

POLICY GOVERNANCE INTERPRETATIONS

IIA Moral Ownership – Interpretation

The Board holds the assets of the church in trust for our moral owners. When we serve on the Board we do not represent ourselves but the moral owners, who are currently identified as the members (legal owners), friends and Sunday attendees. We govern on behalf of the moral ownership not seated at the table.

There are two parts to this policy:

a) The actions of the board must not be for the specific benefit of any member of the Board but are for the benefit of the moral owners. The Board's main focus should be on visioning and linkage with its members.

b) How is moral ownership defined and what implications does this definition have for how we act as a Board? Currently we define moral owners as members, friends and Sunday attendees. There are other definitions and as we gain experience with policy governance we may choose to change our definition. Another possible definition of moral member may be those outside our congregation who may become members or whose lives we may touch with our caring and social justice work, some piece of the world beyond our walls.

Monitoring

Each time we make a decision we ask how this decision benefits our moral owners and is not for the specific benefit of any Board member on the monthly Board meeting checklist.

At least once a year we document a discussion about how we define our moral owners and consider what implications does this definition have for how we act as a Board.

IIB Governing Style Interpretation and Monitoring

The Board's main role is as a visioning body, attempting to discern what direction the congregation needs to be moving in and what changes membership in UUCM can make in people's lives. Its second role is , through its written policy governance manual, to monitor church operation and accomplishment of identified ends while staying within identified limits.

To do this the Board members will attend and be prepared for each board meeting. Discussions will be respectful of individual expertise while encouraging diverse ideas, transparent and supportive of the decisions reached. IN order to do the work of visioning, Board meetings will focus on the long term outcomes and purpose, the change to be accomplished – rather than the narrower programming details. There will be a clear understanding of what is the Board's and what is the minister's role. Because the Board must be responsive to its moral and legal owners there will be regular and meaningful communication between the two.

Monitoring

There will be a yearly congregational survey addressing:

1. Board leadership abilities and its focus on vision and long term effects and accountability to the moral owners.
2. The presence of written policies and actions that direct, control and inspire the organization.
3. Clearly set forth ends to be accomplished and means to be avoided.
4. Governance in a competent, conscientious and effective manner where the Board has spoken with one voice and Board members have supported all approved actions.

The Board will also monitor its behavior for compliance with a checklist at the end of each Board meeting and a yearly checklist.

(Approved December 2014)

IIC Board Job Description Interpretation and Monitoring

The job of the Board can be broken down into two categories:

1. Visioning – discerning the mission of the church and eliciting the moral owners' ideas on visioning to regularly articulate the ends, and
2. Monitoring – making sure the organization is doing what it has been tasked to do via the ends statements without doing anything it shouldn't be doing.

Linkage means deliberate efforts to communicate among the Board, the Owners, Members, friends, and Sunday attendees. Linkage, as the mechanism for discerning Mission and Vision at a higher level, is a relatively new activity for the Board and we are looking into how this is best done. Examples of linkage include discussions with members around the topic of inspiration, conducting the Congregational Survey and discussing the results with Members, and Board member-sponsored Circle Suppers. The Board will continue to explore other opportunities for linkage. Board members are expected to participate in multiple church activities to enhance opportunities for linkage.. The board will be forming a subcommittee to further explore linkage and visioning and how the board engages the congregation in this activity.

Monitoring

1. The Board will be able to document, at least 4 times a year, its efforts to engage in conversation with the congregation regarding mission, vision and ends.
2. Yearly, the Board will review ends for consistency with mission and values and revise when necessary as a result of feedback from the moral owners.
3. The board has devised a monthly and yearly checklist for Board behavior.
4. The Board will be creating a monitoring devise for Board-executive relations and a yearly congregational survey (see this year's results on the "Documents" page of the website.).
5. The board reviews monthly minister and finance reports and has a schedule for monitoring all other aspects of congregational operation covered by the policy manual, including financial planning, financial condition, compensation and benefits, asset protection, emergency succession, core values, ends, policies and strategic outcomes. As all policies have not been interpreted by the minister, methods for monitoring will change as needed.
6. The Board communicates monthly with the congregation through its article in the Expression.
7. That Board members will note their monthly linkage activities on the Board monitoring checklist.

(Amended October 2015)

IID President and Vice President Job Description

Interpretation and Monitoring

This section covers additional expectations and limits for the Board president and vice president.

