

This sample policy accompanies my November 2017 post: Co-chairs Considered. It is not substantively different than the regular board chair position description. Co-chairs normally are co-leaders of the board, not a leader and a back-up leader. So, where there are co-chairs, a board may not require a vice-chair. Where a board adopts this approach, such a position description can be used in negotiating joint and separate responsibilities. The results can help modify the document to reflect the unique nature of each partnership.

Board Co-Chairs

Accountability

- The co-chairs serve, and are accountable to, the board of directors of the Association

Authority

- The co-chairs have no formal authority to direct the board or the affairs of the Association, unless otherwise authorized. Like other board members, they are entitled to make motions and vote on matters before the Association.
- The co-chairs may not, on behalf of the Association, enter into contracts without the knowledge and approval of the board and/or the Executive Committee of the board (including the Executive Director)

Time Commitment:

- Ten to fifteen hours a month

Term of Office:

- Two-year terms, overlapping by one year and renewable once.

Responsibilities:

The co-chairs are is, first and foremost, responsible for the effective functioning of the board in its role of governing the Association. Primarily this involves:

- Chairing board meetings and other association meetings (i.e. AGM, General and Special Membership meetings)
- Setting the agenda for monthly board meetings in consultation with Executive Director, board secretary and treasurer
- Preparing and reporting to the AGM on the activities of the Board of Directors.
- Preparing and updating the annual board calendar
- Encouraging board participation in strategic planning and organizational fundraising events.

Sample Policy

- Monitoring board dynamics and supporting, guiding and coaching fellow board members inside and outside of board meetings
- Conducting and reporting the results of a board self-evaluation
- Organizing an annual board social gathering (e.g. holiday dinner/potluck) and a staff appreciation event
- Participating in board succession planning (recruitment, nominations and orientation).
- Serving as signatory for certain organizational documents.
- Serving as public spokespersons for the Association when needed. Staff normally handles this role on a day-to-day basis.
- Representing the organization at external events
- Acting as a support and resource for the executive director on organizational issues
- Participating in annual performance evaluation of executive director including follow-up support for additional learning and goal setting.

Secondary duties

The co-chairs may, with greater regularity than other members of the board:

- Prepare recommendations for board consideration
- Prepare recommendations to the members for changes to the by-laws

Qualifications:

- Facilitation and meeting chairing experience and skills
- Previous board experience
- Member of the association

Development & Evaluation

- The co-chairs shall regularly consult the board on their expectations of their role and assess their performance and identify areas for improved effectiveness

Removal of a Co-chair

- Unless otherwise indicated in the by-laws, one or both co-chairs may be removed by a special resolution of the Board for which advance meeting notification has been given to all directors, and where the resolution is duly moved and seconded and passed by a majority of directors present.

Note: This sample policy may be used and adapted by a non-profit organization without acknowledging the source.