CRIME SURVIVORS, INC.

Position Descriptions: Board of Directors

Responsibilities of the Board

Determine the organization’s mission and purpose.

It is the board’s responsibility to create a statement of mission and purpose, and to review it periodically for accuracy and validity. This statement should set out the organization’s goals, means, and primary constituents served. Each board member should fully understand and support it.

Select the organization’s chief executive officer/executive director.

Appoint, review, and (if necessary) dismiss that individual. The board must also ensure that the CEO/executive director, who has responsibility for the administration of the organization, receives the moral and professional support he or she needs to further the organization’s goals.

Ensure effective organization planning.

As steward of the organization, the board must actively participate with the staff in an overall planning process, and assist in implementing the plan’s goals. The board should help management to develop business plans, policy objectives, business strategies, and priorities.

Ensure adequate resources.

One of the board’s foremost responsibilities is to provide adequate resources for the organization to fulfill its mission. The board should work in partnership with the chief executive and development staff to raise funds from the community.

Manage resources effectively.

The board, in order to remain accountable to its donors and the public, and to safeguard its tax-exempt status, must assist in developing the annual budget and ensuring that proper financial controls are in place.

Determine, monitor, and strengthen the organization’s programs and services. The board’s role in this area is to determine which programs are the most consistent with an organization’s mission, and to monitor their effectiveness. By constantly reviewing the organization’s work, the board ensures the organization’s capacity to carry out its programs.

Enhance the organization’s public standing.

The board is the organization’s primary link to the community. Clearly articulating the organization’s mission, accomplishments, and goals to the public, as well as garnering support from members of the community, are important elements of a comprehensive public relations strategy.
Ensure legal and ethical integrity and maintain accountability.

The board is ultimately responsible for ensuring adherence to legal standards and ethical norms. The board must establish pertinent policies and procedures (e.g., personnel policies, grievance procedures), and adhere to provisions of the organization’s bylaws and articles of incorporation.

Recruit and orient new board members, and assess board performance.

The board must select new board members and orient them to their responsibilities, and the organization’s history, needs, and challenges. By evaluating its performance, the board can recognize its achievements and determine which areas need to be improved. As the organization grows and improves, the governing board must also evolve to meet changing needs and circumstances.

Selecting Board Members/Personal Characteristics to Consider

Because the board of directors plays such an important role in CSI’s organization, we must apply stringent standards in our search for board members, and look for individuals who:

- Have the ability to: listen, analyze, think clearly and creatively, work well with people individually and in a group;
- Bring a variety of skills, experience, and diversity to the organization;
- Have backgrounds and contacts that differ from, but complement, those of the other directors. This diversity is vital to maintaining a “balanced” board composition;
- Have concern for your organization’s development, and are willing to learn about the substantive program area of the organization;
- Are prepared to set aside any potential conflict between their personal or individual business interests to support the well-being of the organization;
- Possess: honesty, sensitivity to and tolerance of differing views, a friendly, responsive, and patient approach, community-building skills, personal integrity, a developed sense of values, concern for CSI’s development, a sense of humor;
- Are not hesitant to ask questions;
- Willing to: prepare for and attend board and committee meetings, ask questions, take responsibility and follow through on a given assignment, contribute personal and financial resources in a generous way according to circumstances, open doors in the community, evaluate oneself;
- Will take responsibility and follow through on assignments;
- Are willing to contribute personal and financial resources to the organization, and to cultivate and solicit outside funds;
- Can open doors to the community;
- Can recruit board members and other volunteers;
- Develop certain skills if you do not already possess them such as to: cultivate and solicit funds, cultivate and recruit board members and other volunteers, read and understand financial statements, learn more about the substantive program area of the organization;

Responsibilities of Individual Board Members

Within the larger framework of board responsibilities, the individual board members must each fulfill certain obligations to the organization. Those obligations include:
- Attend all board and committee meetings and functions, such as special events, and be prepared to participate;
- Review agenda and supporting materials prior to board and committee meetings;
- Be informed about the organization's mission, services, policies, and programs;
- Keep up-to-date on developments in the organization's field;
- Follow developments in the community, economy, government, etc. that may affect the organization;
- Serve on committees or task forces and offer to take on special assignments;
- Make a personal financial contribution to the organization;
- Follow conflict-of-interest and confidentiality policies;
- Participate in organizational fundraising;
- Inform others about the organization;
- Arrange meetings for the CEO/executive director with your contacts that may lead to support of the organization (financially or otherwise);
- Get to know other members; build working relationships that contribute to consensus;
- Suggest nominees to the board who can make significant contributions to the work of the board and organization;
- Follow conflict of interest and confidentiality policies;
- Assist the board in carrying out its fiduciary responsibilities such as reviewing the organization’s annual financial statements.
- Participate actively in the board’s annual evaluation and planning efforts;
- Refrain from making special requests of the staff.