1. The president is responsible for preparing the agenda and seeing that Board members receive needed documents in a timely fashion.
2. The president runs the meeting in a timely, fair, orderly and thorough manner in compliance with all relevant aspects of the policy manual.
3. The president sees that the Board acts in accordance with its own rules and norms.
4. The president has no authority to make individual decisions about policies, nor can s/he supervise or direct the minister.
5. The president can represent the Board regarding only Board stated positions, can spend budgeted Board funds, can sign contracts and checks; and can call, set the agenda for and run the yearly congregational meeting.
6. The president calls, sets the agenda for and runs the yearly congregational meeting.

The vice-president acts similarly in the president's absence and is also responsible for monitoring the Board's performance.

Monitoring

There will be a record of a monthly Board agenda prepared by the president.

There will be monthly checklists at the end each Board meeting and a yearly checklist filled out by the Board and minister monitoring the president's behavior, collected and reported on by the vice-president.

There will be a yearly congregational survey eliciting member feedback on Board performance.

(Approved January 2015)

IIE Board Code of Conduct

Interpretation

This policy calls board members to act in an ethical, business-like and lawful manner. The Board's only concern is the interest of the moral owners – not the interests of the staff, themselves or other interest groups. There should be no conflict of interest re financial doings – no personal business deals with any church staff or the congregation unless openly decided on by the Board. The decision of the Board, if it intends to do business with an individual Board member, is made without that member's input, deliberation or vote.

1. Board members are not allowed to get jobs within UUCM for themselves, family or close associates. The member must resign from the board if employment is sought.
2. Board members must disclose involvement with other organizations, vendors, etc. that might produce a conflict of interest.
3. Board members may not try to use individual authority over any aspect of the organization – unless authorized by the Board. Trustees have no authority over any staff.
4. Any contact with the press or the public must only be to repeat explicitly stated Board decisions.
5. Any decision to put a Board member on an operational committee is a Board decision. The role of a Board member on an operational committee must be consistent with Board duties such as monitoring, visioning, etc. Board members must in all respects take care not to undermine the Executive.
An operational committee is a committee formed by the Minister as CEO, and is used by the Minister to formulate and implement the means to achieve the Ends for which the Minister is accountable to the Board.
6. Trustees may not judge the Executive's performance, except through the formal evaluation process against explicit Board policies.
7. Once a Board decision is made trustees must support it as decided, whether they agreed with it or not.

Monitoring

At the beginning of each new Board year all Board members will be asked to sign a note indicating they are familiar with the code of conduct, and there will be a written report based on the yearly board evaluation attesting to compliance.

(Approved May 2015)

IIF Board Covenant

Interpretation

This policy calls Board members to participate at Board meetings fully and honestly, acting in the interest of the church and not a personal agenda. It covers how the Board will work together for the good of the congregation, respecting each other's differences, yet listening to each other with an open mind, communicating respectfully and assuming the other's best intentions. While the details of ongoing discussions may be kept in confidence until a final decision is reached, there will be regular communication with the congregation about the process.

Monitoring

Questions will be added to the monthly checklist completed at the end of each board meeting with a final written report at year's end. Questions added:

Did Board members communicate

- fully and honestly
- respectfully
- listen deeply
- assume best intentions
- be confidential and open as appropriate with the congregation

(Approved February 2015)

IIG. Board Committee Principles

Board committees, when used, will reinforce the wholeness of the Board's job and never alter or interfere with communication and delegation from the Board to the Executive and Staff. They will be used solely to assist the Board in carrying out its responsibilities. Accordingly,

1. Board committees are to help the Board do its job, never to help or advise the Staff. Committees ordinarily will assist the Board by preparing policy alternatives and implications for Board deliberation. In keeping with the Board's broader focus, Board committees will normally not have dealings with current staff operations.
2. Board committees may not speak or act for the Board except when formally given such authority by Board action or controlling documents of the church for specific and time-limited purposes.
3. A Board committee that has helped the Board create policy on some topic will not be used to monitor organizational performance on the same topic.
4. Board committees will establish timelines for completion of the committee work.
5. The Board and its committees will meet periodically to discuss progress based on established timelines.

Interpretation

The policy covers committees created by the Board to help do the Board's work and only the work assigned it by the Board. The committees may not intervene with the Minister or Staff. Most committee work will be focused on helping the Board write/monitor/or deliberate on policy. The committee may not speak for the Board unless formally given authority to do so. If the committee has helped write policy, that committee will not monitor performance on that policy. Committees will complete their work in a timely fashion and report to the Board regularly.

Monitoring

There will be a written report based on the yearly board evaluation attesting to compliance. There will be a question on the monthly board checklist regarding timely completion of committee work.

(Approved April 2015)