

Relationships, Roles and Responsibilities

[Taken from Unity Worldwide Ministry Board Training Manual;
Unity Ministry Policy Manual – November 2019, page 133, forward]

What is the relationship of the Board members to the Minister?

The Minister is the spiritual leader of the ministry, as well as the professionally trained and qualified administrative head, charged with carrying out its policies. As such the Minister should be a member of the Board and function as an integral part of that team. Neither entity should be regarded as superior. For proper conduct of a ministry, the Minister and Board should become a team, working together for the highest good of the ministry, blessed with the privilege of conducting an activity that assists humankind in becoming aware of its divinity.

The most valuable asset a church has is a good Minister. It becomes the direct responsibility of the Board of Trustees to support and encourage the abilities of the Minister, assuring that the Minister's needs for spiritual, moral, and financial support are fully met. It is equally incumbent on the Minister to be accountable to the Board for the day-to-day functioning and spiritual direction of the ministry. These reciprocal responsibilities make it essential that the Board and Minister function as a team, holding a common vision of the highest good of the ministry.

(See Appendix B below.)

What is the relationship between a Board member and the congregation?

Experience has proven that it is wise for the content of Board meetings to be kept confidential. This builds a level of trust that allows for "thinking out loud," discussing varied ideas and viewpoints, and developing a consensus decision. It is also wise to gather input from the membership. This may be done through questionnaires, requests for feedback, and perhaps most effectively by having Board members and the Minister make themselves known and available to the membership to hear its concerns and opinions.

Once the decision has been made, it should be communicated to the membership from the entire Board, rather than from an individual member or members. This provides mutual support for one another, frees individual Board members of concerns of expressing controversial views or "dumb ideas," while keeping the membership informed of the Board's action. Board members have accepted the obligation to work toward the highest good of the ministry, on behalf of the congregation. In general, people attend ministries to be spiritually fed. They are interested in knowing that their spiritual needs will be met, that the ministry is well run, and they have a stake in its future. They want to be kept informed and are willing to be enrolled in the vision, provided their needs are met.

What is the relationship between a Board member and members of the ministry staff?

It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to approve new positions and establish and/or approve salary ranges. The selection of the individual to fill a position as well as the day-to-day supervision of staff members is the responsibility of the Minister. This establishes the Minister as the supervisor to whom staff members report and eliminates confusion on the part of the staff members.

It is, therefore, appropriate of the Member or an employed business manager to instruct employees concerning their duties. If a Board member has questions or concerns about the way a paid employee is performing, that should be discussed with Minister. If an employee needs corrective action or counseling the Minister is responsible for managing the situation appropriately.

(See Appendix C below.)

What is the relationship between the Board of Trustees and Unity Worldwide Ministries?

Although the Minister is the official, legal representative of the member church to Unity Worldwide Ministries, the entire Board is an important part of the organization structure of Unity Worldwide Ministries. It serves as the voice of the congregation and is the source of much of the strength and power of our movement as a whole. Should a conflict arise that adversely affects the ministry, particularly between the Board and Minister, it is the responsibility of both the Board and Minister to contact Unity Worldwide Ministries for assistance in managing the conflict. Unity Worldwide Ministries has trained Ministers who, as neutral third parties, can help identify issues and points of disagreement, and make recommendation for resolution.

While no dues are levied for member ministers, the Board is strongly encouraged to accept both the privilege and responsibility of offering tithe support, spiritually and financially, on a sustained basis to Unity Worldwide Ministries.

Who should attend and have a voice in board meetings?

Legally, only duly elected members of the Board may be heard in the vote. The Board has the right and responsibility to determine who should attend, except where specific stipulations are set out in the bylaws. The Minister should be a voting member of the Board, and notified of all meetings. He/she should have the right to attend all meetings, except those having to do with his/her own employment. Where stated that the Minister is an *ex-officio* member of the Board, Robert's Rules defines that as a voting position.

**APPENDIX B
BOARD AND MINISTER: WHO DOES WHAT?**

BOARD	MINISTER
Establish policy.	Carries out policy.
Gives input to the church's vision.	Has primary responsibility for the church's vision.
Creates policy for financial management and approves the financial plan (budget).	Makes sure bills are paid, handles day-to-day expenditures, has input into the financial plan (budget).
Approves a bid for major purchase.	Researches, makes recommendation, and carries out the actual purchase; small purchases are usually made by the Minister without Board approval.
Approves financial plan and general finding for staff salaries, including salary ranges, and establishes new positions.	Determines scope of personnel activities, sets individual salaries, and determines amount of raises.
Sets personnel policies, is apprised of disciplinary actions and potential discharges.	Determines level of staffing, writes job descriptions, hires, disciplines, promotes, evaluates, or fires.
Collectively create a performance evaluation of the Minister that is given by one or two members. Also evaluates Board performance and "church performance," i.e. how well is the church overall fulfilling its mission and vision.	Gives performance reviews on all staff positions.

**APPENDIX C
BOARD/STAFF RELATIONSHIPS**

BOARD	STAFF
Is reimbursed for expenses.	Receives compensation for services rendered.
Makes policy.	Has input into and implements policy under the Minister's direction.

BOARD	STAFF
<p>Works as a team with the Minister, offering feedback through an annual performance review as it pertains to the job description.</p>	<p>Is supervised by the Minister; job performance is evaluated by the Minister; serves at the discretion of the Minister.</p>
<p>Establishes new positions and sets and approves salary ranges, is informed of personnel problems if it moves to progressive discipline.</p>	<p>Is hired by the Minister for a salary, the amount of which is confidential, which falls within the range set by the Board.</p>
<p>Has social, friendly relationship with staff members – does not use this relationship to solicit information or promote triangulation.</p>	<p>Maintains friendly relationship while avoiding discussions of employment issues, other staff members, salaries, and ministry management.</p>
<p>Appoints and supervises committees.</p>	<p>Serves on committees if asked.</p>
<p>Discusses personnel performance, positive or negative, with Minister only.</p>	<p>Accepts assignments and performance evaluations from the Minister only; receives discipline from the Minister.</p>
<p>Serves as an unpaid volunteer – cannot be both Board and staff. This is unethical, inappropriate, and represents a conflict of interest.</p>	<p>Works for pay.</p>
<p>Reviews financial condition through financial statements and approves annual budget.</p>	<p>Proposes budget with rationale and complete financial picture for review.</p>
<p>Communicates Board decisions to the congregation.</p>	<p>Assists with communication and supports Board decisions.</p>
<p>May disagree and even argue among selves at the Board meeting; obligated to support the decision once it is made. May not, by statement or innuendo, indicate non-support.</p>	<p>Is obliged to support the decision of the Board; gives up the right to speak about issues when accepting a staff assignment. The vote is the only voice appropriate to a member who is also a staff member.</p>

The Minister is both Board and staff. He/she serves as a full member of the Board yet receives compensation for services. The Minister is the only individual receiving compensation from the ministry who may serve on the Board.