Crawford County Commission on Aging
Board Governance Policy

I. - Governance Process

1. Governance Commitment: On behalf of the people named in its By Laws, the Board, engaging in a continual refinement of its vision, mission, and values guarantees the accountability of the Commission On Aging by assuring that it:

    A. Achieves appropriate results for the appropriate persons at an appropriate cost.
    B. Avoids unacceptable activities, conditions, and decisions.

2. Governance Style: The Board will govern with an emphasis on:

    A. Encouragement of diversity in viewpoints.
    B. Outward vision rather than internal preoccupation.
    C. Strategic leadership rather than administrative detail.
    D. Clear distinction of Board and Director roles.
    E. Collective rather than individual decisions.
    F. Future goals rather than past or present programs.
    G. Proactively rather than reactivity.

3. Board Job Description: The Board will represent the people named in its By Laws in determining and demanding appropriate organizational performance by:

    A. Establishing the link between the Board and the people.
    B. Writing governing policies that at the broadest level address:
        1. Governance Process: The Board philosophy and accountability.
        2. Board - Staff Relationship: Delegation of authority and monitoring of performance.
        3. Executive Limitations: Constraints on executive authority.
        4. Ends: Organization impacts, benefits, outcomes, recipients, and relative worth.

4. Annual Board Planning Cycle: The Board shall accomplish its job with a governance style consistent with its policies and follow an annual agenda which;

    A. Completes a re-exploration of ends policies at least annually.
    B. Continually improves its performance through attention to Board education and to enrich input and deliberation.

II. Board/Staff Relationship

1. Director Role: The Director is accountable to the Board acting as a body. If individual Board members instruct Director to implement individual ideas without Board knowledge, the Director shall address with Board Chair. If the Board Chair is the individual, the Director shall address with Vice Chair. The Board shall instruct the Director through written policies, delegating to the Director interpretation and implementation of those policies.

2. Delegation to the Director: All Board authority delegated to the staff is delegated through

the Director, so that all authority and accountability of staff is considered to be the authority and accountability of the Director.

A. The Board shall direct the Director to achieve specified results, for specified recipients, at a specified worth through the establishment of Ends Policies.
B. The Board shall limit the latitude the Director shall exercise in practices, methods, conduct, and other "means" to the "ends" through establishment of Executive Limitations Policies.
C. As long as the Director uses a reasonable interpretation of the Board's Ends and Executive Limitation Policies, the Director is authorized to establish further administrative policies, make all decisions, take all actions, establish all practices, and develop all activities.
D. The Board may change its Ends and Executive Limitations Policies, thereby shifting the boundary between Board and Director domains.
E. Only decisions of the Board acting as a body are binding on the Director. Decisions or requests of individual Board members, officers, or committees are not binding on the Director unless the Board has specifically given such authority.

3. Director Job Description: As the Board's single official link to the operating organization, the Director's performance will be considered to be synonymous with:

A. Organizational accomplishment of the provisions of Board Ends Policies as monitored annually.
B. Organizational operation within the boundaries of prudence and ethics established in Board Policies on Executive Limitations as monitored annually.

III. Executive Limitations

1. General Executive Constraint: The Director shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decision or organizational circumstance which is either illegal, imprudent or in violation of commonly accepted business and professional ethics or in violation of contractual obligations.

2. Treatment of Clients: With respect to interactions with clients or stakeholders, the Director shall not cause or allow conditions or decisions which are unsafe, disrespectful, undignified, intrusive, or which fail to provide appropriate confidentiality and privacy. Accordingly, the Director may not:

A. Use forms or procedures that elicit information for which there is no clear necessity.
B. Use methods of collecting, reviewing, or storing client information that fail to protect against improper access to the information elicited.
C. Fail to provide procedural safeguards for the transmission of information.
D. Fail to establish with clients a clear contract of what may be expected and what may not be expected from the services offered.
E. Fail to inform clients of this policy or to provide a grievance process to those clients who believe that they have not been accorded a reasonable interpretation of their rights.
F. Fail to have client services that reflect the diversity found in the community

3. Treatment of Staff: With respect to the treatment of staff, the Director may not cause or

allow conditions that are unfair, undignified or unsafe. Accordingly, the Director may not:

A. Operate without written personnel procedures that clarify personnel rules for staff, provide for effective handling of complaints, and protect against wrongful conditions.
B. Discriminate against any staff member.
C. Fail to acquaint staff with their rights under this policy.
D. Fail to consider human diversity in all dealings with staff.

4. Budgeting: Budgeting any fiscal year or the remaining part of any fiscal year shall not deviate materially from Board Ends priorities or risk fiscal jeopardy. Accordingly, the Director may not cause or allow budgeting which:

   A. Contains too little information to enable credible projection of revenues and expenses, separation of capital and operational items, and cash flow.
   B. Plans the expenditure in any fiscal year of more funds than are conservatively projected to be received in that period.
   C. Provide less than is sufficient for Board prerogatives, such as costs of fiscal audit, Board development, Board and committee meetings, and Board legal fees.
   D. Endangers the fiscal soundness of future years or ignores the building of organizational capability sufficient to achieve Board Ends in future years.
   E. Creates cumulative budget amendments larger than $5,000 without review of the Board at the next regularly schedule meeting. In addition, budget amendments less than a cumulative amount of $5,000 are to be approved by the Board on a quarterly basis at the regularly scheduled meeting following the end of each quarter.

