

YFC Boards – A Quick Overview

Between the Gavels

A board of directors is an interesting legal entity. It really only exists between the time the gavel hammers the meeting to order until it hammers the adjournment of the meeting. Outside of called and recorded meetings, the board's authority ceases and is replaced by board member's influence.

Executive Director – Leads or Follows

The question often is asked as to how an Executive Director can lead and follow a board at the same time. The answer lies in the distinction between boards and board members. The ExD is to be in submission to the board but at the same time play a leadership role in the lives and work of each board member. If a board member demands something outside of board meeting, he or she should be encouraged to bring it before the whole board as a motion.

The Voice of the Board

The board has a single voice. The voice of the board is the minutes. What is written and approved in the minutes is the legally binding voice of the board. That is why it is so important for key issues to be accurately recorded and that is why it takes an act of the entire board to say that the minutes do accurately reflect the decisions made in the board meeting. Any policy made by a board (that does not have date parameters) stands until it is amended or overturned in later meetings. A board can not bind the hands of future board meetings by making policy that can not be overturned.

The Board and YFC/USA

The board as an entity holds the legal relationship between a YFC chapter and the YFC movement. YFC/USA, through the field department (NFDs and AFDs), grants a board of directors a YFC charter each year. If there is a charter issue at the chapter level it is ultimately between the board and field department to resolve the issue.

Roles of the Board

The board has one employee, the Executive Director. The board's authority over the rest of the staff should be executed through the ExD. The exception is the board treasurer should have unfettered access to the bookkeeper to assure financial integrity. The board chair has two privileges that no other board member has. The chair sets the agenda (which still can be amended by the board as a whole) and the board chair can assign board members to committees. The board chair usually plays an informal role of being the liaison between the board and the ExD. The board secretary should sign the approved minutes and keep them on file at the YFC office. It is a good practice to have all policies recorded in board minutes in a log at the front of the board minutes files for easy reference.

Missional Community of the Board

With all the talk about minutes, gavels, logs, unfettered access, and such, where does the human and spiritual side of board membership come in? The cleaner the lines of authority are drawn, the more the board is freed up to work within the context of a missional community. (For example: when the sound system at your banquet is functioning well you can focus completely on the program and don't even remember that the sound system exists.) When the role of the board is crystal clear you can focus on the mission before you and you can do it in a context of a shared journey of following Christ.