Summer 2020

Enhancing Board Governance and Engagement at the Upcountry History Museum

Jade Cox

Consultancy Project
Executive Summary

Organization:	Gardner-Webb University School of Education
Project Title:	Enhancing Board Governance and Engagement at the Upcountry History Museum
Candidate:	Jade Cox
Consultancy Coach:	Dr. Dale Lamb
Defense Date:	July 7, 2020
Authorized by:	Dana L. Thorpe, Chief Executive Officer Upcountry History Museum

Amendment History

Version	Issue Date	Changes
Version 1	May 5, 2020	Initial version.
Version 2	June 19, 2020	Corrections in grammar and formatting.

Approval

This consultancy project was submitted by Jade Cox under the direction of the persons listed below. It was submitted to Gardner-Webb University School of Education and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Gardner-Webb University.

_____   _____
Dr. Dale Lamb, Faculty Advisor   Date
Gardner-Webb University

_____   _____
Dana Thorpe, Site Advisor   Date
Chief Executive Officer

Abstract

Enhancing Board Governance and Engagement at the Upcountry History Museum. Cox, Jade, 2020: Consultancy Project, Gardner-Webb University.

The purpose of this consultancy was to assist the Upcountry History Museum in developing their board of directors into an engaged decision-making body. At the beginning of the consultancy, the museum was preparing to craft a strategic plan for the next ten years and had hopes of becoming accredited by the American Alliance of Museums in the future. Museum leadership requested help from the consultant in the areas of board governance and engagement. During the three-year project, the consultant worked to provide the museum with updated bylaws, a new onboarding program for new members, and the creation and implementation of a committee structure. These deliverables enabled the museum leadership to begin to transition the board of directors into an active, governing body to ensure the vision and the mission of the museum is realized.

   Keywords: board governance, board engagement, board structure, board development

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1 Introduction

1.1 Project Purpose

Background Information

The Upcountry History Museum in Greenville, South Carolina, has the mission to connect people, history, and culture. The museum's original roots took hold in 1983 as the Greenville Country Historic Preservation Commission formed a new section 501(c)(3) educational, not-for-profit corporation titled the Historic Greenville Foundation. Ultimately, the Foundation settled on the goal of creating a museum representative of the unique history of the Upcountry of South Carolina. Today, the Museum is located at Heritage Green in downtown Greenville and is the historical record keeper and storyteller of the 15 counties in South Carolina designated as "the Upcountry."

The museum has eight full-time employees: chief executive officer, chief operating officer, curator of collections, education and program manager, facility and installation manager, collection manager, visitors' services coordinator, and education coordinator. The museum is also governed by a 23-voting member board of directors.

Challenges

In an effort to increase board engagement and fundraising capacities, the Museum leadership set out to actively recruit board members with ties to well-known and influential organizations in the Greenville area. In 2017, the Upcountry History Museum Board of Directors added eight new members. The

museum also has an internal plan to apply to the American Alliance of Museums Accreditation program following the completion of rehousing the permanent collection. This process is not scheduled to begin until 2022 at the earliest. In addition, the leadership of the museum is also looking forward to crafting an updated strategic plan that will guide the museum for the next five years. Coupled with addition of the new board members and driven by future plans, the museum desired to strengthen the decision-making, governing, and engagement abilities of the board of directors.

Purpose of the Consultancy Project

The purpose of the consultancy project was to lay the foundation of transitioning the Upcountry History Museum Board of Directors into an actively engaged and working board. Much of the consultancy was completed in advisement with the Chief Executive Officer and the Director of Education and Programs (this position has undergone changes since the project began). While consulting with the Museum representatives, it was determined that the bylaws need revising, a committee structure needed to be implemented, and the board member handbook and orientation process needed revising. The goal was to sure up the governance and administrative documents and procedures in an effort to provide the leadership of the museum with tools to ensure effective recruiting, onboarding, and sustainability of a board of directors working on behalf of the vision and mission of the museum.

1.2   Associated Documents

    a.   SWOT Analysis
    b.   Board Assessment (Survey)
    c.   New Member Handbook/Orientation Program (draft)
    d.   New Committee Structure
    e.   Literature Review
    f.   DEOL Consultancy Defense Presentation

1.3   Project Plan Maintenance

The consultancy with the Upcountry History Museum began in October 2017 and determined the primary focus of the project would focus on board development and engagement. Monthly meetings were scheduled with the Director of Education and Programs to establish tasks and timeframes. All documents were submitted to the Chief Executive Officer and Director of Education and Programs for review prior to board review or approval.

2 Project Scope

These meetings established and ordered the tasks agreed upon. The initial task was to conduct a review of the bylaws that pertained to board members and governance. Also, during this time, the board of directors was given a board assessment to help assess individual and collective attitudes toward the museum. This assessment also figured into the proposal and ultimate decision of what committees to implement. Other tasks included the review and revision of the board handbook and a proposal for an orientation program for new board members.

2.1 Outline of Partnering Organization's Objectives

2.1.1 Objectives

The overall of objective of the project was to establish processes that will increase board engagement at the Upcountry History Museum. This was to be achieved by reviewing and updating bylaws, creating an orientation program for new board members, conducting a board assessment, and implementing a new committee structure for the board of directors. All objectives were achieved except for the creation and implementation of the orientation program for new members. A draft document was submitted to the Chief Executive Officer and the Director of Education and Programs for review, and that is where it remains.

2.1.2 Success Criteria

Success criteria for the consultant included the following:

1. Receiving copies of bylaws from similar organizations and drafting a revised copy of bylaws for the CEO and Executive Committee of the museum to review.

