

Annual Board Self-Evaluation Survey

Summary Report for



HunterKemper Consulting

August 30, 2022

Section 1: Introduction and Survey Overview

In support of the current WNCSource strategic plan, a new Annual Board Self-Evaluation Survey was developed to establish a baseline measurement of board members' understanding of their roles and the work of the agency. Board governance best practices were also assessed.

The Executive Committee provided direction, reviewed a draft survey, and confirmed the questions to include. This Board Self-Evaluation Survey was conducted from July 20 to Aug. 19, 2022. The survey was distributed by email to 17 current board members, with an option for a verbal phone administration of the survey also offered. A total of 15 board members responded (88%), and they spent an average of 16.22 minutes completing the survey.

The survey explored various topics in the following sections:

1. Board of Directors Participation and Engagement (5 questions): Duration of board service, perceptions of board meetings and participation, suggestions of strengths and improvements related to board meetings, and overall board effectiveness.
2. Individual Participation (3 questions): Self-assessment of board participation, areas of value and impact as a board member, and individual success as a board member.
3. Understanding and Equipping the Board (3 questions): Understanding the vision and role as a board member, clarity regarding board role in various areas, and effectiveness of recent board trainings.
4. Communications and Tools (4 questions): Comfort level with communicating about WNCSource and utilization of board portal tools, ideas for developing an elevator speech, employee directory as a tool, staff role and communication clarification, and input regarding virtual and in-person board meeting options.
5. Board-CEO Partnership (1 question): Agreement with aspects of communication and role differentiation between the CEO and the Board.
6. Strategic Plan Engagement (3 questions): Understanding of strategic plan goals, alignment with strategic plan board participation metrics including fundraising and attendance, and additional feedback.

This report summarizes the survey results. Section 2 summarizes the key findings for each of the 6 topics of the survey. Section 3 provides the survey results, including average ratings and text responses. A copy of the online survey has been provided as a separate document.

Section 2: Key Findings

This section summarizes the key findings, organized by the 6 topics of the survey. Survey rating response options extended from 1 to 5, (1 = low, 3 =medium, and 5 = high). Average response scores ranged nearly from 2.87 to 4.80.

Many of these findings relate to the strategic plan Goal #1: Equip the Board of Directors with tools, training, and structure to lead the Agency strategically into its future. The results of this survey are relevant to some of the outcomes, strategies, and metrics identified in this goal. A few fundraising-related results are also relevant to the strategies and metrics for Goal #7: Implement a Strategic Development program to connect people's philanthropic passions with community needs.

1. Board of Directors Participation and Engagement

Strengths:

- Overall board effectiveness was rated among the highest average ratings (4.33, question 5).
- There was a high level of agreement about board meetings, including that board meetings are well planned, different points of view are encouraged and acknowledged, board members are supportive of decisions made, and that board members come to meetings prepared, with scores also among the highest ratings (4.00 to 4.80, question 2). Board meetings were rated as interesting at almost the same level (3.87).
- Comments indicated that board meeting strengths include the agenda, information and reports, receiving materials in advance, more insight into programs, the CEO's report, well-organized, and a hybrid meeting format.

Challenges:

- There was less agreement that all board members participate in important board discussions, with a score that was among the six lowest average rates (3.40, question 2).
- Suggestions for enhancing the meetings include; more involvement by board members particularly in virtual format, additional training and explanation about agency operations, reduce content duplication between written and verbal reports, direct link to the board documents, focus on priority content, and recognition of employee or employees of the month.

2. Individual Participation

Strengths:

- Board members rated their own participation among the highest average scores for listening to different points of view, supporting the decisions that are made, and coming to meetings prepared (4.13 - 4.80, question 6). This parallels the high ratings for the board overall.
- Board members indicated that they participate in important board discussions (3.87, question 6), which contrasts with the lower rating about all board members participating in important board discussions (3.40, question 2). Board members also indicated that they participate actively in their assigned committee (3.80).

Challenges:

- In contrast with the high rating of overall board effectiveness, the average rating of members' own overall effectiveness as a board member was among the lowest average scores (3.47, question 8).
- Board members' sense of the value they bring to the agency was in the medium-level average ratings for the Value of their time, Talent/skills, Access to others, Knowledge of the issue and/or advocacy (3.53 – 3.67, question 7). The self-assessment of board members' financial guidance and oversight received the lowest average score (2.87, question 7).

3. Understanding and Equipping the Board

Strengths:

- Board members indicated a high level of understanding of the role and vision of WNCSource in the community and of board roles (4.40 for each item, question 9).

Challenges:

- While the rating of understanding of board roles was among the highest scores (4.40, question 9), the ratings of clarity on various aspects of board roles were in the medium to medium-high range, including oversight of operations, strategic plan, board management, financial guidance & oversight, and legal compliance (3.73 – 3.44, question 10).
- Clarity on the board fundraising role received the second-lowest average rating (3.00, question 10).
- The effectiveness of recent board trainings (e.g., Bylaws, WNCSource program operations, culture, board portal) was rated in the medium to medium-high range (3.64, question 11).

