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Ten Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Board Members

Establish Organizational Identity:

1. **Determine the organization's mission and purpose.** It is the board's responsibility to create and review a statement of mission and purpose that articulates the organization's goals, means, and primary constituents served.
2. **Ensure effective organizational planning.** Boards must actively participate in an overall planning process and assist in implementing and monitoring the plan's goals.

Ensure Resources:

3. **Select the chief executive.** Boards must reach consensus on the chief executive's responsibilities and undertake a careful search to find the most qualified individual for the position.
4. **Ensure adequate resources.** One of the board's foremost responsibilities is to secure adequate resources for the organization to fulfill its mission.
5. **Recruit and orient new board members and assess board performance.** All boards have a responsibility to articulate prerequisites for candidates, orient new members, and periodically and comprehensively evaluate their own performance.
6. **Enhance the organization's public standing.** The board should clearly articulate the organization's mission, accomplishments, and goals to the public and garner support from the community.

Provide Oversight:

7. **Support the chief executive and assess his or her performance.** The board should ensure that the chief executive has the moral and professional support he or she needs to further the goals of the organization.
8. **Determine, monitor, and strengthen the organization's programs and services.** The board's responsibility is to determine which programs are consistent with the organization's mission and to monitor their effectiveness.
9. **Provide proper financial oversight.** The board must approve the annual budget and ensure that proper financial controls are in place.
10. **Ensure legal and ethical integrity and maintain accountability.** The board is ultimately responsible for ensuring adherence to legal standards and ethical norms.

References

Richard T. Ingram, *The Ten Basic Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards* (BoardSource 2016).