2. Creating and submitting for review an orientation program for new board members.

3. Guiding the discussion and implementation of newly formed committees.

4. Conducting and reporting on the board assessment.

2.1.3 Risks

A major risk occurred when the Director of Education and Programs left the museum. This person served as the site supervisor for the consultancy. I met monthly with the Director of Education and Programs, and she served as the liaison to the CEO. However, it became evident that the CEO was in communication with the Director of Education and Programs regarding the progress of the project. There was little down time as the CEO transitioned into the direct contact for the consultancy. The project continued to progress. In some instances, project objectives moved more swiftly once I was able to communicate directly with the CEO. The implementation of new committees was an example of an unencumbered objective that was met once direct communication was established with the CEO.

2.2   Definitive Scope Statement

The scope of this project was to lay the foundation for an active and engaged board of directors for the Upcountry History Museum. The desired outcomes of the leadership of the museum included board

members that are active in the "work" of the museum, ensuring that the museum recruits effective members, having a process to orient new members, and enhancing the governance of the board through industry standard and consistent bylaws.

3   Deliverables

3.1   To Partnering Organization

Deliverables to Upcountry History Museum included the following:

1. Proposed revisions to Article Three, Article Four, Article Five, Article Six, Article Seven, and Article Eight of the bylaws of Upcountry History Museum.

2. A template for an orientation program and notebook for new board members.

3. A proposal for potential committees.

3.2   From Student

The following were conducted during the project:

1. A SWOT Analysis.

2. A board assessment from National Council of Nonprofits.
    a. Compiled and presented the data to the CEO and Director of Education and Programs.

3. Met with the Executive Committee to discuss the purpose and scope of the project.

4. Met with the full board to provide an overview of the project and ask for assistance in completing the board assessment.

Deliverable/Task	Current Status	Appendix
SWOT	Complete	Yes
Bylaws Revision	Revisions have been submitted to the CEO and Executive Committee. Currently the Executive Committee is assessing revisions and working to fine-tune them in preparation presentation to full board before moving to a final vote.	No

New Orientation Program and Handbook	A draft was created and submitted to the CEO and Director of Education and Programs.	Yes
Committee Structure Proposal	An original list of 8 committees were submitted to the CEO. The CEO and Executive Committee decided to implement 4 committees: Networking, Communication, Engagement, and Financial Planning. The committees have been adopted and are currently working on their assigned tasks.	Yes
Board Assessment	Completed. Data has been compiled and presented to the CEO and Director of Education and Programs. The biggest takeaway for the leadership of the museum is that current members of the board are unaware of the current practices of the museum in the areas of outreach, marketing, and programming.	Yes

4   Project Approach

4.1   Project Lifecycle Processes

An initial meeting with the CEO and Director of Education and Programs occurred in October 2017. At this meeting, all attendees discussed and decided on the areas of focus for the project. The CEO and Director of Education requested help related to board development and engagement. The CEO and other staff members desired to transition the current board of directors into an active, working, and decision-making body for the overall benefit of the museum. The CEO and Director of Education and Programs expressed the following desires related to the board: higher attendance at board meetings, higher attendance of board members at museum functions, increased levels of personal giving from board members, and increased levels of giving influence by board members.

After the initial meeting, I directly with and worked through the Director of Education and Programs. Monthly meetings were held between the two as well as frequent email communications. The Director of Education and Programs worked closely with me regarding all milestones and as the liaison between the CEO and the consultant. However, this dynamic shifted in May 2019 as the Director of Education and Programs left the museum. At that time, the CEO became the direct contact for the consultancy.

4.2   Project Management Processes

Again, the CEO, and the Director of Education and Programs, and I managed

the process and progress of the project. Most of my discussions took place with

the Director of Education and Programs, who would then meet with the CEO to

provide updates and gather feedback. All requests, reports, and decisions were

presented to the CEO for approval, feedback, and permission. Ultimately, the

CEO directed all aspects of the consultancy for the museum.

4.3   Project Support Processes

The project was supported by:
➢ CEO of the museum
➢ Director of Education and Programs of the museum
➢ Executive Committee of the museum
➢ Full Board of Directors of the museum
➢ DEOL Student (myself)

4.4   Organization

4.4.1 Project Team

Project milestones were required as part of the DEOL program throughout

the project. These milestones guided the project and ensured all aspects

were covered. Ultimately, these milestones were compiled to provide a

complete and thorough outline for completion of the consultancy.

Furthermore, the required courses of the DEOL program and the

assignments and tasks of each class helped the consultant develop the

necessary skills needed to effectively partner with their consultancy

organization. In addition to course requirements, regular communication

and meetings with the partnering organization and university supervisor

ensured that important deadlines and tasks were completed to accomplish

the objectives of the consultancy.

4.4.2 Mapping Between Upcountry History Museum and Student
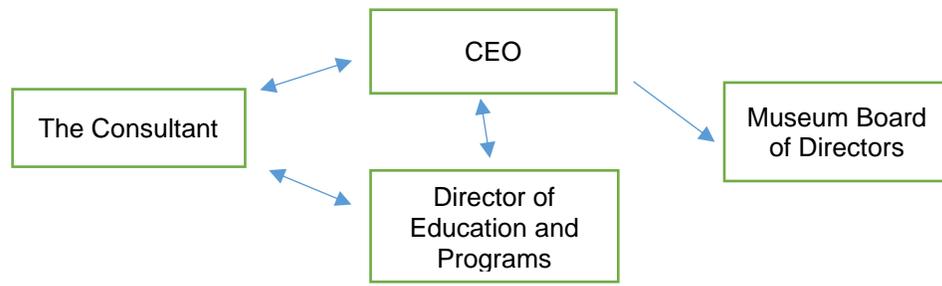
5 Communications Plan

For this project, communication was mainly between the CEO, the Director of Education and Programs, and me. I met monthly with the Director of Education and Programs to discuss the processes and progress of the project. Communication also involved emails. The Director of Education and Programs was an essential piece of the communication especially since she served as the direct link to the CEO. All recommendations, requests, proposals, and created materials were submitted for approval by the CEO through the Director of Education and Programs. I had one meeting with the Executive Committee to provide an overview and purpose of the project and a meeting with all board members to discuss the purpose of the project, introduce the board assessment, and request each member's participation in the assessment. Mainly, the board was kept informed by the CEO.

