

Qualifications

The Board of Directors is the policy body of the Star Valley Chamber of Commerce. Its members represent a cross-section of the business and professional leadership in the community. It has always been considered an honor to serve on the Board. Genuine and unselfish interest in the Chamber and its objective is the first requirement for the Board members.

Other qualifications include:

- A willingness to make time, effort and financial commitment necessary to give the proper attention to Chamber responsibilities.
- A business and work experience that will assist in the exercise of sound judgment in considering problems of the Chamber as they relate to the overall program of community development.
- The ability to inspire others and to command the respect of associates in responding to worthwhile initiatives sponsored by the Chamber, and to motivate others to resolve community problems.
- The ability to work constructively and harmoniously with directors, members and staff of the Chamber in accordance with policies established by the Board of Directors.
- A top-level "policy" decision maker for his/her firm, usually the chief executive officer of the business with the ability to commit his/her firm's human financial resources to the work of the Chamber.
- A demonstrated ability for leadership in community service.

The proper performance of responsibility by directors and officers is vital to the sound and efficient operation of the Chamber.

Good Board Member:

- Approaches his/her responsibilities in the spirit of a trustee on behalf of the members.
- Stands up for his/her convictions, even at the cost of misunderstanding or disapproval in his/her business or social life.
- Backs up other board members and staff, rising to their defense when they are unjustly criticized or attacked.
- Treats staff as a partner in high calling, while maintaining overall supervision and control.
- Avoids being overawed by others on the Board, whether they be executive staff; tycoons of business, labor or society; professional in various fields, etc.
- Welcomes information and the best available advice, but reserves the right to arrive at decisions on the basis of his/her own judgment.
- Respects the right of other Board members and of staff to disagree with him/her and to have a fair hearing of their points of view.
- Accepts as routing and supports those decisions that are made by a majority vote that will a times go against him/her.
- Criticizes, when necessary, in a constructive way, if possible suggesting an alternative course.
- Recognizes that his/her time and energy are limited and that over-commitment may prove self-defeating.
- Endeavors to keep disagreements and controversies impersonal, and to promote unity.
- Maintains loyalty to his/her agency, within a high loyalty to the welfare of the community and to humanity as a whole.

Functions of the Board

To get a good sense of the operational necessity of having a Board of Directors, you should first review the functions usually performed by a group. If you ask different people, or read different manuals on the duties of a Board of Directors, you will get as many different answers as the number of source you consult. Listed below, however, are the more widely accepted functions or duties of a Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors shall:

- Set the overall policy of the organization
- Determine the goals of the chamber through an approved Program of Work
- Provide adequate funds to do the job through the annual budget
- Establish the dues structure
- Approve the structural organization to include an organization chart
- Provide elections of directors and officers in accordance with the by-laws
- Recommend changes in the by-laws
- Approved in advance all expenditures not included in the budget
- Fill all vacancies occurring on the Board of Directors in accordance with the by-laws
- Meet as required in the by-laws, or more frequently on the call of the president, or on the board's own motion, and set the dates for such meetings
- Provide adequate facilities and equipment
- Employ and annually evaluate the performance of the Executive Director

(The Executive Committee serves as the Personnel Committee)

This list could be longer, but these are considered to be some of the more important functions for the effective operations of a chamber and a board of directors. You must ask yourself, however, when you become a board member, what are **you** expected to do? What specific things are **you** responsible for? How can you work best to help the board fulfill its purposes? Your personal role on the board will, of course, depend on your own expertise, interests and time commitments.

Functions of the Board Member

You should plan to:

- Attend every meeting of the Board of Directors
- Volunteer to work on the Board's committees in areas where your own work and life experiences will best be used
- Take an active role in discussing and developing all new policies and procedures for all chamber matters, including the chamber's annual operating budget and spending plans
- Take an active role in reviewing and evaluating the major programs designed to serve the membership and committees
- Prepare for each meeting by doing any homework necessary to be informed and to take an active role in meetings
- Make sure that your opinions and thoughts on all matters that come before the Board are presented in a way that represents the interests of the membership
- Avoid any conflict between your personal interests as a citizen and your interests as a member of the chamber and Board of Directors

All of the activities and tasks listed above may make things sound like you have agreed to take on a full-time job. To assure that this does not happen to you or other board members, boards have developed a greater reliance on working committees. By creating committees that focus on specialized aspects of the organization's operational needs, board members are allowed to make valuable contributions to the success of the chamber without being **deeply involved** in every aspect of board business. The idea behind creating the committees is to allow a relatively small number of board members to become very familiar with one or two aspects of the organization's operations. These "few", then become the sources and/or create information on their committee's area of focus for the entire Board of Directors. It is this information and its flow to the larger board that helps the board become more effective in carrying out its management and leadership responsibilities.

Overall, serving on the Chamber Board of Directors does not come without obligation. It carries a strong need for commitment on your part. Serving on a Chamber Board of Directors, however, should also be enjoyable, and rewarding, both personally and for your business.