

# Taxonomy for Governance Assessment

## 1. STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

**STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT.** All parts of organization are operating in concert with agreed upon strategic direction of organization.

- Governance units are accountable to and aligned with the strategic plan
- People understand organizational priorities clearly enough to be able to make and execute decisions in a timely manner.

## 2. STRUCTURE AND PROCESSES

**STRUCTURE.** Structure helps – rather than hinders – in making the decisions and taking the actions most critical to success.

**PROCESSES.** Processes are designed to produce effective, timely decisions and action.

- Capacity to cope well in crisis or in rapidly changing environment
- Balance of inclusivity and timeliness to convert opportunities into value
- Soundness of decision-making processes: focus, knowledge base, use of time, speed, revisiting decisions, effective consensus building and implementation, transparency)

**INFORMATION.** The people in decision roles have the information they need when and how they need it to make rational, data driven decisions.

## 3. ROLES AND RELATIONSHIPS

**ROLES.** Individuals and groups understand their roles and accountability in our most important decisions.

- Orientation to understand and fulfill responsibilities
- Fiduciary governance – budget, use of resources, assuring resources exist, authority at appropriate org levels
- Effective systems of accountability

**RELATIONSHIPS.** Relationships among governance parts, ensuring conflicts do not deter governance; constituent relationships.

- Volunteer-volunteer relationships – how these relationships work together to advance governance effectiveness

- Volunteer-staff partnership
- Role of staff – are senior staff members counted on to inspire, coach and lead, or is the emphasis on organizing and planning

## 4. PEOPLE AND ENGAGEMENT

**LEADERSHIP.** We are able to engage the best and most qualified people to positions where they can have significant impact.

- Development, recruitment and selection of leadership
- Balance of stability and innovation

**REPRESENTATION.** All constituent groups are appropriately represented in decision-making.

- Diversity
- Inclusivity

**MEMBER PARTICIPATION.** Members are appropriately engaged in the decision-making processes of the organization.

**COMMUNICATION.** Members have sufficient information to help them understand the work done on their behalf by the organization.

## 5. CULTURE, BEHAVIORS, AND REWARDS

**CULTURE.** Organizational culture reinforces prompt, effective decisions and action throughout the organization.

- Capacity to cope well in crisis or in rapidly changing environment
- Balance of stability and innovation
- Transparency
- Extent to which the culture supports individual initiative and/or teamwork

**BEHAVIORS.** Leaders at all levels consistently demonstrate effective stewardship, collaboration, accountability, inspiration and decision behaviors.

**REWARDS AND INCENTIVES.** Those who make and execute effective decisions are valued and effectively rewarded.

- Volunteer leader traits that are most valued and rewarded
- Values that guide treatment of volunteers and staff and how they are rewarded