4. Communications and Tools

Strengths:

- There was a strong indication of comfort with speaking to friends, colleagues, and/or community groups about WNCSource and also with using the online board portal tools (4.00 – 4.20, question 12).

Challenges:

- The rating for the effectiveness of the employee directory with role synopsis for easy communication was on the lower range (3.38, question 14).

Other Input:

- Suggestions for helping board members develop an elevator speech included:
 - Basic tenets of what we believe.
 - Concise description of programs and their impact.
 - Testimonials and community feedback.
 - Specifics on how to increase teacher hiring and retention.
 - Overview of funding sources (% of government versus fundraising).
 - Discuss in meetings.

- For the question about in-person or virtual board meeting format, many people expressed a willingness to participate in either format. Some people indicated a preference for participating virtually for convenience, and a few other indicated a preference for occasional in-person meetings for increased interaction.

5. Board-CEO Partnership

Strengths:

- Several aspects of the Board-CEO partnership received high average scores, including an assessment of good two-way communication between the board and the CEO, indication that the board or a board committee has formally evaluated the CEO within the past 12 months, and agreement that the board has discussed and communicated the kinds of information and level of detail it expects from the CEO on what is happening in the organization (4.00 - 4.71, question 16).

Challenges:

- Potential challenges emerging from scores in the medium to medium-high range include clear understanding of where the board's role ends and the CEO's role begins and practice of the board providing feedback and showing its appreciation to the CEO on a regular basis (3.62 - 3.64, question 16).

6. Strategic Plan Engagement

Strengths:

- Goals #1 - 7 of the strategic plan had a medium high to high level of board understanding (3.930 – 4.29, question 17). Goal #7, to implement a strategic development program, had the lowest average rating of understanding among all of the goals.
- Board members indicated a high level of priority for board meeting attendance, a metric for strategic plan Goal #1 (4.71, question 18).

Challenges:

- In addition to the low clarity on the board fundraising role identified in topic 3 above, two other aspects of fundraising received low scores. The level of importance of having 100% of board members make a financial contribution was rated at a medium to medium-high level (3.64) and board members' level of comfort in helping with fundraising for the agency was rated at a medium level (3.07, question 18).

Additional Suggestions:

- Compliments and appreciation were expressed for staff members David White and Kim Hall and for board chair Kim Wilson.
- Suggestions were made to conduct a board campaign and emphasize the importance of personal giving to board members.

Section 3: Summary of Board Survey Responses

This section compiles the average ratings and all survey comments. Comments have been lightly edited for spelling and punctuation.

Survey Page 1: Board of Directors Participation and Engagement

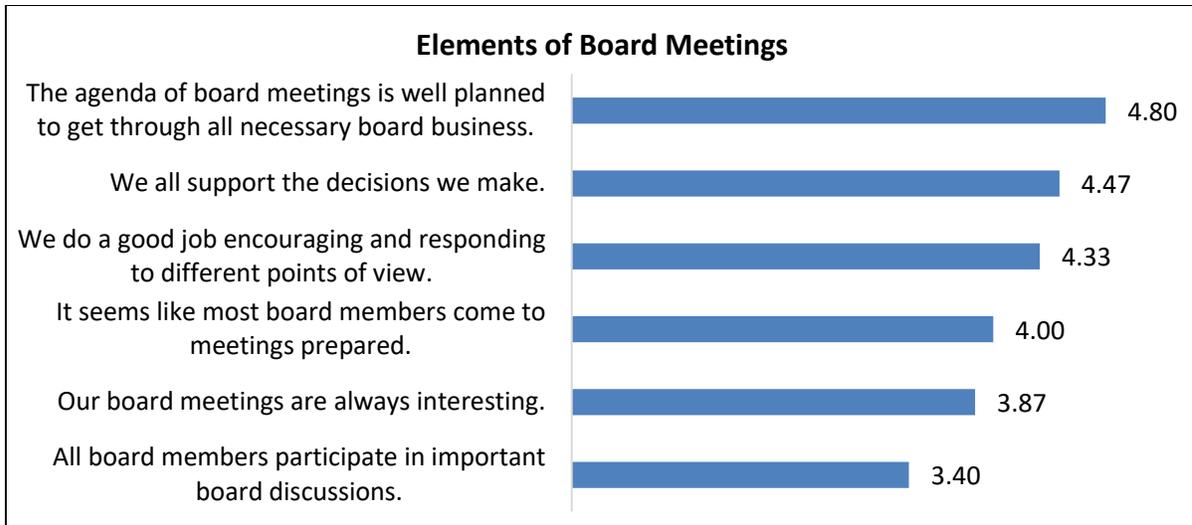
Survey Responses

Survey Dates	Total # Responses	Avg. Total Time Spent
July 20 to Aug 19, 2022	15 out of 17 board members (88%)	16 min., 19 sec.

