

Bite Size Pieces

Learning Topic - Board Governance and Committees –
Module #2

1. Recommended Pre-requisite(s) – Governance BSP
Module one – This session flows best if it follows a
discussion of possible governance styles, as outlines in
Governance BSP one.

2. Learning Objectives

Determine the best Governance and Committee
Structure for your Clinic Board

In this session the leader helps the board agree on
what governance style and committee structure makes
most sense for their clinic.

Note – Be sure to read through the entire material in
advance of the session so that you are well prepared and
have all the handouts copied and the flip chart material
ready.

3. Content Covered

Four Possible Governance Styles
Your Clinic's Governance Style
Your Clinic's Committee Structure

Tip – If food is being served at your meeting, you might
consider having the board start the module while eating

4. Learning Outline

Before the session, prepare a flip chart with the “Four
Possible Governance Styles”

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Begin the session by reminding the group of your discussion of Governance Styles at the last session. Ask the group to share any insights they have had since then and fill in the chart as appropriate. (5 minutes)

Poll the group to see which of the four styles of governance they believe makes the most sense for your clinic and why. Record their responses next to each style on your flip chart. (5 minutes)

Hand out the 'Sample Committee Structure' document. Ask the participants to review the handout on their own and highlight any similarities or differences they see when they compare it to your clinic's committee structure, if you have one. (5 minutes)

Lead a discussion on how this only one view of what are the important committees to have in place in any clinic and that a lot depends on the issues a Clinic is facing at any one time. Stress the fact that while you may have a committee structure already in place, this is a good time to review and decide if you need to supplement or change it in any way. For example, if you are having difficulty recruiting new board members, you may want to strike a Nominating Committee. Ask the group to agree on which committees are most important for your clinic at this time. Capture the consensus on flip chart. (5 minutes)

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Note – Please see the “Equipment and Materials” section for a list of all handouts and other materials you’ll need. All handouts are provided at the end of this document.

Option – If you decide to start with this BSP, you may wish to go back to BSP #1 and copy the handout ‘4 Possible Governance Styles’ to use it as a foundation for this discussion. You may also wish to read Part one and two (pages 15 to 43) of “Governing for Results: A Director’s Guide to Good Governance” by Mel Gill. You can order this book online from the BSWG website at:
www.onboardlegalclinics.org – on the Home Page, click on ‘Board Tools’ and choose ‘Bite Size Pieces’.

5. Equipment and Materials Needed

Flip chart and markers

Flip Chart – “Four Possible Governance Styles” (p. 6)

Handout – “Four Possible Governance Styles” (refer to module one)

Handout – “Sample Committee Structure” (pp. 7 to 10)

Note – If your board hasn’t completed Governance Module #1, you can download this module from the BSWG website!

6. Timeframe

20 minutes

7. Facilitator Notes

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Use this section to make your own notes about the session. Be sure to share anything of an evaluative nature when the session is over.

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8. Results/Evaluation

Please make enough copies of the Evaluation form (pages 11 and 12) and have each participant complete and hand in to you at the end of the session.

Note – Evaluation is an important part of our training success! Please ask all participants to complete an evaluation form.

9. Next Steps

Consider adding another Bite Size Piece module to your next agenda.

Ask for a volunteer to lead the next session.

Encourage all board members to visit www.onboardlegalclinics.org to sign up for automatic updates on board learning and development.

Tip – Why not download the ‘Bite Size Pieces Board Training Grid’ which your board can use to track what training has been covered and who has been a session leader?

Learning Topic – Board Governance – Module Two
Flip Chart – Four Possible Governance Styles

Four Possible Governance Styles

Conventional Board

Policy Governance Board (the Carver Model)

Working/Operational Board

Collective

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Handout – Sample Committee Structure

1. Types of Committees

There are different types of committees that non-profit organizations such as clinics may have:

Standing Committees are on-going committees in key areas of responsibility. They are often mandated in the By-laws. Clinics may have standing committees in areas such as Human Resources, Clinic Services and Board Development and Recruitment.

