Board Development Checklist

(Adapted from the Katahdin Trust)

Board Recruitment

- [ ] Prepare a list of current Board members with title or affiliation.
- [ ] Determine if current members are willing to continue serving.
- [ ] Prepare a skills/focus area inventory of existing board members.
- [ ] Determine how many new Board members are needed. Board size should be 6-15 members.
- [ ] Fill in a power mapping chart with names of current and potential board members.
- [ ] Prepare a recruitment list of names in order of priority, with groupings based on skills needed and level of influence and support.
- [ ] Determine who will approach each potential member, how to report the response, and when to approach the next person on each skill list. Be very deliberate in recruiting needed skills/influence.
- [ ] Assign current Board members to go with Executive Director to meet with potential Board member.
- [ ] Develop a Board Member job description, including conflict of interest statement and any Directors liability insurance provided.
- [ ] Compile a potential Board recruitment packet:
    - Organizational one-pager or brochure
    - Board list
    - Copy of By-laws
    - Job description
    - Conflict of Interest statement
- [ ] Begin recruitment, filling in power-map and skills inventory as commitments are made. When one skill segment is well-represented, stop recruiting in that segment and concentrate on areas where representation is need.
- [ ] Continue until Board is complete.
- [ ] Send welcome letter to new members, with date of Orientation meeting and date of first Board meeting.

Prepare a Board of Directors Manual

- [ ] A loose-leaf two- or three-ring binder with tabs is most flexible. Ask members to bring binder to meetings and add new materials related to committee or Board work. Consider including these items:
    - Organizational one-pager or brochure
    - Calendar showing meeting dates, time, and location
    - Board list with titles or affiliations, address, contact information
    - Mission, Vision, Purpose
    - Brief written history and/or fact sheet

- By-laws
- Articles of Incorporation
- Board member job description
- Committees and descriptions
- 501c3 Letter
- Conflict of Interest Statement
- Board Liability insurance policy
- Financial documents
    - Prior-year annual report
    - Most recent audit report
    - Current annual budget
    - Form 990
    - Banking resolutions
    - Current funder list

- ☐ Conduct initial orientation session with new Board members.
- ☐ Board Chair, Executive Director, and key committee chairmen should attend the orientation with the new members.
- ☐ Make it clear that your organization needs their expertise, their influence, and their time – not just attendance at the regular meetings.
- ☐ Develop bullet-points or Q&A sheets to prepare the new members to respond easily to questions about the organization.

Preparation for Meetings

- ☐ Determine how members prefer to be contacted: email if possible and snail mail as a last resort.
- ☐ Send meeting notices at least one month ahead if meeting quarterly. Send reminders at least 2 weeks ahead if following a regular monthly schedule.
- ☐ Make sure meeting minutes are sent to Board members promptly after each meeting. Do not delay the minutes. If a member has missed the meeting, he needs to know quickly what was discussed, announced, and decided at the meeting.
- ☐ Organize all materials, reports, agenda, etc for each board meeting.
- ☐ Start promptly and observe a set adjournment time.
- ☐ Follow the agenda. Use basic components of Robert's Rules of Order.
- ☐ Make the meetings interactive and interesting. Board members should make reports and present questions to be discussed at the meetings. The Executive Director should not dominate the reporting and discussion.

Ongoing Board Development

- ☐ It is important that each board member understand what his "job" is, whether it is one specific task or as a member of a committee or task force. Make it clear that the task or job will go undone if not carried out by the assigned member(s)

- Develop the members to be the primary communication bridges into the community at large. Board members are volunteers, and the meeting is an opportunity for on-the-job training while they are together.
- Include on each meeting agenda a 5-10 minute “learning” segment for board members. Use the time to:
    - Give the opportunity for board members to get to know each other and the organization’s many facets.
    - Coach or refresh the members about the goals and objectives of your organization and to develop a passion for the value of the organization.
    - Keep them informed about current laws, policies, or political views that may affect the organization.
    - Feature an aspect of your organization’s services that they might not know about.
    - Keep members motivated by sharing successes and disappointments with them. Use examples or stories to illustrate challenges and outcomes.
    - Be sure that the members can distinguish between “What we do” and “What we achieve.”
    - Give them the ability to communicate the impact of your organization on your clients, their families, and the community as a whole.