1. How long have you been a Board member with WNC Source (including when it was another name)?

Duration	# Responses	% Responses
Less than 1 year	3	20%
1 – 3 years	5	34%
4 – 5 years	6	40%
6 – 12 years	1	6%
Total	15	100%

2. How would you rate your level of agreement about the following key aspects of the board meetings?



Number of responses: 15.

Scale: Low (1), Medium Low (2), Medium (3), Medium High (4), High (5).

3. What is particularly helpful about board meetings?

Comments:

- A clear agenda, reports/documents prepared for the meeting, and a hybrid meeting format.
- David's report and the simplicity that it is given with.
- David's report identifying tasks and results.
- Historic info and budget/grant efforts.
- I appreciate having the documents beforehand. Even if it's just a few minutes and I have nothing to add, it's nice to review what will be discussed.
- Lately, COVID issues and staffing problems related to the pandemic. Ongoing, sharing department/program info. Always, new issues.
- Learning more about WNCSource and the community.
- Linking with members.
- Since Kim Wilson became chair of the Board, meetings are so much more organized, polished, and effective.
- Start on time and are well organized.
- The information presented to the board is helpful because it is well presented in a clear and concise fashion.
- They are informative and up to date.
- To see the different areas WNC Source has an impact.
- Very well organized and prepared.

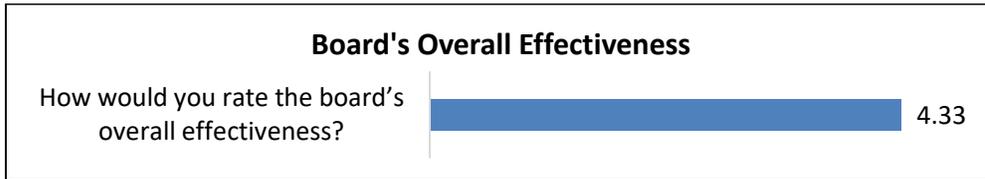
4. What could be improved about board meetings?

Comments:

- I can't think of anything. I think it's pretty straightforward and informative. I'm looking forward to trying it out in person.
- I miss the great meals and seeing folks in person, but I do love the virtual format for convenience and safety.
- In person.
- More graphs and videos.
- More involvement by board members. Turn cameras on so we can see each other. Everyone chat in box please.
- More training and explanation on some of WNCSource's operations.
- Most of the reports are the same information as given in the meetings. I know that we need to make sure the information comes across, however it can be very repetitive. Also, I know Kim has a lot going on, if there's a way to provide a direct link to the board documents, that would be helpful!
- Recognition of employee or employees of the month.

- Some areas have a lot of information to be shared. Minute details do not need to be read at the meetings as it's time consuming. I would highlight the most important for the board to know. It's our responsibility to read the details.
- Too much information. Finances are detailed and complex.

5. How would you rate the board's overall effectiveness?



Number of responses: 15.

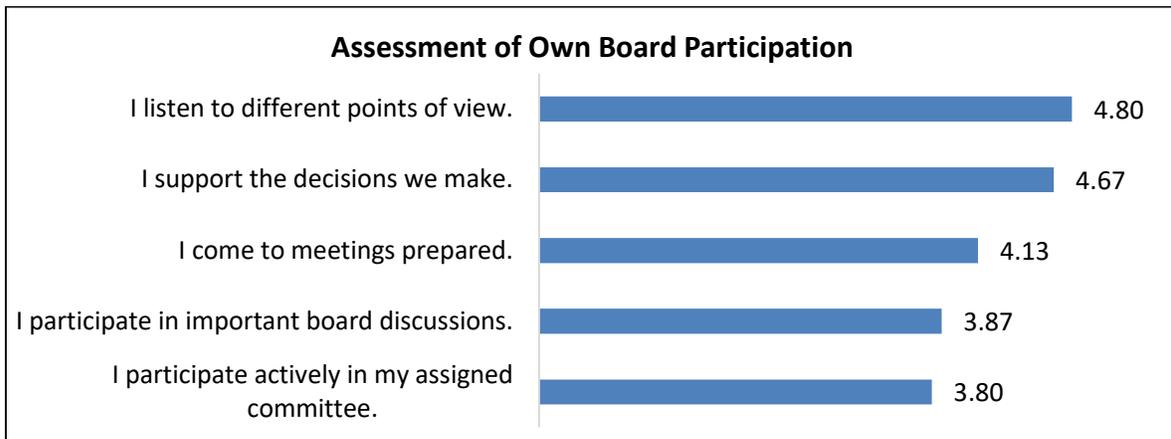
Scale: Low (1), Medium Low (2), Medium (3), Medium High (4), High (5).

