



Questions To Be Considered by Prospective Board Members

Serving as a board member can be a challenging and rewarding volunteer experience. Board members have important legal and fiduciary responsibilities that require a commitment of time, skill and resources. You are encouraged as a prospective board member to consider the following basic questions before accepting the nomination to serve on the Mary E. Bivins Foundation board. Please feel free to find answers from board members or the chief executive of the organization.

Ask questions about the organization's programs

- What is the mission of the Mary E. Bivins Foundation?
- How do its current programs relate to the mission?
- Does the Bivins Foundation have a strategic plan that is reviewed and evaluated on a regular basis?

Ask questions about the organization's financial status

- Is the financial condition of the organization sound?
- Does the board discuss and approve the annual budget?
- How often do board members receive financial reports?

Ask questions about the organization's clients or constituencies

- Whom does the Mary E. Bivins Foundation serve?
- Are the organization's clients or constituencies satisfied with the organization?

Ask questions about the structure of the board

- How is the board structured?
- Are there descriptions of the responsibilities of the board as a whole and of individual board members?
- Are there descriptions of board committee functions and responsibilities?
- Who are the other board members?
- Is there a system of checks and balances to prevent conflicts of interest between board members and the organization?
- Does the organization have directors and officers liability coverage?

Ask questions about individual board member's responsibilities

- What are the ways that you think I can contribute as a board member?
- How much of my time will be required for meetings and special events?
- How are committee assignments made?
- What orientation will I receive to the organization and to the responsibilities of service?
- Does the organization provide opportunities for board development and education?

Ask questions about the board's relationship to staff

- Is the board satisfied with the performance of the executive staff?
- How do board members and senior staff typically work with each other?