6   Work Plan

The initial meeting in October 2017 established the areas of focus and scope of the

consultancy. An initial draft of proposed deliverables was provided to the CEO and

Director of Education and Programs in November 2017. The charts below outline the

work plan, tasks, and deliverables of the consultancy.

I.   Specific Activity: SWOT Analysis

Timeline	January 2018
Persons Responsible	Consultant, Chief Executive Officer, and Director of Education and Programs
Tasks/Procedures	CEO and Director of Education and Programs completed a SWOT Analysis and submitted it to the consultant.
Resources Needed	Museum documents and data; SWOT Analysis form
Formative Assessment Method	Literature and research review of SWOT Analysis to understand their strengths, weaknesses, purposes, and outcomes.
Summative Assessment Method	a. Review and discussion of information provided by museum leadership. b. Application of data gathered to the proposed outcomes of the project and identified needs of the museum.
Goal	To study the internal and external environment of the museum.
Indicator of Success	A completed copy of the SWOT Analysis submitted to the consultant. The consultant used the information to devise an action plan to address weaknesses and heighten the indicated strengths of the museum.

II. Specific Activity: Board Self-Assessment Survey

Timeline	January 2018-April 2018
Persons Responsible	Consultant, Chief Executive Officer, and Director of Education and Programs
Tasks/Procedures	a. Created a draft of the proposed board assessment and submitted it to the CEO and the Director of Education and Programs for review. b. Made revisions and edits and submitted those to the CEO for final approval. c. CEO distributed the assessment to the board members. (Paper copies were made available at the monthly board meeting, and the assessment was also sent out via email. A two-week deadline was set to complete the assessment.)
Resources Needed	Assessment instrument, board member contact information, computers, and paper.
Formative Assessment Method	a. Literature and research review of board assessments to understand their strengths, weaknesses, purposes, and outcomes. b. Review and selection of sample board assessments to determine best fit for consultancy goals and deliverables.
Summative Assessment Method	a. Assessment was conducted. b. Data gathered from the assessment. c. Analysis and dissemination of the data.
Goal	The distribution of a comprehensive board assessment survey to help drive the needs, processes, and operations of the museum related to the board of directors.
Indicator of Success	A return rate of 33%.

III. Specific Activity: Revision of the Current Bylaws of the Museum

Timeline	January 2019-September 2019
Persons Responsible	Consultant, CEO, and Executive Committee of the Board of Directors
Tasks/Procedures	The CEO and Director of Education and Programs provided the consultant with a list of similar museums to pattern the bylaws revision after. (Tampa Bay Historical Center, Chicago History Museum,

	Norman Rockwell Museum, The Reading Public Museum, and Connecticut Historical Society. I contacted each of the identified museums and asked for copies of their bylaws. After analyzing the provided documents, the consultant revised the Upcountry History Museum's bylaws to correlated to the bylaws of the similar organizations. I also expanded the review of museum bylaws and began to research the bylaws of museums not on the list provided by the CEO. This expanded review was conducted to answer questions related to quorums, qualifications of board members, nominating board members, and committees. The expanded list included nine additional museums: Aiken County Historical Museum, Alameda Museum, Mid-Atlantic Association of Museums, Knoxville Museum of Art, Minnesota Association of Museums, Maryhill Museum of Art, Ventura Museum, Wellfleet Historical Society and Museum, and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The CEO and Executive Committee picked up the work of finalizing the revisions to the bylaws.
Resources Needed	A copy of current bylaws and copies of bylaws from other museums.
Formative Assessment Method	a. Review of bylaws of museums and historical societies. b. Review and research of parliamentary procedures for boards of directors (*Roberts Rules of Order*).
Summative Assessment Method	a. Updated and revised copy of bylaws provided to CEO and Executive Committee for review. b. Revised bylaws presented to full board for discussion, input, and further considerations. c. Final vote of approval by full board of directors.
Goals	An approved, up-to-date document that outlines the bylaws of the museum, which is aligned to industry standards.
Indicators of Success	An approved and implemented governing document.

IV. Specific Activity: Development and Implementation of a Committee Structure

Timeline	October 2019-September 2020
Persons Responsible	Consultant, CEO, Executive Committee of the Board of Directors

Tasks/Procedures	The following committees were proposed to the CEO and the Director of Education and Programs: Executive Committee, Audit Committee, Finance Committee, Collections and Acquisitions Committee, Development Committee, Governance Committee, Programs, Education, Outreach Committee, and Nominating Committee.
	
	The following committee structure was approved and implemented.
	   a. Networking Committee: focus on corporate giving
	   b. Communication Committee: focus on advancing the role of the museum in the community
	   c. Engagement Committee: focus on membership recruitment, retention, and financial giving.
	   d. Financial Planning: focus on long range financial planning of the museum.

Resources Needed	Human capital and documents from other museums that outline their committee structure.
Formative Assessment	a. Research related to committee structure and functions for museums. b. Review of methods on how to implement committee structure (best practices).
Summative Assessment	Drafting and implementation of committees including a proposal (action plan) specific to the needs of the museum.
Goal	To create and present a committee proposal that addresses the tops needs of the museum.
Indicator of Success	With board approval, implement a committee structure with established responsibilities and goals for each committee. Have committees fully staffed and operational at the beginning of the 2019-2020 fiscal year.

V. Specific Activity: Creation of an Onboarding/Orientation Newly Elected Board Members

Timeline	January 2020-May 2020
Persons Responsible	Consultant, CEO, Executive Committee of the Board of Directors
Tasks/Procedures	a. Created a draft for the onboarding program for new board members. b. Submitted to CEO and the Director of Education and Programs for review.
Resources Needed	Sample documents, paper, computer
Formative Assessment	a. Research and review of best practices for onboarding new board members.
Summative Assessment	a. Created and submitted a proposed plan to CEO. b. Document reviewed by museum leadership.
Goal	The establishment of an onboarding program for new board members that provides precise information needed to be successful and engaged in the work and responsibilities of the board of directors.
Indicators	A fully implemented program that is used for onboarding/orienting newly elected board members. This has not been achieved.

