

HomeFront Housing Authority (HFHA)

Board of Commissioners

Job Description

Board member responsibilities

Board members are responsible for determining HFHA policy in human resources, planning, finance, community relations, and organizational operations.

Human Resources – Board members have **three key responsibilities** in this area:

1. Board Membership which includes recruiting new board members, recognizing and nurturing existing boards members, and providing existing board members with opportunities to grow and develop as leaders;
2. CEO/Executive Director oversight which includes hiring, termination, disciplining, and evaluation of the CEO, and;
3. Personnel Policies, which include policies relating to the CEO's employment, and ensuring that the CEO has complete and up-to-date policies in place for management and staff.

Planning – Board members have **three key responsibilities** in this area:

1. Establishing and reviewing HFHA's mission, vision, values, and strategic plan;
2. Planning which services/programs HFHA provides; and
3. Evaluating HFHA services/programs and operations on a regular basis.

Finance – Board members have **four key responsibilities** in this area:

1. Ensuring financial accountability of HFHA;
2. Overseeing an ongoing process of budget development, approval, and review;
3. Ensuring that adequate funds are available to support HFHA's policies and programs; and
4. Overseeing properties or investments of the HFHA.

Community Relations – Board members have **three key responsibilities** in this area:

1. Ensuring that HFHA's programs and services appropriately address the needs of those we serve;
2. Advocating for HFHA's services/programs, which includes an awareness that board members are always emissaries of HFHA in the community; and
3. Cooperative action, which includes determining occasions when HFHA could/should take part in coalitions, joint operations, etc.

Organizational Operations – Board members have **four key responsibilities** in this area:

1. Ensuring that HFHA's management systems are adequate and appropriate;
2. Ensuring that the board's operations are adequate and appropriate, which includes writing policies for the conduct of meetings and operation of board business;
3. Ensuring that organizational and legal structure are adequate and appropriate; and
4. Ensuring the HFHA and its board members meet all applicable legal requirements.

Performance expectations for board members – Performing duties as a member of the HFHA board, every board member is expected to:

1. Demonstrate a strong belief and commitment to HFHA's mission, vision, and values;
2. Devote the necessary time to prepare for and participate in board and committee meetings;
3. Exhibit high ethical standards and integrity in all board actions;
4. Be a champion for HFHA;
5. Take responsibility and accountability for HFHA and all decisions made by the board;
6. Spend the time necessary to learn how to do the job, and maintain an ongoing schedule of in-service to learn how to do the job better; and
7. Demonstrate a willingness to work as a team member with other board members and the CEO.

Housing Authority Commissioners and Board Members

Basic Functions

The Public Housing Authority Commissioner must be prepared to advance the interest of the housing authority and, in so doing, improve the community that it serves. The commissioner, along with other commissioners appointed to the Board is ultimately responsible for the well-being and success of the housing authority (and thereby its clients), and he/she provides the guidance, direction and oversight necessary to make this happen. The commissioner should believe that:

- ⏏ Communities and the people that live in them can be transformed for the better;
- ⏏ The creation and maintenance of decent human lives requires decent and affordable housing (and community improvements);
- ⏏ Housing authorities, although primarily responsible for the provision and maintenance of physical dwellings, influence the quality of their clients' lives;
- ⏏ The success of their housing programs and the clients served by them is possible;
- ⏏ They must stay current on significant legislative and programmatic changes in the field;
- ⏏ Networking and training/educational opportunities are critical to the success of their work;
- ⏏ They are responsible for the proper administration of their housing authorities;
- ⏏ They must assure the housing authority operates within the parameters of the law with the collaboration of the CEO; and
- ⏏ As representatives of the housing authority, they are ambassadors to the larger community and, therefore, must act as committed advocates for low- and moderate-income housing programs in the local community.

Essential Duties

1. Hire, guide, and supervise a qualified CEO/Executive Director to manage the day-to-day operations of the housing authority.

2. Work together with the other commissioners and the CEO as an effective team to further the work of the housing authority.
3. Provide leadership for the housing authority through the development and sustenance of the vision, mission, and goals for the housing authority, based upon an assessment and prioritization of local needs.
4. Once the specific goals to move the housing authority towards its vision and mission are established, monitor progress and hold the CEO and his/her staff accountable for the timely achievement of those goals.
5. Set policies governing the operations of the housing authority that chart its direction in current and future programs that are consistent with the vision, established mission, and goals.
6. Advocate for public and affordable housing throughout the local community, its political jurisdiction, the state, and the federal government.
7. Ensure, through independent reviews and audits that the housing authority operates within the law and according to HUD regulations.
8. Through the CEO, work to obtain and manage monies that support the housing authority's operations.
9. Approve, adopt and monitor the housing authority's operating budget(s).
10. Establish policies that ensure the housing authority acts legally and with integrity in its daily operations and that specifically prevent fraud, abuse, mismanagement, and discrimination.

Qualifications and Abilities

The Commissioner must possess the ability to:

- ⏏ Read and understand financial statements, reports, and budgets.
- ⏏ Analyze, understand, and act upon written reports, correspondence, and regulations.
- ⏏ Make sound decisions based upon sufficient input.
- ⏏ Select an effective CEO and then to supervise, coach, and direct that person.
- ⏏ Meet the public and other government officials and groups.
- ⏏ Understand ethical behavior and recognize and avoid conflicts of interest or appearance thereof.
- ⏏ Understand and know the community which the housing authority serves.

- ⏏ Assess and prioritize local needs.
- ⏏ Develop the vision and mission to accomplish local needs.
- ⏏ Favorable influence on the community with regard to the prioritization of local resources for the housing authority.

Education

There are no specific educational requirements for the Commissioner, but he/she should have sufficient education to read and understand basic written materials and financial statements. Since commissioners are political appointees, they may come from any type of culture, professional or vocational background. A commissioner who is appointed and finds that their skills are insufficient for the requirements of the job should be proactive in the pursuit of that knowledge that will make them proficient.

The commissioner should also be committed to achieving NAHRO Commissioner Certification within one year of appointment.

Experience

The Commissioner should be knowledgeable about his/her community and its needs. If not well-versed in the field of affordable housing, the Commissioner should seek to become so at the earliest opportunity. The Commissioner should have good people skills and an understanding of both individual and group dynamics. The Commissioner should be a mature, benevolent individual, capable of putting the needs and interests of others above his/her own.

Compensation

The Commissioners serves as a volunteer and receives no salary for his/her work. The Commissioner must be prepared to accept, as his/her sole compensation, his/her contributions toward creating and promoting affordable housing and making the community a better place for low- and moderate-income families to live.

Note: Much of the information used to create this job description was gathered from NAHRO's Handbook for Commissioners: A Resource Guide for Public Housing and Community Development Agency Commissioners (3rd edition).