*Keep in mind that:*

- Board members have no individual authority separate of the board;
- Board members are expected to support decisions of the board, regardless of personal desires and/or options.

**Board Member Job Descriptions**

Besides being members of the board, several board members will be asked to take on additional responsibilities as office holders and/or committee members. Here are some of the responsibilities associated with specific board positions:

**President**

- Presides and oversees board and executive committee meetings;
- Assists CEO/executive director in preparing agenda for board meetings;
- Serves as the chief volunteer representative of the organization;
- Is a partner with the CEO/executive director in achieving the organization’s mission;
- Works closely with the CEO/executive director to ensure good communication between board and staff;
- Assists CEO/executive director in conducting new board member orientation;
- Encourages the board's role in strategic planning;
- Appoints committee chairpersons and members, in consultation with other board members;
- Oversees all board committees;
- Serves ex officio as a member of committees, and attends their meetings;
- Ensures the full participation of board members and moves to fill board vacancies;
- Discusses with the chief executive issues of concern to the board or the organization;
• Monitors financial planning and financial reports;
• Plays a leading role in fundraising activities;
• Formally evaluates the annual performance of the CEO/executive director;
• Periodically consults with board members on their roles and help them assess their performance;
• Oversees searches for a new CEO/executive director;
• Evaluates annually the performance of the organization in achieving its mission;
• Works with the board (governance committee) to recruit new board members;
• Acts as an alternate spokesperson for the organization;
• Serves as chairperson of the executive committee if the board has such a committee.

**Vice President**

• Presides at board meetings and serves as the chief volunteer officer in the absence of the president;
• Reports to the president;
• Works closely with the president and other staff;
• Participates closely with the president to develop and implement officer transition plans;
• Assists the president in carrying out special projects when necessary;
• Serves on the executive committee if the board has such a committee.

**Secretary**

• Records minutes of board meetings or oversees this function if done by a staff person;
• Serves as the official keeper of organizational records;
• Ensures minutes are distributed to members shortly after each meeting;
• Serves on the executive committee if the board has such a committee.

**Treasurer**

• Serves as chairperson on the finance committee and makes reports to the board about organizational finances;
• Administrates fiscal matters of the organization;
• Assists in setting organizational budgets;
• Provides volunteer oversight to organization’s financial accounting systems;
• Ensures development and board review of financial policies and procedures;
• Assists in hiring auditor;
• Serves on the executive committee if the board has such a committee.

**Committee Chair**

• Takes the leadership role of the committee;
• Sets the tone for the committee work;
• Ensures that committee members have the information they need to do their jobs;
• Oversees the logistics of committee operations;
• Reports to the board’s president;
• Works closely with the CEO/executive director and other staff to prepare budget for the event;
• Assigns work to the committee members, sets the agenda and runs the meetings, and ensures distribution of meeting minutes;
• Follows up to be sure committee members complete their assignments;
• With CEO/executive director prepares a timeline for completion of assignments;
• Makes progress reports to the CEO/executive director and the board of directors;
• Insures an adequate number of volunteers is in place;
• With CEO/executive director establishes timeline for day of event;
• Initiates and leads the committee’s annual evaluation.

Committees

Much of the work that a board does is accomplished through its committees and task forces. With the exception of the executive committee, which acts on the board’s behalf, committees recommend action to the full board for discussion and action. Most boards need only a few standing committees – the rest can be accomplished by task forces created for a specific purpose.

Every board member should serve on at least one but preferably no more than two committees or task forces. Each member of the committee must make a serious commitment to participate actively in the work of the committee. Board committees may include people who are not board members.

**Common standing committees include:**

• Governance Committee
• Audit Committee
• Finance Committee
• Executive Committee

**Event committees include:**

• Annual Awards Banquet
• Miniature Golf
• Easter Program
• Halloween Program
• Thanksgiving Program
• Annual Run/Walk Health & Safety Expo
• Giving Thanks Campaign
• Survivors Gift Drive & Elf's Holly Day