

Governance Redesign Considerations

Overview

When an association begins the re-examination of its organizational structure and governance processes, there are a number of elements it may choose to include in the study design. Among those:

Key Plan Elements:

Which elements of the strategic plan specifically call for modification to the governance structures or processes?

Key Design Criteria

What key design criteria should be established, in advance, to serve as a “litmus test” for the final outcomes? By determining at a high level what outcomes are desired, the group can better depoliticize the process and the final recommendation. Such elements might include but not be limited to:

- Simplicity and clarity of response
- Sunset provisions or re-evaluation periods where appropriate
- Flexibility
- Supportive of timely decisions
- Action-oriented
- Clarifying roles between and among entities and staff and volunteers
- Local linkages
- Clear communication linkages
- Resource sensitive

Entity Evaluation

For each major entity examined (such as a Board of Directors, House of Delegates, etc) a series of decisions will need to be made. Those include:

Roles And Responsibilities

- Who is it accountable to?
- What is it accountable for?

- What is its role in governing/policy setting?
- Is it responsible for defining goals to be accomplished or accomplishing those goals?
- How does it gather the information and knowledge it needs to make informed decisions?

Size and Composition

- *How big(number of parts) and what are the elements that comprise it?*
- *What types of representation are important – functional, geographic, segment/special interests?*

Meeting Frequency And Focus

- *How frequently does the entity meet?*
- *What is its charge?*
- *What is a quorum?*
- *Can conference calls or other electronic means be used to conduct business?*
- *What kinds of issues/activities should comprise its agendas?*

Terms And Limitations Of Office

- What are the terms of office?
- What is the maximum length?
- Required interruptions in service?
- Chair's process if any?

Qualifications And Experience

- *What are the criteria/requirements for each position?*
- *Are they the same or are they different for different roles?*

Accountability And Resources

- How will the entity be held accountable?
- To whom will it be accountable?
- What kind of resources will it control/have oversight for?

Nomination And Election

- *How are candidates identified/nominated/elected/appointed?*

Membership Enfranchisement and Involvement

- *In what ways can members provide input to the policy and decision-making processes of the entity?*
- *How can the entity ensure that member needs are recognized and addressed?*
- *How can members actively participate in the work of the entity?*
- *How are members informed about the work of the entity?*

Source: Cygnet Strategy, LLC