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# NONPROFIT MANAGEMENT FOR PET RESCUE ORGANIZATIONS

## Part Eight: Administrative Tasks & Meeting Management

For more information on these  
and other nonprofit  
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# In this section:

- Ongoing Board tasks to maintain a healthy nonprofit organization:
  - Bylaws Review
  - Corporate and IRS filings
  - Documenting policies and procedures
  - Monitoring conflict of interest
- Techniques for running productive and efficient Board and committee meetings



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# Review your bylaws annually

- ◉ Your bylaws are the rules by which your Board agrees to operate the organization. You get to write your own rules...but then you have to follow them!
- ◉ You should review your bylaws each year to make sure the rules still make sense for your organization. If not, they should be amended.
- ◉ The bylaws review is also a good chance for your Board member to refresh their knowledge.
- ◉ Assign a Board member to chair a Bylaws Review committee. The committee can make recommendations on any needed amendments. Your bylaws should specify how amendments may be enacted; make sure you comply with any notice requirements.
- ◉ Schedule the bylaws review for the same month every year, and put it into your strategic plan!



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# Annual Corporate Filings

- Your annual filing requirements for maintaining your corporate status will vary depending on the state in which you are incorporated.
- Typically you will be required to file a Corporate Annual Report. You may also need to file a state tax return (even if you're tax exempt). Many of these filings can be done online.
- Check with your Secretary of State's office for the requirements that apply to your organization.
- Your Executive Director will probably handle these annual filings, but the Board should be familiar with the requirements and make sure the filings are done each year. If you are an all-volunteer organization, appoint one Board member to have responsibility for following up on annual filings.



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# IRS Requirements

- ◉ Almost all nonprofit corporations are required to file an annual Federal tax return, even if you have 501(c)(3) tax exempt status. Previously, if your annual gross income was less than \$25,000 you didn't have to file, but starting in 2008 even most of these small organizations must file an "e-postcard" or risk losing their exemption.
- ◉ You will probably use IRS Form 990 or 990EZ for your annual Federal tax return. This form can be downloaded at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).
- ◉ The form is fairly simple for small organizations. It mostly asks questions about your sources of income. If you have "unrelated business income" (for example, from charging fees for boarding pets, a thrift shop, or selling pet supplies), you will be taxed on that income.



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# IRS Requirements

- If you have employees or use contractors, you will need to file a variety of IRS reports and forms, on both a quarterly and annual basis. These will include Form 931, W-2 Forms, and 1099 Forms. To learn about IRS requirements for employers, visit [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).
- Unless your organization is very simple, or you have special expertise, you should seek the advice of an accountant who specializes in nonprofit work to help with your Federal tax issues.
- Your Executive Director will probably handle IRS matters, but the Board must be familiar with the requirements and make sure the filings are done each year. If you are an all-volunteer organization, appoint one Board member to have responsibility for following up on IRS matters.



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# Documenting policies & procedures

- ◉ Part of the responsibility of both Board and staff members is to keep records of how their jobs are accomplished. When you document what you do and how you do it, the next person who does that job will not have to start from scratch. You will be building “institutional memory,” an important part of a healthy nonprofit organization.
- ◉ Board committee chairs should keep track of how committee objectives are accomplished: contact lists, vendor information, work plans, etc.
- ◉ Staff (or volunteers in unstaffed organizations) should develop checklists for tasks like animal care, setting up adoption events, etc.





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# Documenting policies & procedures

- ◉ When the Board is called upon to make policy decisions, those decisions should be clearly documented and available for reference. For example, what is your organization's policy on sterilization before adoption?
- ◉ Assign a Board member to work with staff on reviewing written policies and procedures annual and make recommendations for any needed changes.
- ◉ Develop a Policies and Procedures Manual that keeps all this documentation in one place. Make sure the manual is available to all Board and staff members.





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# Monitoring Conflict of Interest

- ◉ Remember that it is the Board's responsibility to ensure that the organization operates without conflict of interest. There is no surer way to alienate your community than by ignoring conflict questions. Conflict of interest will also jeopardize your 501(c)(3) status.
- ◉ A good rule of thumb is: if a Board member or family member is benefitting from his/her association with the organization, there may be a conflict of interest.
- ◉ Your organization should have a policy of requiring three quotes for single-item or service expenditures costing over a certain amount to guard against conflict of interest.
- ◉ Board and staff training should include an annual review of your written Conflict of Interest Policy.



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# Meeting Management

- You can ensure that your Board and committee meetings are efficient, effective and worthwhile through smart use of agendas and the power of committees.
- Use your previous month's minutes to develop each month's agenda, to prevent Old Business items from falling into a black hole.
- Align your agendas with the activities on your strategic plan; for example, if you know bylaws revision is on the plan for June, put it on the agenda in April or May.
- Effective meetings require the chair to plan, prepare, and to structure and control the meeting.



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# Meeting Management

Effective meetings require you to:

## ○ Plan

- Prepare an agenda that includes brief descriptions of what the meeting will cover (not just headings)
- Find out what everyone needs to have on the agenda BEFORE the meeting! Establish a policy for when the agenda deadline will be.
- Have precise objectives - what the meeting is intended to achieve. Don't just meet to meet.



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# Meeting Management

Effective meetings require you to:

## ○ Prepare

- Arrange agenda items in necessary order and logical sequence
- Allocate a specific time for each item based on importance
- Anticipate what information and/or people may be needed to make decisions



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# Meeting Management

Effective meetings require you to:

## ○ Structure and control the meeting

- The meeting chair should be skilled at diplomatically but firmly keeping the discussion on track.
- Control private discussions; bring everyone back into the group
- Respect the work of your committees. Don't pick apart committee work at the Board meeting. Detailed project planning should take place at the committee level.
- Stick to your agenda. You can leave a limited amount of time at the end for issues from the floor.



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# The power of committees

- ◉ The purpose of committees is to let the detailed planning and work for your projects and activities happen in smaller groups that are interested in particular topics. The Board meeting or full membership meeting is not the place for this to happen.
- ◉ By scheduling regular, timely committee reports, you can avoid a common meeting pitfall: getting bogged down on minutiae. The Board's role is to assign tasks to the committee, hear reports and approve committee actions and recommendations - not to re-think all the work the committee has done. If someone has strong opinions about a project, they should join the committee.



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# Respect your committees!

- Provide time on each month's agenda for committees to report on their plans and projects.
- Make sure committee chairs know they will be called upon to report on any issues relating to their committee that require follow-up from the last meeting, as well as items from the ongoing work plan.
- Give committees the opportunity to participate in the formulation of the budget for their activities.
- Make sure committee members are recognized and thanked for the work they do. Committees and work groups are where the heavy lifting of nonprofit governance usually takes place!





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# Want to learn more?

Nonprofit governance and management is a huge and complex topic. Some graduate business schools are now offering an MBA in nonprofit management.

If you'd like more information about best practices in nonprofit management, a good place to start is your local United Way. Although United Way usually does not have funding available for pet rescue groups, they may be willing to share their training resources and allow your Board members and staff to attend workshops.



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# Questions or Comments?

**For more information about these topics:**

**Download the complete  
Nonprofit Management series at  
[www.maddiesfund.org](http://www.maddiesfund.org)**

**or contact Mary Ippoliti-Smith at**

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