



Board Member Agreement

note: this is a working document; dated 6/22/22

Board of Directors purpose:

Board members are responsible for ensuring effective and fiscally sound oversight of the programs of Rural Vermont.

Board Member Expectations

Members are expected to:

1. Participate and be engaged
 - a. Attend all/most board meetings (missing 3 consecutive meetings can be grounds for resignation)
 - b. Serve on at least one of the following circles: Core, Fundraising & Financials, Policy, or Communications
 - c. Offer to take on special assignments, officer/Core roles, and/or serve on ad-hoc committees, when possible
 - d. Attend functions, such as conferences and Rural Vermont events, whenever possible
 - e. Review agendas and supporting materials prior to board, circle, and committee meetings
 - f. Be reasonably accessible, by phone or email, to staff and other Board members as needed
 - g. Fulfill commitments within agreed-upon deadlines
 - h. Assist the Board in carrying out its fiduciary responsibilities, such as reviewing its annual budget and contributing to fundraising efforts
 - i. Network and develop relationships with other board members, Rural Vermont staff, and additional stakeholders such as agricultural and land-based groups, organizations, and businesses.
 - j. Share resources and talents with Rural Vermont, including expertise, experience, and/or connections to potential sources of support
 - k. Engage in strategic direction discussions, considering the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats associated with Rural Vermont
 - l. Be willing to step down from the Board if unable to meet expectations
2. Make well-informed decisions
 - a. Be informed about Rural Vermont's policy and organizing work, intent, duties, mission, internal policies, scope of work, and interest areas
 - b. Stay abreast of Vermont's agricultural sector developments and current events
 - c. Engage in the thoughtful, deliberative decision making process associated with Rural Vermont's mission
3. Conduct themselves with integrity
 - a. Support the decisions of the Board
 - b. Raise and resolve any issues or concerns with the Board, chair, or staff

- c. Serve as an advocate/ambassador for Rural Vermont
- d. Be aware of conflicts of interest, and address as necessary
- e. Maintain confidentiality of Rural Vermont members as necessary

4. Follow Ground Rules for Meeting Conduct

- a. Use sociocratic meeting methods and decision-making protocol
- b. Read relevant material before meetings
- c. The Board is to be governed by the principle of maximum transparency
- d. Board meetings will start and end on time
- e. Be respectful of other board members, the chair, and staff. Participate with an open mind, respect differing viewpoints, be willing to learn, and make decisions that support the mission of Rural Vermont based on relevant facts at hand.

5. Be held accountable through organizational changes that foster diversity, equity, and inclusion through our [anti-racism policy](#) while addressing disparities in agriculture.

Expected Time Commitment for Board Members:

- 1. Attendance of quarterly Board meetings (usually 4 hours in length)
- 2. Attendance of the Annual Meeting (usually an evening in the fall)
- 3. Attendance of annual Board Retreat (timing varies)
- 4. Participation in special meetings as necessary
- 5. Participation in circle meetings as necessary (variable; at least quarterly)
- 6. Be available to represent Rural Vermont at meetings with constituents, legislators and/or funders
- 7. Be available to represent Rural Vermont at conferences, events, and relevant public gatherings