

## **Omaha Area Board of REALTORS®**

### **Consensus Association Model**

*(As defined by the elected leadership)*

*Omaha Area Board of REALTORS® and Great Plains REALTORS® MLS directors were surveyed regarding five major assessment areas of association management. The directors were asked to respond with their ideal expectations for the operation of the association. The benefits of developing an association model are:*

- ✓ *Establish the best operating philosophies*
- ✓ *Align the expectations of elected leaders and staff*
- ✓ *Identify areas for improvement*
- ✓ *Help evaluate the need for specific programs and services*
- ✓ *Provide a basis for strategic planning and budgeting*
- ✓ *Realign staff assignments and professional development goals*

**Below is the association model identified by the elected leaders of the Omaha Area Board of REALTORS® and the Great Plains REALTORS® MLS:**

#### **1. Association Governance and Operations**

- a. Volunteers determine the association's future direction
- b. Authority for determining the organizational vision and strategic outcomes belongs to the elected leadership; the Board of Directors approves the strategic vision and assists the chief staff executive with goal development
- c. Internal organizational structure is managed by the chief staff executive
- d. The staff works closely with volunteers to ensure the association's operation is consistent with its defined mission and acts as a liaison between the committees, forums and councils, and the Board of Directors.
- e. Decision-making authority for most operational procedures is vested in the chief staff executive within budget parameters and standard operating procedures
- f. A flexible committee structure remains fluid and ready for change to meet the needs of the organization. The chief staff executive regularly collaborates with elected leaders to modify the committee structure or adopt the use of work groups and ad hoc committees to accomplish the strategic goals of the association
- g. Governing documents and policies are flexible, allowing the association to quickly respond to changing conditions. Governing documents and policies are updated continuously to match the association's mission and to manage goals

## **2. Member Services**

- a. Association utilizes targeted communication systems and multiple delivery vehicles focusing on enhancing current knowledge and discussion of future trends
- b. Innovative new member orientation methods (online orientation) combined with volunteer participation in traditional orientation model
- c. Provide programs and services to meet the professional needs of targeted real estate specialty groups and specific demographic segments of membership
- d. Provides basic processing of complaints according to established policies and procedures; provides professional standards services through a cooperative enforcement agreement with the state association.
- e. Offers or provides access to education programs based on the current needs of members either through the association or outsourced through other providers
- f. Develops or provides access to innovative products and services based on an analysis of current and future member needs; implements programs and events that are consistent with the strategic vision of the organization
- g. New strategic initiatives are envisioned, identified, and implemented based on member needs
- h. Networking and social opportunities are planned by volunteers and staff targeting key member groups to enhance career success and meet the needs of members

## **3. Internal and External Relations**

- a. Chief staff executive is visionary leader of all staff, and is not focused entirely on day-to-day operations; Chief staff executive manages key areas, but assigns program details and clerical functions to paid staff; delegates significant latitude for individual initiative and decision-making
- b. Staff and elected leadership recruit, develop, and nurture volunteer leaders; staff and volunteer leaders work together as partnerships
- c. Chief staff executive and volunteers develop collaborative relationships with local, state, and national associations; staff and volunteers participate in state and national meetings
- d. Association CPA firm and attorney support association operations and alert staff or volunteer leadership to new and emerging issues; network with counterparts in other associations
- e. Staff and volunteer leaders initiate effective and synergistic relationships in an effort to build beneficial political and business coalitions with local, state and national government leaders, media, culturally diverse community groups and allied organizations, including service providers, vendors, consultants, contractors, influential industry leaders and allied real estate groups
- f. Association has the ability to analyze and impact the legal and regulatory environment as it impacts the profitability of members and the rights of homeowners
- g. Association has a high level of political action skills, including fundraising efforts, member mobilization efforts, and candidate development; is recognized leader in

- governmental advocacy in the market area and in partnership with the state and national associations
- h. Maintains a politically aware organizational culture
  - i. Works to ensure that leading brokers view the association, its leadership and staff as valued resources and industry leaders

#### **4. Physical and Financial Resources**

- a. The association maintains a dedicated office location with up to date office equipment that is analyzed and updated on a routine basis
- b. A strong financial position and revenue sources are maintained to operate the association at optimum levels; funding is available to react quickly to opportunities, threats, and new initiatives
- c. Comprehensive budget is developed by staff based on desired strategic outcomes and is approved by elected leadership; chief staff executive is empowered to make adjustments within strategic objectives to act quickly on opportunities, threats, or new initiatives
- d. Financial reserves are maintained and a solid investment policy is in place with ample funds for available for future program and project development

#### **5. Staff Competencies**

- a. The chief staff executive is responsible for the administration and management of the association and maintains a comprehensive knowledge of office management skills and is able to delegate or outsource as necessary; has a clear understanding of legal and regulatory issues and is able to develop related policies
- b. Compensation is regionally competitive for the chief staff executive and key staff positions
- c. Professional development opportunities are provided for the chief staff executive and paid staff with emphasis placed on the enhancement of leadership and association management skills and overall knowledge of industry issues and trends
- d. Chief staff executive is responsible for all administration and management of the association with a focus on empowering staff and aligning staff positions with desired goals; adding focus on community and real estate industry issues