<p>Motion #11-12: Moved by Beta, 2nd by Theta, to donate the artwork to the thrift store.</p>	<p>Gamma will contact the thrift store to arrange for the artwork to be picked up. She will send the donation receipt to Delta for the corporation's records.</p>
<p>Next meeting: 6:00 p.m. on June 10, 2010 at the chapter house</p>			

Mini Board Self-Assessment Survey

	Does Well	Needs Improvement
Organization's Mission		
Strategic/Long-Range Planning		
Project Evaluation		
Fiscal Management		
Risk Management		
Relationship with CC/CL		
Relationship with House Director (if applicable)		
Board-staff relationship		
Relationship with chapter members		
Relationship with parents		
Public Relations and Advocacy		
Board Selection and Orientation		
Board Organization		

Adapted from: Dambach, C.F. (2003). Structures and Practices of Nonprofit Boards. Washington, DC: BoardSource.

Strengthening Board Effectiveness

Area for Improvement:

1.

2.

3.

Area for Improvement:

1.

2.

3.

Area for Improvement:

1.

2.

3.

High Impact Meetings & Board Communication

Key Questions to Guide Better Board Meetings

Before the meeting:

- Are board members receiving board packets well in advance?
- Have board members read the material and provided appropriate feedback? Do they understand and agree with the inclusion of the issues in the agenda?
- Is the material presented in a concise and focused manner? Is it easy to understand the main points of the agenda or do the main points get buried in trivia?

During the meeting:

- Is the chair an effective meeting facilitator?
- Is there something new and surprising happening at every meeting?
- Is the discussion focusing on the big issues or are debates about administrative and management-related details?
- Do board members feel involved and able to contribute their skills and expertise?
- Do board members leave feeling as though they have learned something?
- Are board members respectful of the comments and contributions of fellow members? Are members in basic agreement of the main issues even if their approach may be different?
- Are meeting always in the same old boring place with the same old boring food?

After the meeting:

- Did anything happen between the last meeting and the next one?
- Do board members feel as though they have wasted their time and nothing got accomplished?
- Do board members receive minutes in a timely fashion so that those who were not present are aware of what happened and all are clear about needed follow-up to the meeting?
- Did board members actually finish their tasks before the next meeting?
- Is anyone communicating with members in between the meetings?

And other underlying issues:

- Are board members genuinely interested in the mission of the organization?
- Are members worn out and tired of the commitment?
- Do members make wholehearted efforts to participate and collaborate?
- Do members come to every board meeting?
- Do members demonstrate an understanding of the issues?

Adapted from: Flynn, Outi (2004). Meet Smarter: A Guide to Better Nonprofit Board Meetings. Washington, DC: Board-Source.