Comments:

- As this is my first Board of Directors, I'm not sure. I know that we have better attendance with the virtual meetings so keeping them seems important.
- Continuing to have board members who either receive or are connected to the services the agency provides.
- Face to face would be better.
- I feel like there is a lot that WNC Source could just update the board on and then we vote upon. Monthly meetings are a lot with a lot of information that is already shared in the board reports. Maybe have a monthly report like we do, then have a board meeting every other month. As a board member, it's my responsibility to read the material and make sure I am update today to make the best decisions for the organization.
- In person.
- More training.
- More training on agency programs.
- Not working in public service or having served on a board before, I'm not sure that I'm the best person to answer the above question or this one. We may be highly effective already given that WNCSource is a pretty prominent and effective nonprofit. I'm pretty pleased with seeing more diversity now than what I feel was here when I started. That's something that I'd continue to encourage as far as backgrounds, experience, ethnicity, etc.
- Reminders when documents have been uploaded to the portal and having ample time to review them before a meeting.
- We don't advocate for WNC Source. We don't give money or raise money. Few of us volunteer for an event or at the stores.

Survey Page 2: Individual Participation

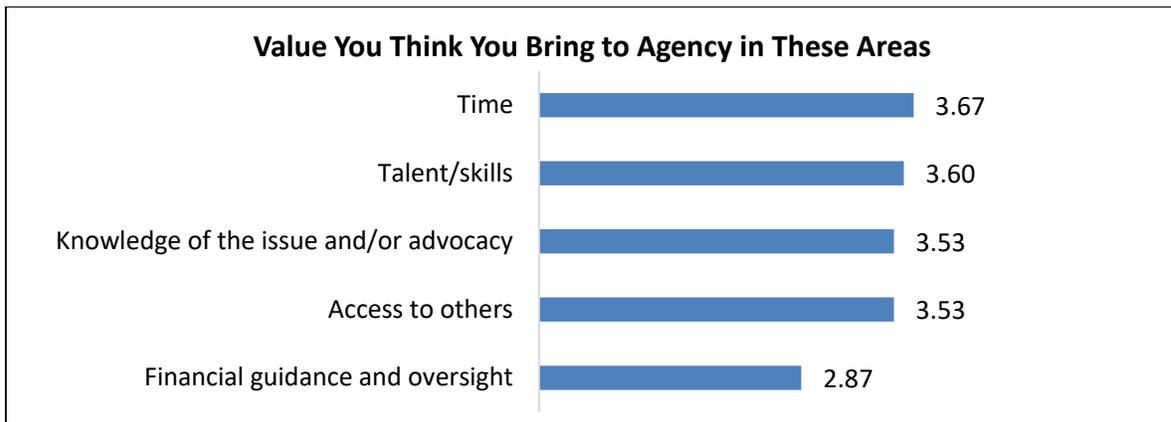
6. To what degree do you agree with the following in reference to your board participation?



Number of responses: 15.

Scale: Low (1), Medium Low (2), Medium (3), Medium High (4), High (5).

7. Please rate the value you think you bring to the agency through your contributions in the following areas.



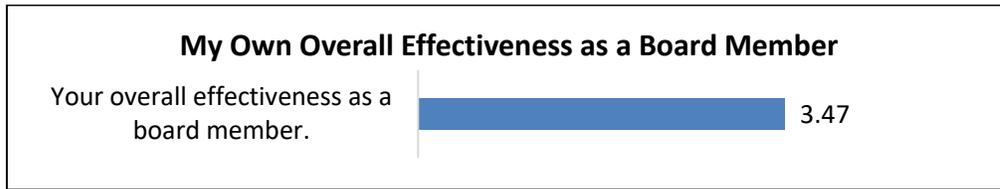
Number of responses: 15.

Scale: Low (1), Medium Low (2), Medium (3), Medium High (4), High (5).

Comments:

- By Financial - do you mean for the agency or my money contributions? If you mean reviewing/voting on agency financial issues, it's HIGH. If you mean my \$\$ contributions, it's LOW.
- I bring access to others but it is never asked for.
- I have been very active the first five years. This past year I have not been active due to working a full time and part time job and raising 4 daughters mostly alone.
- I'm not sure where marketing experience fits into this, maybe under talent/skills.
- Play a part in marketing. Hope to play a more effective role.

8. How would you rate your overall effectiveness as a board member?



Number of responses: 15.