7 Milestones

Project Milestones	Current Status
Adoption of new bylaws	The Executive Committee is planning to resume work on bylaws in summer 2020. Any additional meetings related to this task have been postponed due to COVID-19.
Adoption of new committees	The new committee structure was approved in the summer of 2019.The committees have been approved.
Implementation of committees	The committees began their work with the beginning of the fiscal year for 2019.
Committee work initiated	The committees have been approved and begun their work. Along with the specific tasks of each committee, as outlined in their descriptions, all committees are focusing on the museum's annual fundraiser: Fall Flavor: A Historic Dining Experience.
Adoption of new board member orientation	A draft was been submitted to the CEO and the Director of Education and Programs.
Increase board member attendance at museum events	Each month board members are presented with a list of upcoming events and select the event that they will attend. Some examples include: Neighborhood Night, Toddler Time, Family Fun Day, and Fundraising Calls.

8   Metrics and Results

Risks, Constraints, Assumptions

A. SWOT Analysis:
   a. Strengths indicated include
      ➢ Diversity of board based on size of the board, personal backgrounds of the individual board members, the corporate and community partners represented, as well as the different community interests represented
      ➢ Continuity of leadership both in the board of directors and the museum staff
   b. Weaknesses indicated include
      ➢ The board lacks clear, definable, and obtainable goals, which has limited the boards input on long-term goals, the strategic plan, and ways to help achieve the mission and vision of the museum.
      ➢ The board relies too much on staff for direction.
   c. Opportunities indicated include
      ➢ Board training to help move the organization forward.
      ➢ There are numerous community and corporate sponsors who are not currently represented on the museum's board but could potentially make the board stronger.
      ➢ The museum has been growing its membership base and increasing visitation numbers. This presents opportunities to connect with these "new" members to refresh the board membership, especially for those members actively engaged with exhibitions and programs.
      ➢ Increasing engagement opportunities for community and corporate partners prior to board involvement to help strengthen ties, but also testing the waters with potential board members prior to welcoming them to the board.
   d. Threats indicated include
      ➢ This community has a large number of nonprofits/cultural organizations all vying for the same board members and donors.
      ➢ The board has a fund-raising mission, and the current corporate giving landscape is continually changing making it difficult to select projects that fit and to select board members from corporations with a mission that connects to the museum.
      ➢ For board members who have not been heavily involved with the museum prior to joining the board, the lack of experience and understanding of the museum can pose a real challenge.
      ➢ There is confusion over what the museum was 10 years ago, compared to what the museum is today, and what the future of the museum could/should look like.

B. Board Assessment: The information indicated below is based off the 15 completed surveys returned; that is a completion rate of 65%. Surveys were distributed to each board member via paper copies as well as through Google Forms. Board members were asked to indicate their responses to 20 questions using a Likert scale. The survey also contained three short answer questions.

The following insights were gleaned from the board assessment and helped indicate what areas for the consultant to focus on during the project:

> ➢ 83% of respondents either agree or strongly agree that the board understands museum's mission, vision, and service/programs.

> ➢ 50% of respondents were neutral and 8% of respondents disagree that the board effectively represents the organization in the community.

> ➢ 57% of respondents were either neutral in their response or disagreed with the statement that all necessary skills, stakeholders, and diversity are represented on the board.

> ➢ 40% of respondents agree or strongly agree that the board is attentive to building leadership capacity on both board and staff.

> ➢ 66% of respondents agree or strongly agree the board has a full and a common understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the board.

C. Document Review: The Upcountry History Museum desires to bring their bylaws into alignment with similar organizations, and with the help of museum staff, five potential organizations were identified as possible models to emulate. A document review of these organizations was completed. However, the bylaws of the identified organizations did not contain all the items that the Upcountry History Museum was seeking, and the bylaws of additional museums were researched beyond those originally identified by museum leadership. After reviewing each organization's bylaws, suggested revisions were submitted to the CEO and Director of Education and Programs.

8.1 Risks

Risk Description	Mitigation Plan (what to do to avoid the risk occurring)	Contingency Plan (what to do if the risk occurs)	Impact (what the impact will be to the project if the risk occurs)	Likelihood of occurrence (e.g., %, or high, medium, low)
Board members are not active committee members.	1. Give board members input on committee adoption. 2. Board members vote and approve the implementation of committee structure. 3. Members of each committee crafts their purpose, duties, tasks, and goals for each specific committee. 4. Each board member has a voice regarding which committee they would like to participate in.	Ask Executive Committee and CEO to oversee committees and assess work and progress of the committees. Executive Committee puts in additional accountability strategies to ensure each committee is reaching their goals.	Staff will remain the decision-maker of the organization. An essential piece of board development and engagement will not be in place, and the current level of board engagement at the museum will remain the same.	Medium
The museum does not institute or update their onboarding process for new board members.	1. Strategies are offered to museum leadership related to recruitment and orientation of highly qualified board members. These include a draft for onboarding new board members, an updated handbook, a recruitment tool, and assessment tool. 2. Executive Committee and	Executive Committee and CEO implement board development sessions and plan a yearly retreat. Seek a consultant to assess board and propose ways to create opportunities for board	The museum will not be able to actively recruit highly qualified candidates. Highly qualified candidates will not actively seek out or apply for openings on the board of directors.	Medium

