

## Council Member/Staff Interaction

Q. What are the primary roles of the Council, the ED, and supporting staff?

### **Primary role of the Council**

When defining the role of the Council, remember it refers to the group, not to individual members. The Council functions as “a whole”.

Individual Council members have no authority or individual rights over the Council but assume accountability for their own actions. The full governing body (the Council) has three key roles:

- 1) **Direction** – the Council guards the mission of the Council, and through guidelines (such as the DD Act, policies, and procedures) steers it in the right direction
- 2) **Oversight** – The Council monitors the activities, the health, and the ethical behavior in the Council.
- 3) **Resources** – Council members ensure the Council is well-equipped to fulfill its mission (approving budgets and investments, capable ED, and an esteemed reputation).

### **Primary role of staff**

When the Council hires the executive director, it delegates the daily management to that person. The executive director reports to the Council and any staff who are subsequently hired report to the executive director.

The executive director is responsible for maintaining regular contact with the Council and particularly the Chair. He or she keeps the Council informed about the issues and activities that are part of the Council’s daily life. The Council would have difficulties making well-rounded decisions without constant input from the Executive Director. The staff helps the Executive Director more efficiently implement the directives set by the board.

It is not always easy or even possible to draw a clear line between governance and management. The council's duties center on its monitoring role. The executive director is responsible for making things happen with the help of the rest of the staff. However, both sides need each other’s support - and availability when requested without veering off to micromanagement.