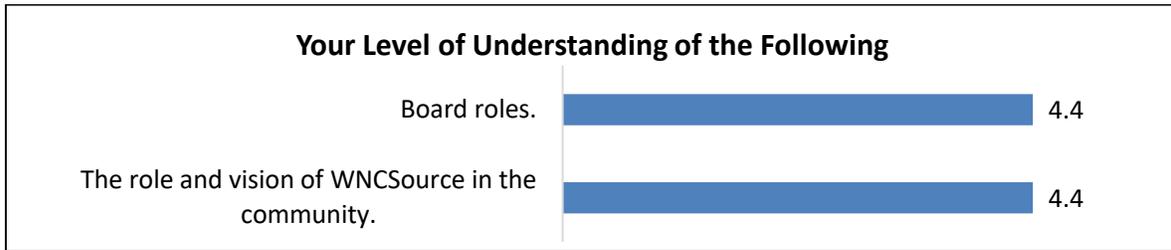
Scale: Low (1), Medium Low (2), Medium (3), Medium High (4), High (5).

Comments:

- Attend meetings more consistently.
- Experience.
- I could do better/more. It's more related to just sectioning out time, and so I forget things. I'm working on doing better with it and am hoping to contribute more to our recruiting and retention efforts in addition to building partnerships with other local nonprofits.\
- I don't have a printer and miss the printed versions of the monthly documents. I understand the need for tree conservation & mailing costs and support having it online. I need to ask Kim Hall to send me printed material as I find it difficult to see and read all of it online.
- If I had more detailed understanding of the finances, how expenditures are prioritized, and how we decide to spend money on brick and mortar vs. teachers.
- Maybe to be part of committee but my available time is limited.
- More opportunities to get to know the staff.
- More time to devote to work as a board member.
- More training on our operations.
- Not sure I'm a great fit. I feel like I'm mostly there as a sounding board and to make a quorum. I know the basics of running businesses, staffing, budgeting, etc. if you want someone who can make a bigger impact, I don't want to take someone else's seat. The work this organization does is fantastic & our community needs it desperately which I why I chose to serve.
- This is my last year.

Survey Page 3: Understanding/Equipping the Board

9. Please rate your level of understanding of the following:



Number of responses: 15.

Scale: Low (1), Medium Low (2), Medium (3), Medium High (4), High (5).

Comments:

- I think WNCSource knows what they do, other than transit and a few Children's programs, I'm not sure the community knows what WNCSource even is (even before the name change)
- The vision changes with the Board members. I'm thankful David White has stayed steady and true to his values.

10. Please rate the clarity you have regarding your role as a board member in the following areas.



Number of responses: 14 – 15.

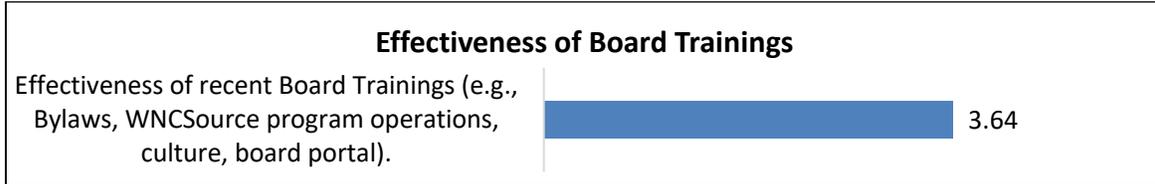
Scale: Low (1), Medium Low (2), Medium (3), Medium High (4), High (5).

Comments:

- A lot has changed since we developed the strategic plan, it's always good practice to take a pause for revision and reassess. We've had staff changes, (HUGE change with Sheryl and her numerous years of experience and passion for housing and helping others in this area) etc.
- Again, just because I am clear on my role as a board member, it doesn't mean we function well as a board or undertake typical board activities. I have high expectations of myself and others on the board and I don't think we are terribly self-informed or engaged.

- Again: by Financial - do you mean for the agency or my money contributions? It's only been in the last year that Board \$\$ contributions has been addressed. I am VERY uncomfortable with this issue for a non-profit that serves mostly income-limited folks and requires members of the same on the board.

11. Please rate the effectiveness of recent Board Trainings (e.g., Bylaws, WNCSource program operations, culture, board portal).



Number of responses: 14.

Scale: Low (1), Medium Low (2), Medium (3), Medium High (4), High (5).

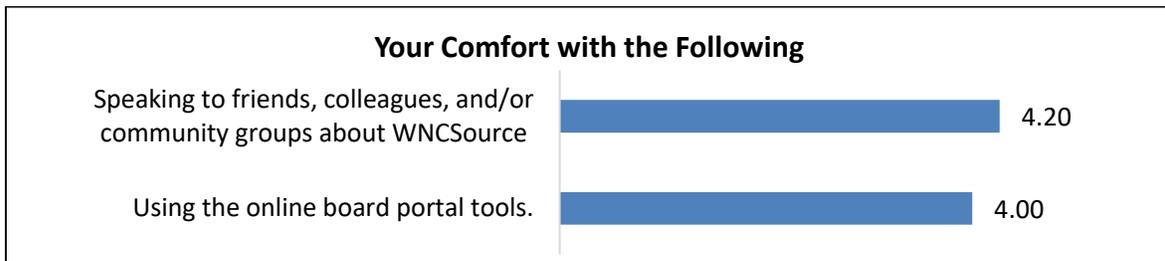
Comments:

- Didn't attend.
- I don't remember having any specific training.
- New member training and discussion.
- Perhaps at each Board meeting, a suggestion to Board members that if they would like more info on a topic, to do ____ (this needs more thought/suggestions)
- We have great self-regulated training and I would like to do more but it requires members engage themselves in it.