	assigned committee review draft. 3. Assigned committee uses draft to create an onboarding program that meets the needs of the museum and new board members. 4. Proposed onboarding program is presented to and voted on by board of directors. 5. Training session(s) help for those responsible for providing the onboarding session.	members to engage in organization's mission and vision.		
The board does not effectively institute or embrace the newly approved bylaws as the board continues to progress towards an actively engaged, governing board.	1. Make sure board members have input regarding the revision of the bylaws. 2. New revisions are presented to board members and discussions/questions are allowed. 3. Vote and approval by all board members. 4. Revisions to bylaws address the gaps in governance related to the board. 5. Session(s) to make sure that all board members understand the new bylaws.	The committee responsible for revisions should address any concerns related to revisions. Executive Committee works with designated committee to address any misunderstanding and provide additional training.	The board will not progress through the life stages of nonprofit boards: organizing, governing, to institutional. Museum staff will remain the lead decision makers for the organization.	Low
Board does not	1. Adopt a meeting structure that does	Executive Committee and	The museum runs the risk of not	Medium

implement the strategies for increasing board engagement to ensure board members are effective representatives of the organization.	not heavily rely on reports from museum staff. 2. Provide time at board meetings for committees to meet and conduct their business. 3. Solicit frequent feedback from the board; conduct board assessments. 4. Provide re-fresher sessions to board members related to the vision and mission of the museum along with practical training on elevator pitches and messaging.	CEO implement board development sessions and plan a yearly retreat. The museum can seek a consultant to assess board and propose ways to create opportunities for board members to engage in organization's mission and vision.	being able to fulfill its vision, mission, or outreach to the community. Board members are not adequately informed or involved in the "work" of the museum. The museum could lose standing in the community.	

8.2   Constraints

Some constraints related to the consultancy include:
- ➢ A series of board meetings that were not held due to quorum not being met.
- ➢ Site supervisor left prior to the end of the consultancy.
- ➢ Delays and lags in communication from site supervisor due to work priorities.
- ➢ Consultant received limited feedback on submitted documents related to deliverables

8.3   Assumptions

Assumptions made during the consultancy include:
- ➢ The Upcountry History Museum will continue to serve the Upcountry of South Carolina.
- ➢ Board members will continue to attend the monthly board meetings, will meet requested monetary donation as designated in bylaws, and volunteer for museum events.
- ➢ Museum leadership is invested in and committed to the consultancy partnership.

- ➢ The Executive Committee of the board will continue to meet and provide oversight for the museum and guide the complete board through the process of governing the museum.
- ➢ The leadership of the museum and the board of directors will continue to have a positive working relationship.
- ➢ Board members are willing to serve their 2-year term and are willing to take on the work of the proposed committees, thus increasing board involvement with staff and programming of the museum.
- ➢ The leadership of the museum and the board of directors are willing to continue the framework of moving towards a governing board that becomes active decision-makers for the fulfillment of the museum's vision and mission.

9   Financial Plan

The consultancy did not require a budget or financial plan for the project. The Upcountry History Museum also did not have to factor any services related to the project into their budget or financial plan. The focus of this project was on board development and engagement, which required no sources of funding. However, the organization and I did invest many hours of their time to achieve the intended outcomes of the consultancy.

10 Quality Assurance Plan

As a means to trace progress and improvement, the consultant used the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) model. This four-stage problem-solving model provides a framework for implementing change and enables organizations to make incremental changes and assess the benefits of those changes. The chart below summarizes the purposes and outcomes of quality improvement.

Indicators/Variables	Quality Improvement Outcomes
Purpose	Designed to implement knowledge, assess a process or program as judged by established/accepted standards.
Starting Point	Knowledge-seeking is integral to ongoing management system for delivering maximum experience for visitors (client experience).
Design	Adaptive, iterative design.
Benefits	Directly benefits a process, system, or program.
Risks	Does not increase risk to the organization.
Participant Obligation	Responsibility to participate as component of keeping the organization relevant, responsive, and operational.
Endpoint	Improve a program, process, or system to establish standard.
Analysis	Compare program, process, or system to establish standards.
Adoption of Results	Results rapidly adopted and implemented.
Publication/Presentation	Responsible parties encouraged to share systematic reporting of insights.

The implementation of the PDSA model began by answering three questions specific to the desired outcomes of the museum.

1. What is the museum trying to accomplish?

The Upcountry History Museum is seeking an active and engaged board that takes part in the decision making and governing processes of the museum. The museum is seeking to create a new committee structure within the board of directors that will strengthen the museum as they look towards the future and make plans for accreditation and strategic planning.

2. How Will the museum know that a change is an improvement?

- ➢ Conducting assessments of board members and comparing data to increase board member attendance at board meetings and museum events.
- ➢ More qualified candidates seeking placement on the board.
- ➢ Board meetings are led by board members and are not solely for reporting out from museum staff.

3. What changes can result in improvement?

- ➢ New board meeting structure.
- ➢ New committee structure.
- ➢ Active recruiting process for board members that have the skills the museum needs.
- ➢ Ongoing board development.

Appendix A

SWOT Analysis Conducted by Museum Leadership

INTERNAL FACTORS	
STRENGTHS (+)	WEAKNESSES (-)
Due to the large size of the UHM Board, there is room for considerable diversity. Diversity may include the personal backgrounds of the individual board members, the corporate or community partners represented, or the different community interests represented. Currently, there has been continuity in leadership both in the board for the staff which allows for stronger relationships and prevents a loss of time to bring leadership up to speed. The bylaws currently provide a degree of flexibility that allow for the creation of committees or special tasks forces as needed but without the requirement that they be standing committees. This provides the flexibility the Museum needs to respond to trends and changes without needing to approve changes to the bylaws.	Outside of the general idea of being a governing body, the board lacks clear, definable, and obtainable goals. Thanks to staff input, the board has started to set small goals this year. As the governing body of the Museum, the Board should be thinking about the long-term goals and helping to set the Museum on the path to move forward, grow, and become a stronger organization. Currently the board focuses too much on smaller items that do not help the Museum move forward. They are lacking in terms of strategic planning and do not seem to grasp the need to take steps now to help move the organization forward. The board would also benefit from more training in the role of a governing board, they rely too much on staff for direction.