5. Financial Condition: With respect to the actual, ongoing condition of the organization's financial health, the Director may not cause or allow the development of fiscal jeopardy or a material deviation of actual expenditures from Board priorities established in Board Ends Policies. Accordingly, the Director may not:

   A. Expend more funds than have been received in the fiscal year to date unless the debt guideline below is met.
   B. Borrow money.
   C. Use any designated reserves other than for established purposes.
   D. Conduct inter-fund shifting between the fund balance and operating budget in amounts greater than can be restored to a condition of discrete fund balances by certain unencumbered revenues within thirty (30) days.
   E. Fail to settle payroll and debts in a timely manner.
   F. Allow any payments to be overdue or inaccurately filed.
   G. Acquire, encumber, or dispose of property with a value over $10,000.
   H. Enter into any contract with a value greater than $10,000.
   I. The Commission on Aging administration cost will be equal to or less than 10% of the total budget not including direct service expenses.

6. Asset Protection: The Director shall not allow assets to be unprotected, inadequately maintained nor necessarily risked. Accordingly, the Director may not:

   A. Fail to insure against theft and casualty losses to one-hundred (100) percent replacement value less any reasonable deductible and against liability losses to Board members, staff or the organization itself in an amount greater than the average for comparable organizations.

B. Allow unbonded personnel access to material amounts of funds.
C. Unnecessarily expose the organization, its Board or staff, to claims of liability.
D. Make any purchase wherein normally prudent protection has not been given against conflict of interest, or of material value without having obtained comparative prices and quality.
E. Fail to protect intellectual property, information and files from loss or significant damage. Receive, process or disburse funds under controls insufficient to meet auditor's standards.
F. Invest or hold operating capital in insecure instruments, including uninsured checking accounts and bonds of less than AA rating, or in non-interest bearing accounts except where necessary to facilitate ease in operational transactions.
G. Endanger the organization's public image or credibility, particularly in ways that would hinder its accomplishment of mission, including changing the name of the organization.

7. Compensation and Benefits: With respect to employment, compensation and benefits to employees, consultants, contract workers and volunteers, the Director may not cause or allow jeopardy to fiscal integrity or public image. Accordingly, the Director may not:

    A. Change his or her own compensation and benefits.
    B. Promise or imply permanent or guaranteed employment to anyone.
    C. Establish current compensation and benefits which:
        1. Deviate materially from the geographic or professional market for the skills employed.
        2. Create obligations over a longer term than revenues can be safely projected, in no event, longer than one year with the exception of labor contracts and in all events, subject to loss of revenue.
    D. Establish or change pension benefits so the pension provisions:
        1. Cause unfunded liabilities to occur or in any way commit the organization to benefits which incur unpredictable future costs.
        2. Provide less than some basic level of benefits to all full time employees, though differential benefits to encourage longevity in key employees are not prohibited.
        3. Allow any employee to lose benefits already accrued from any foregoing plan.
        4. Are instituted without prior monitoring of these provisions.

8. Executive Succession: In order to protect the Board from sudden loss of chief executive services, the Director shall not have fewer than one (1) other executive familiar with Board and Director issues and processes.
9. Community Resources: With respect to the attainment of the Board's Ends, the Director shall not fail to take advantage of collaboration, partnerships, and innovative relationships with agencies and other community resources.
10. Communication and Counsel to the Board: With respect to providing information and counsel, the Director shall not permit the Board to be uninformed. Accordingly, the Director may not:

    A. Neglect to submit monitoring data required by the Board in a timely, accurate and understandable fashion, directly addressing provisions of the Board Policies being monitored.
    B. Let the Board be unaware of relevant trends, anticipated adverse media coverage, material external and internal changes, particularly changes in the assumptions

upon which any Board Policy has previously been established.

C. Fail to advise the Board if, in the Director's opinion, the Board is not in compliance with its own Policies on Governance Process and Board-Staff Relationship, particularly in the case of Board behavior which is detrimental to the work relationship between the Board and Director.
D. Fail to marshal for the Board as many staff and external points of view, issues and options, as needed for fully informed Board choices.
E. Present information in unnecessarily complex or lengthy form.
F. Fail to provide a mechanism for official Board, officer or committee communications.
G. Fail to deal with the Board as a whole except when fulfilling individual requests for information or responding to officers or committees duly charged by the Board.
H. Fail to report in a timely manner an actual or anticipated noncompliance with any Policy of the Board.

IV. Ends

End #1: The Commission on Aging shall ensure that resources are effectively managed with a goal of limited to no waiting list for services.

Outcome Measure: Actual number of clients on waiting list combined with circumstances surrounding the need for the waiting list.

End # 2: Services are accessible to all seniors in Crawford County.

Outcome Measure: Actual numbers served from each township & City of Grayling.

End #3: Customer Service satisfaction that reflects quality of services, achievement of program objectives and a process for hearing and resolving consumer concerns, utilizing survey results to meet a goal of 90%. Surveys will be completed for In-Home, congregate, home delivery meals and senior center activities.

Outcome Measure: Customer service surveys with 90% satisfaction.

End #4: The levels of services are acceptable to all seniors in Crawford County.

Outcome Measure: Customer service survey responses to question asked. Evidence of a waiting list.

End #5: The Commission on Aging will be compliant with all funder program guidelines.

Outcome Measure: 100% performance and financial audit compliance.

End #6: The Commission on Aging will provide services at a comparable cost.

Outcome Measure: Cost per unit of service will be compared to the Commission on Aging precious year.

Adopted 2/05
Updated 7/26