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Survey Page 4: Communications and Tools

12. Please share your comfort with the following:



Number of responses: 14.

Scale: Low (1), Medium Low (2), Medium (3), Medium High (4), High (5).

Comments:

- Break out friends and colleagues from community groups. By community groups, do you mean as a scheduled speaker? Or meetings I normally go to, so informally?
- Cannot use the portal as I am visually impaired.
- From a UX perspective, I feel like it could use a little attention, but it's easy enough to navigate.
- I don't talk to friends about WNC Source but I could.

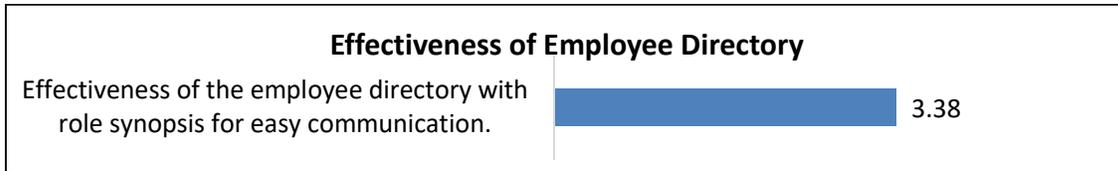
13. One of the strategies in the strategic plan is to develop a 30-second elevator speech so that board members can uniformly articulate WNCSource's mission and activities. What information would be helpful to you in developing this elevator speech?

Comments:

- Actionable and descriptive community feedback on the positive impact WNCSource has on community members.
- Basic tenets of what we believe and of our operations.
- Concise language that would be reviewed by legal.
- Discuss in meetings if this is important.
- How do you condense that many programs into 30 seconds?
- How we are going to increase teacher hiring and retention.
- I think clearly seeing the programs overview is helpful. I think going through the planning day at Highland Lake was super beneficial when it came to digging into WNC Source. I think the leadership has an idea (some more than others and not necessarily David) about what WNC Source is and what they do, the team has to have a common, articulated view before the board can. I think they know the mission as it's written out, it's the articulation of what WNC Source actually does that folks get caught up on.
- Knowing how much of our financial support comes from the government versus how much needs to be from fundraising.
- Simplicity.

- This question is unclear to me. Do you mean I'm to develop my own elevator speech? Or what topics do I think are important to include for the folks responsible for developing one?
- WNCSource has multiple service areas and capturing mission and activities in 30 seconds would be difficult. What areas would senior leadership of the program areas most like for us to capture in 30 seconds?

14. How would you rate the effectiveness of the employee directory with role synopsis for easy communication?



Number of responses: 13.

Scale: Low (1), Medium Low (2), Medium (3), Medium High (4), High (5).

15. For upcoming board meetings, what is your comfort with having a choice of virtual and in-person options for participating? Please share any suggestions to increase the effectiveness of this combination.

Comments:

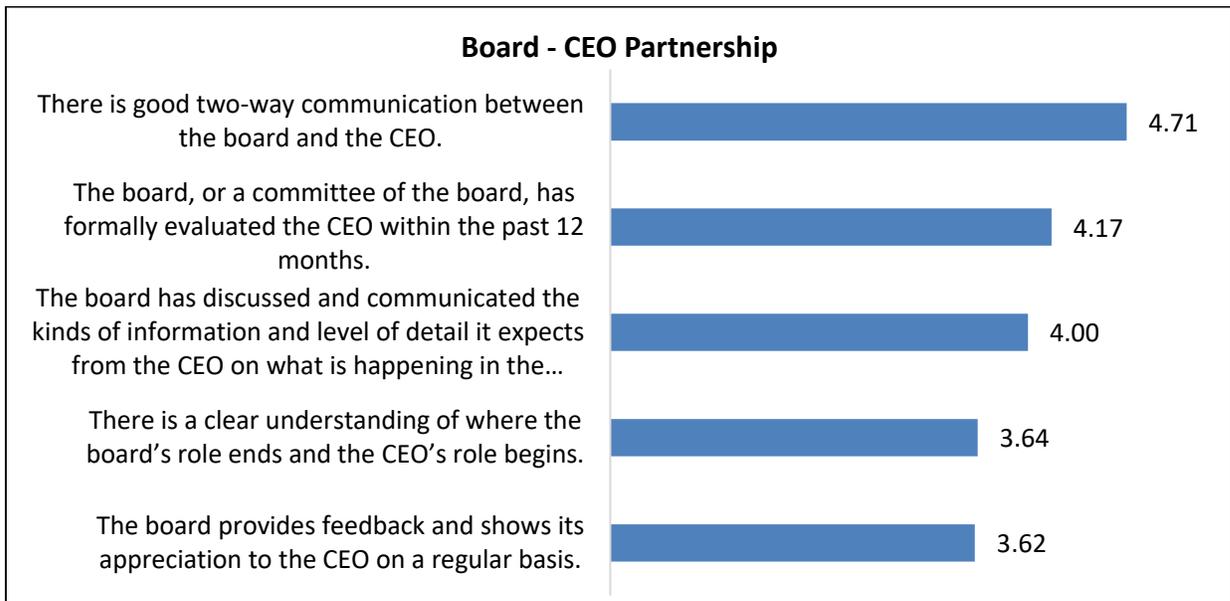
- Covid is here to stay, it's going to be the new cold or flu, Virtual is easier as a board member (and I'm sure much cheaper as the meals at the country club were nice) especially since I don't live in Hendersonville. There is value in being in person. Having two modalities (virtual & online) can be a nightmare which connection, audio/video, etc.
- Good with both, but would like to meet in person occasionally.
- Having a choice is good. I prefer face to face.
- I like having a choice. I understand if we go back to meals/meetings, there was already a problem with no-shows who had confirmed they would attend and the agency had to pay for those meals anyway. So, there would have to be a hard set deadline for each and I would like to see this issue addressed to the Board if we go back to meals.
- I never use the employee directory and don't think I should be communicating with the staff directly, so I don't like this question.
- I think the hybrid meeting format has been very successful and it should continue to be an option for board participation.
- I would participate either way.
- I'm fine with in-person meetings. It might be helpful to require a negative rapid test from in-person attendees. With the CDC making significant changes to their policy and position on wearing masks and isolating, it seems reasonable.
- In person meetings are more formal to me, but I could do either virtual or in-person.
- In person.
- Prefer virtual.

- The virtual platform seems to be working well. I think in person Board meetings could be a hybrid and be at an outdoor venue.
- Virtual makes attending much more convenient being a single parent. Getting to know who serves beside me would be beneficial.
- Virtual works well, especially during these uncertain COVID times. Also seems to make our start time more prompt and completion timely.

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Survey Page 5: Board-CEO Partnership

16. How would you rate your level of agreement with the following?



Number of responses: 12 – 14.

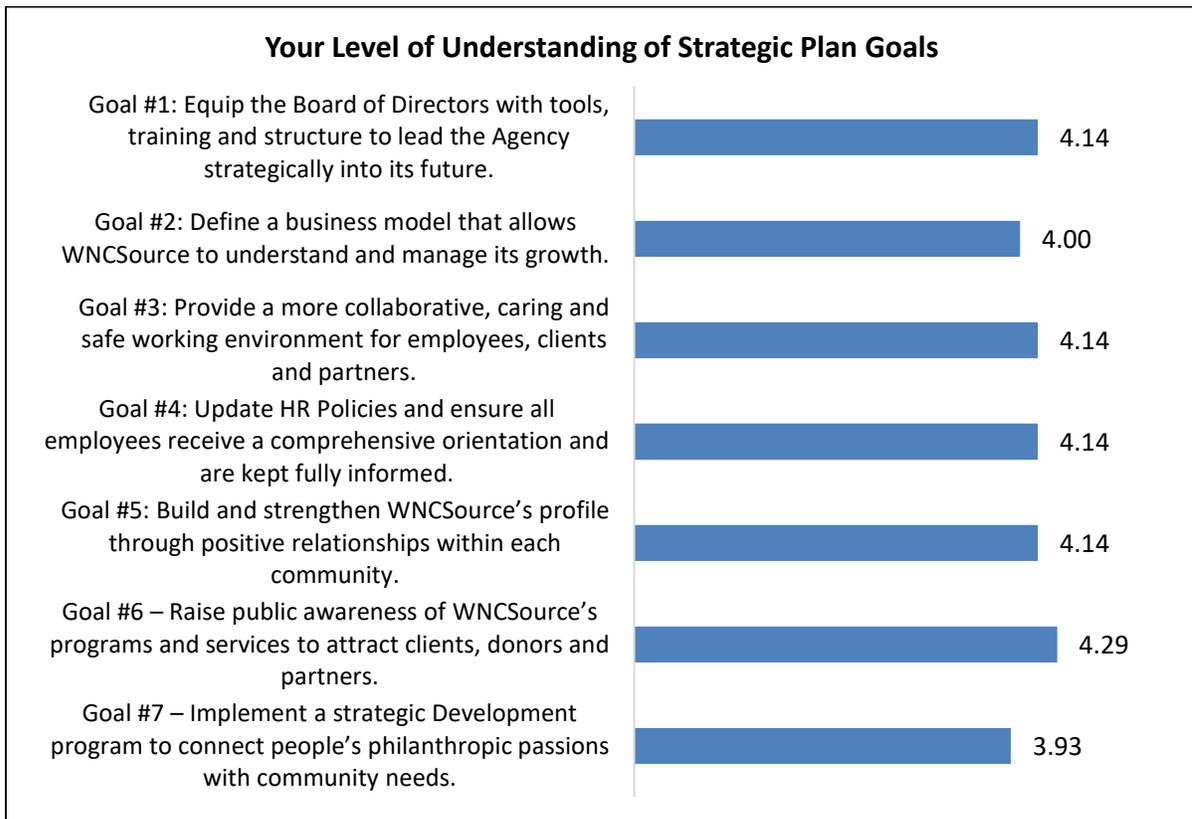
Scale: Low (1), Medium Low (2), Medium (3), Medium High (4), High (5).