EXTERNAL FACTORS	
OPPORTUNITIES (+)	THREATS (-)
There are numerous community and corporate partners who are not current represented on our board but who could potentially make the board stronger (ex: GHS, Duke Energy, Clemson). The Museum has been growing our membership base and increasing visitation. There may be opportunities to connect with some of these members/donors to refresh the board membership with those who are actively engaged with our exhibitions and programming. Increasing engagement opportunities for community and corporate partners prior to board involvement would be wonderful for strengthening our ties, but also testing the waters with potential board members prior to welcoming them to the board.	This community has a large number of non-profits/cultural organizations all vying for the same board members and donors. The board has a fund-raising mission and the current corporate giving landscape is continually changing making it difficult to select projects that fit and to select board members from corporations with a mission that connects to the Museum. For board members who have not been heavily involved with the Museum prior to joining the board, the lack of community understanding of the UHM brand can pose a real challenge. There is confusion over what the Museum was 10 years ago, compared to what the Museum is today, and what the future of the Museum could/should look like.

Appendix B

**Board Assessment: Adapted for the Dissemination to Board of Directors
at Upcountry History Museum**
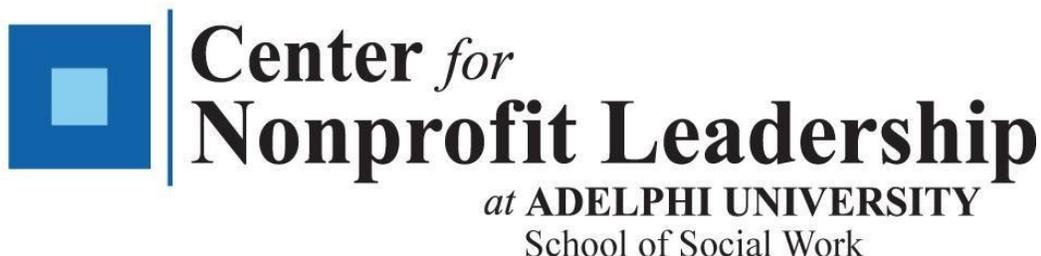
Board of Directors' Assessment

Considerations	5 Strongly Agree	4 Agree	3 Unsure	2 Disagree	1 Strongly Disagree
1. Board has a full and a common understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the board.					
2. Board members understand the organization's mission, vision, and services/ programs.					
3. Structural pattern (board, officers, committees, executives and staff) is clear, delineated in bylaws, and followed by board.					
4. There are an adequate number of well-functioning board committees and other work groups.					
5. Board members actively participate in strategic planning and ongoing strategic thinking.					
6. The board has adopted, and uses, explicit measures of progress toward identified outcomes.					

7. Board attends to policy related decisions which effectively guide operational activities of staff.				

8. Board receives regular reports on finances/budgets, service/program performance and other important matters.				
9. Board helps set fundraising goals and is actively involved in some aspect of fundraising.				
10. All board members make a personal financial contribution to organization.				
11. Board effectively represents the organization to the community (i.e. has an "elevator speech.")				
12. Board meetings facilitate focus and progress on important organizational matters with reporting kept to a minimum.				
13. Board meetings are adequate in length and held at the right time of the day.				
14. Board regularly evaluates and develops yearly goals with the chief executive.				
15. The board reviews the compensation of the Executive Director based on industry standards.				
16. Board has approved comprehensive personnel policies which have been reviewed by a qualified professional.				
17. All necessary skills, stakeholders and diversity are represented on the board.				

	5 Strongly Agree	4 Agree	3 Unsure	2 Disagree	1 Strongly Disagree
18. Board culture encourages and welcomes open discussion, even when members disagree.					
19. Board has an emergency succession plan for executive.					
Considerations	**5 Strongly Agree**	**4 Agree**	**3 Unsure**	**2 Disagree**	**1 Strongly Disagree**
20. Board is attentive to building leadership capacity on both board and staff.					
21. Board regularly assesses itself as a whole and also board member participation individually.					
22. Board has a packet of materials for new board members and an orientation process for them.					
23. Board has a board agreement, a whistleblower policy and a conflict of interest policy that all board members must sign and follow.					
24. A strategic process is in place for developing the board.					
25. The board regularly monitors financial performance and projections.					
26. Board members are sufficiently knowledgeable to ask meaningful questions about finances and financial management.					
27. The board reviews the audit report and has an opportunity to ask questions of the auditor at an exit conference.					
28. The board reviews the 990 before filing.					

29. Board discussions focus on the organization's future NOT its past.					
30. Each member of the board feels involved and interested in the board's work.					

What specifically would help to make you a more engaged board member?

Please list the three to five issues on which you believe the board should focus its attention in the next year. Be as specific as possible in identifying these points.

1.

2.

3.

4.

In ten years, what do you believe is the single most important impact that this organization should have on the community it serves?

Appendix C

New Board Member Orientation
(Draft: Submitted for review on March 11, 2019)

To be held before the first Board Meeting of the fiscal year.
Purpose: To make sure new board members are well informed about
- how Upcountry History Museum operates
- the "who's who" of the museum; including staff, volunteers, and other board members
- the vision, mission, and key accomplishments of the museum
- how to begin to contribute to the museum in their new role.

I. The Board Orientation Binder

A. The binder should be sent to new members ahead of the orientation meeting. This gives new members the opportunity to review the information and come with any questions or comments.