Ad Hoc Committees are appointed to deal with an issue or policy of special importance. They are usually appointed by the Board for a limited time. Examples of Ad Hoc Committees, which a clinic Board might appoint, are a committee to review the By-laws and other Governance documents, a Committee to search for an Executive Director, or a committee to focus on outreach to a particular community or client group.

Advisory Committees are appointed to bring “outside” expertise into an organization, perhaps of a professional or technical nature, or relating to knowledge of a specific community. Examples of Advisory Committees, which a clinic Board might appoint, are a Committee to support test case litigation, a Committee to advise on services to victims of domestic abuse, or a Committee to advise on services in a specific geographical area.

2. Committee Structure

Each Committee of the Board will have a Chair who is a member of the Board and a staff member liaison. The Board will determine the need for ad hoc and advisory

committees as the future unfolds. Some typical standing committees for consideration include:

The Executive Committee – carries on the business of the organization when the full board cannot; oversees finances and operations; available the Executive Director for consultation on decisions between meetings.

The Governance Committee – sets specific annual and long-term goals; reviews and drafts policies; recommends training and other resources for Board effectiveness; helps prepare for the AGM; deals with organizational structure.

The Strategic Planning Committee – reviews the vision, mission and values of the clinic and determines the strategic imperatives moving forward that will guide the annual operational planning of the clinic.

The Clinic Services Committee – review and assesses community needs; monitors progress on programs and projects; reviews strategic plan; works on program development as needed.

The Nominating or Membership Committee – reviews and updates criteria for Board membership;

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Handout – Sample Committee Structure

canvases community and recruits suitable Board members; accepts applications from prospective Board members; reviews applications and makes recommendations to Board on prospective new members, periodically reviews Board manual and makes recommendations for changes if necessary.

3. Size and Composition of Committees

In the case of all committees, the Board will actively foster engagement of individuals who can contribute positively to the planning, development and implementations of the specific activities which will secure the advancement of the clinic's vision and mission.

Note – Generally speaking, it is a good idea to have each member of the Board serve on the Governance Committee and serve on at least one other committee. Whenever recruiting new committee members, it is advisable to let them know that they will be non-voting member and that they must agree to work under the mandate of the committee as determined by the Board. Before a committee increases its number, the committee should first identify the skill sets needed to complement the Board members already on the committee. Wherever possible, volunteers should also reflect the diversity of the community.

4. Administration

Each committee will, at a minimum, provide oral progress reports to the Board on a regular basis.

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Handout – Sample Committee Structure

5. Committee Recruitment Process

Members of the committee will seek out candidates in a number of ways so as to tap into the widest range of possible candidates. Recruitment methods will include, but not be limited to – the solicitation of candidates through volunteer bulletin boards, the website, the membership database, and word-of-mouth referrals.

6. Timing

Committees will decide on the appropriate time to increase their membership as determined by their tasks at hand and the skill sets needed.

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Evaluation

Name of Clinic:

Module Name: Board Governance and Committees

Date:

Module Number: Two

About this Module

(To be completed by all participants and the session leader)

This material contributed to a better understanding of the topic

Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

The Content was relevant

Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

The content was organized and easy to follow

Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

The time spent on this module was worth it

Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

For an introductory session, the level of the content material was:

Too Advanced Just Right Too Basic

This module could be improved by:

Bite Size Pieces

Evaluation

About Bite Size Pieces Training

(To be completed by all participants and the session leader)

This is an easy and cost-effective way to learn

Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

I like making learning a board agenda topic

Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

Everyone on the board should take a turn at leading a session

Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

About the Bite Size Pieces Facilitation

(To be completed by the session leader)

I found the facilitation notes and material easy to follow

Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

I enjoyed my role as session leader

Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

Session Leader. Please provide a copy of this evaluation form to each participant and ask that it be completed and returned to you at the end of the session.

Tabulate all results on a separate sheet and fax to the BSWG at: 1-866-674-6714. You can also send an email of the results to: contact@onboardlegalclinics.org