Comments:

- Perhaps the roles are in the Board paperwork I signed years ago, but I don't remember it now. I think individually Board members communicate to the CEO appreciation on certain issues as they come up, but I don't know if it's on a regular basis. How is this done on other Boards?
- Communication.
- David looks to others a lot for their input and opinions which is great, it seems sometimes his knowledge, background, experience, etc. is overshadowed by more outspoken staff members when as the CEO, sometimes it's your decision to make the decisions with the information provided and I wish it seemed that way more.
- I feel like I'm too new to answer some of these.
- I feel like we evaluated David White recently, although I couldn't say when. Hopefully we haven't failed to show appreciation for the job he's doing and while I don't remember providing formal feedback, I feel like we do throughout meetings.

Survey Page 6: Strategic Plan Engagement

17. Please rate your level of understanding of each of the following strategic plan goals:



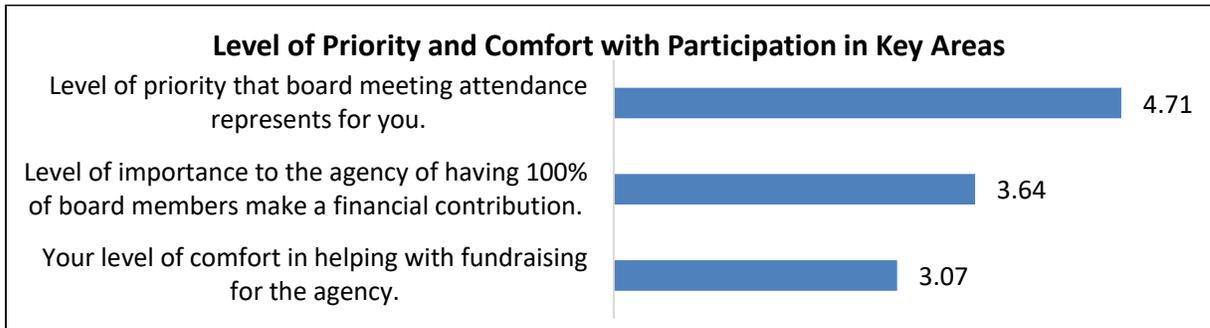
Number of responses: 14.

Scale: Low (1), Medium Low (2), Medium (3), Medium High (4), High (5).

Comments:

- I don't think the question is well written. I know our goals. I am not actively participating in making the goals achieved.
- I put Low on those items I'm not sure of the plan. I cannot find the info on the WNCSource website today as after logging in as Board member, none of the documents are there. Something is wrong with the online portal today. I tried on laptop and tablet, both show "Sidebar Heading" "Sidebar Content" where the documents used to be. Sorry. Without them in print I can't answer these. I have a rudimentary knowledge of the ones I marked high.
- I think I would like to know more about Goal #2, but it's entirely possible that it's just slipping my mind at the moment.
- I'm not a board member of financial means. I think this board would benefit from changing a few of the positions to be positions that could better position the organization.
- We still have work to do on all of these.

18. Please rate the following:



Number of responses: 14.

Scale: Low (1), Medium Low (2), Medium (3), Medium High (4), High (5).

19. Do you have any other suggestions or questions related to board work and engagement?

Comments:

- I am looking forward to the opportunity to connect more with my fellow board members.
- I do like how much goes into board awareness and development. I think that is very important!
- I don't believe I've been specifically asked to make a gift. As a professional fundraiser I know the importance of having 100% board participation in giving. Make it known to the board the importance.
- If a Board Member only shows up at the monthly meetings without careful preparation, I do not see how they can understand the meeting content. Financial information is complex and reflects agency values.
- Interested in learning more from experienced board members.
- It has been a pleasure working with David White and especially Kim Hall over the past 6 years. Kim Wilson is amazing as well!
- Let's try that 100% giving drive again.
- Question 18 doesn't make sense to me, what are you asking?