B. Contents
- Welcome letter from the CEO
- History One Pager: outlines the history of the museum.
- Staff Organizational Chart
- Program Highlights: A brief document that details the accomplishments and new initiatives underway.
- Outline of Board Roles and Responsibilities
- List of all current board members (including contact information)
- List of board committees (including members and each committees' responsibilities)
- List of upcoming meetings
- List of upcoming events
- Strategic planning documents
- Approved budget for the calendar year
- Most recent monthly financials
- Most recent audited financial statements
- Copy of museum's bylaws
- Fundraising one pager: Emphasis that there is a fundraising obligation. List some of the many ways the obligation can be met.
- Board Meeting Minutes: recommended from at least 3 meetings back.
- Agenda for the first board meeting
- Code of ethics
- Conflict of interest policy and questionnaire

II. The Orientation Session
   a. Who should attend?

Proposed Suggestions:
- ➤ Executive Committee Board Members
- ➤ CEO
- ➤ All current board members…especially for the meet and greet session
- ➤ Lead Program and Development Staff Member

b. Who should run the meeting?
Proposed Suggestion:
- ➤ The Chairperson of the Board of Directors

c. What is a sample agenda?
Proposed Suggestions:
- ➤ Introductions/Get to know everyone
- ➤ Tour of the museum
- ➤ Discussion of what's going on, programs, initiatives, accomplishments
- ➤ CEO shares the vision for the organization including "where the new members fit into the vision
- ➤ Board Chair reviews the roles and responsibilities (allow time for questions)
- ➤ Lead Development Staff Member reviews the one sheet related to fundraising
- ➤ Board Chair outlines the upcoming board meeting agenda
- ➤ Questions/Closing/Collection of any documentation
- ➤ Final video presentation
- ➤ Dismissal

Sources:
https://www.inphilanthropy.org/sites/default/files/resources/Ten%20Basic%20Responsibilities%20of%20Nonprofit%20Boards-Natl%20Center%20NP%20Boards.pdf)
https://managementhelp.org/boards/manual.htm
https://blog.joangarry.com/board-orientation-template/
https://www.nonprofitsteward.org/news/building-a-board-notebook/

Appendix D

Board of Directors
Committee Structure

<u>**Networking Committee**</u>
Target of 8 members
2019-2020 Chair: Tina Belge
- Provides support for fundraising event(s)
- Generates business & organizational sponsorship leads

<u>**Member Engagement Committee**</u>
Target of 8 members
2019-2020 Chair: Marianne Pierce
- Provides support for the Annual Appeal
- Works to increase membership engagement, specifically through:
    - Individual donor base
    - Support level memberships

<u>**Communications Committee**</u>
Target of 4 members
2019-2020 Chair: Whitney Hanna
- Supports staff in communicating member benefits and programming opportunities
- Helps to develop and monitor the Museum's brand position within the community
- Provides guidance on Board communications

<u>**Finance Committee**</u>
Target of 3 members
2019-2020 Chair: Mark Parrott

<u>**Audit Committee**</u>
Target of 2 members
2019-2020 Members: Marianne Pierce and Mark Parrott

Appendix E

Professional Literature Review

Year to year, CEOs and other members of senior leadership, set out to find qualified individuals ready to embrace the mission and work collaboratively with others on such areas as governance, fundraising, and policymaking. A common theme for organizations is how to engage their board of directors and how to reap the benefits of having board members that are active decision makers. Highly qualified board members are willing to work on behalf of the organization beyond board meetings and become ingrained in the operations of the organization. For decades researchers have tried to define and narrow a list of qualities to help organizations in their selection of board members who are aped to become the engaged ambassadors, advocates, strategists, and supporters of the organization they seek to serve. These studies have identified some common variables to help guide organizations as they strive to fill their board of directors with highly qualified members. Not only does the research highlight individual characteristics of board members, but it also stresses the importance of assessing the collective group, the external environment of the organization, and organizational leadership.

Nonprofit organizations must be aware of changing environmental conditions, and these conditions will directly impact the needs of an organization, including the skills and expertise that board members bring to an organization. In all the reviewed articles, a constant variable, whether directly stated or implied, was the importance of frequent environmental scans. The assessment of the data gathered from these scans will impact organizational decisions, and given "the growth of this sector, combined with increasing

government and public demands for greater effectiveness, and changes in political, economic, and social environments, which introduce opportunities and challenges, demand that nonprofit organizations become more entrepreneurial and innovative in their service provision and in their business models" (Jaskyte, 2014, p. 1922). The board of directors of an organization must have the capacity and take on the responsibility to guide an organization and keep them competitive. However, key persons must be in place for the board to fulfill its duty, and executives "use their board appointments as a way to scan the environment for timely and pertinent information" (Carpenter & Westphal, 2001, p. 640). This environmental scan will provide organizations with the data they need to ensure they are actively pursuing key persons with the required skills and expertise to guide the organization.

Adequate human capital is a critical component for effective and engaged boards and is the next step of building an engaged board of directors. Two prominent questions seemed to arise in multiple articles related to the concept of human capital. Should board members be allowed to serve on multiple boards? Should an organization have more outsiders or insiders on their board of directors. Ultimately the answer comes down to what is best for the organization, and the answer could possibly vary from organization to organization depending on the stability of the external environment. However, board members serving on multiple boards bring with them "social connections and opportunities for vicarious learning can lead to more highly developed knowledge structures for implementing the focal firm's strategy" (Carpenter & Westphal, 2001, p. 641). Furthermore, "in turbulent environments, directors can benefit from interlocks that expose them to possible strategic alternatives" (Carpenter & Westphal, 2001, p. 643).

According to research, if an organization is experiencing a stable environment, the need for differing strategic procedures and knowledge for outside sources is a not as relevant, and an organization will see greater benefits from board members whose attention is given solely to them. Regarding the question of insiders versus outsiders, consistent research findings reveal "no significant relation between firm performance and the percentage of insiders on the board as a whole" (Klein, 1998, p. 277). Another variable that comes into play when addressing the addition of new members to a board and directly relates to the addition of outsiders is prestige. Often leaders of organizations take the stance that they need as many prestigious board members as possible, and they will actively recruit these individuals without out clearly defining "prestigious" or understanding the immediate needs of the organization in terms of "who" should serve on the board of directors. However, "recent research has shown that while adding prestigious individuals can increase group performance initially, this effect diminishes as the number of prestigious individuals increases" (Acharya & Pollock, 2013, p. 1399). Organizations must understand the needs of the organization as well as the costs and benefits associated with the identification, selection, and addition of individual members to the board of directors.

Not only do organizations need the "experience, expertise, knowledge, skills, and reputation" of individual members, but they also need board members who are active participants and strong, deliberate decision makers (Knyazeva et al., 2013, p. 1566). Organizations do not need individuals to act as rubber stamps, and organizations do not benefit from board members who "often fail . . . to analyze documents and information provided before meetings. …Hence preparation for and participation in board meetings

can influence the board's ability to effectively perform its tasks" (Minichilli et al., 2011, p. 196). Organizations also do not need disruptive members. The addition of any member to the board of directors, no matter how prestigious their position, cannot "create internal costs" for the organization. Given these two variables, organizations must accurately assess the needs of the organization, as well as each established board member and any recruit. Once these assessments are complete, organizations should align their board members to tasks that match the board members strengths and interests. By correctly pairing a member and task, the organization benefits form an engaged board member that is an active participant in the decision making and governing activities of the board. Correct pairing also builds organizational knowledge and identification, and research has shown that "the strength of an individual's identification as an organizational member has been shown to affect attitudes and behaviors toward [the organization], particularly cooperation, commitment, satisfaction, and turnover" (Hillman et al., 2008, p. 443). Additionally, organizations can expect board members who identify with the organization to "expend effort and be engaged in their" organization (Hillman et al., 2008, p. 446). In this area, research again asserts "finding that 'inside or outside status is not predictive of individual members' internal or external orientations,' … instead that it is how much an individual defines [themselves] as a director that impacts, for example, the extent to which [they] provide critical resources to the firm, whether that be external experience of an outside director or knowledge of internal processes a current executive chooses to share in a board meeting" (Pearce, 1983, as cited in Hillman et al., 2008, p. 447).

Moving on from the individual assessment of board members, an organization must work to bring the individual members into a "robust and effective social system"

(Jaskyte, 2014, p. 1925). Thus, begins the transition from capitalizing on human capital to maximizing social capital. An essential element of building a collective team is cohesiveness. Organizations reap many benefits from cohesive boards including member retention, organization commitment, organizational involvement, collaboration, communication, and performance (Jaskyte, 2014). However, these benefits will not be realized unless the individual board members begin to "use and [integrate their personal] expertise and skills to enhance group decisions. The collective use of knowledge and skill is particularly relevant when groups are highly interdependent, and when the group shares a sense of collective responsibility for performance outcomes" (Minichilli et al., 2011, p. 197). Having a clearly defined committee structure is one way for organizations to build a cohesive team of board of directors. Effective and engaged committees "meet separately from the full board, are composed of subsets of board members, and tend to have a specific, narrowly define functions" (Klein, 1998, p. 278). Committee structures also align with research and findings that "when identities are intrinsically related or aligned with one another, there is positive spillover of identification from one to the others and little conflict among them" (Hillman et al., 2008, p. 449). Committees afford individual board members to work on specific tasks that align with their interests, expertise, and experience, and by working with likeminded individuals in a small setting, each member is building the repertoire of skills needed for the collective group to achieve success.

Once an organization has taken stock of the external environment and concludes their needs in terms of board membership, the next step is to actively seek new recruits followed by training. This training is for new and established board members. Current

research does not advocate one specific program over another, but research does show positive benefits to organizations in effectiveness, engagement, and performance "as nonprofits face the challenges of competition for limited resources and operate in increasingly politicized environments" (Nobbie & Brudney, 2003, p. 571). Essentially board training programs are an organizations response to changing external environments and provide a mechanism to ensure the survival of an organization during a time of "increased pressure on nonprofit organizations to be accountable to stakeholders and funding sources, competition from for-profit businesses in traditionally held nonprofit service arenas, and the use of nonprofit organizations to provide publicly financed services" (Nobbie & Brundney, 2003, p. 575). Research also strongly advocates for the implementation of any board training program with fidelity and completeness to ensure a "thoughtful, deliberative process that leads them to closely examine and define their purpose as an organization, the procedures and mechanisms of governance, and their relationship with management (Nobbie & Brudney, 2003, p. 592). These programs provide organizations with the opportunity to address all the previous variables discussed: individual interests of board members, outsiders vs. insiders, CEO and other leaders, and environmental shifts. As previously mentioned, the degree to which an individual feel embedded and intrenched within an organization has direct relationship to their engagement level related to board activities and responsibilities. By going through a board training program, board members spend time developing skills needed specific to the organizations they are serving, and these programs can also "increase group cohesiveness and group identification, which, in turn, has been shown to be related to high degrees of conformity and commitment" (Jaskyte, 2014, p. 1925). As research has

shown "the degree that policy governance model has been implemented, board members, board chairpersons, and CEOs will report significant improvements in board performance" (Nobbie & Brudney, 2003, p. 578). During these trainings, outsiders and insiders come together to form a collective group working on behalf of an organization in a capacity the is "internally consistent and has external utility" (Nobbie & Brudney, 2003, p. 589). Thus, organizations hoping to achieve their goals and remain relevant and productive in constantly changing environments must adopt and implement a continuous training program for their board of directors.

While there are no list of exact qualities or characteristics that nonprofit organizations should look for when trying to build an effective and engaged board of directors exists, research does point processes that will benefit the organization. All these processes involve assessment. First an organization needs to be aware of the external environment, and this involves conducting continual environmental scans. The data gathered from this scan should drive the selection of new board members and dictate the work of the board of directors. Next, an organization needs to assess each individual board member in order to determine how their skills, expertise, and experiences best align with the vision and mission of the organization. As research has shown, organizations will reap the greatest benefits from a board member that feels connected to the organization. Finally, leaders of the organization need to meld the individual members into a connected and cohesive group. This involves researching and finding the best board training program that addresses the needs of the organization. This is a continuous and cyclical process, when implemented fully will ensure the organization has

informed board members fully capable of governing and engaging in the work of the

organization.

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