



Board Director Job Description

EXPECTATIONS OF THE BOARD AS A WHOLE:

Our Mission: Rocky Mountain Ecodharma Retreat Center (RMERC) is devoted to bringing Buddhism and Dharma back into the natural world where they originated, and in doing so, regain the connection and energy necessary to effectively address ecological and related social crises. We call all of this Ecodharma. Ecodharma practices help us develop clarity, compassion, and courage, which are all needed to face humanity's greatest challenge ever: the ecological crisis.

Purpose: RMERC values collaboration, systems thinking, relationship building, diversity, inclusivity, attention to process and effectiveness. We run a Retreat Center and encourage the development of Ecodharma with the support of a small staff, a modest but growing circle of volunteers, committees, and the Board. The Board's role is to advise, oversee fiduciary and legal responsibilities, and general promotion of RMERC so as to support the organization's mission and needs. While day-to-day operations (including physical infrastructure, program management, technology, networking and sangha building) are led by RMERC's Executive Director and staff, the Board-staff relationship is a partnership, and the appropriate support of the Board is both critical and expected. We appreciate how the [National Council of Nonprofits](#) describes the role of a board – “rather than steer the boat by managing day-to-day operations, board members provide *foresight, oversight, and insight.*”

To satisfy its fiduciary and legal duties, the board is responsible for:*

- determining the mission and purposes of the organization
- organization of the board of directors
- selecting and evaluating the performance of the Executive Director
- strategic and organizational planning in partnership with the Executive Director, staff and relevant stakeholders
- ensuring strong fiduciary oversight and financial management, including creation, adoption and oversight of the annual budget
- Ensuring the ongoing care and health of our land, buildings, infrastructure, facilities, etc.
- fundraising and resource development
- enhancing RMERC's public image and promoting the organization
- assessing its own performance as the governing body of RMERC, including annual self-review
- continuous oversight of organizational and individual commitment to creating a community of belonging
- ensuring RMERC's commitment to a diverse and inclusive board and staff

**Members of the board share these responsibilities while acting in the interest of RMERC. Each member is expected to make recommendations based on their experience and vantage point in the community.*

Length of terms: Three years, which may be renewed, pending reelection by the board. To maintain a balance of continuity and fresh energy and perspectives, the Board tries to engage in healthy succession planning, coordinating terms of service to allow for a graduated rotation of members.

Meetings and time commitment:

- The board of directors meets approximately 6 times a year.
- Meetings typically last 3 hours.
- Board members are asked to serve on 1 or 2 committees, which are composed of staff, board members, volunteers, and paid consultants when needed/appropriate. Committees of the board allow targeted work to occur and meet an average of 4-6 times per year, self-determined depending upon their respective work agendas.
- The Board tries to hold an annual in person weekend retreat/meeting in Colorado in April or November at the Center to build connection with each other, the Land and our mission as we attend to business and engage in visioning.
- Board members may be called upon to potentially attend special events or meetings (e.g. donor appreciation, member events), as they are determined.
- Service on RMERC's Board of Directors is without remuneration, except for administrative support, travel, and accommodation costs in relation to board members' duties.

Board meeting structure and organization:

- The board elects its co-chairs, secretary and treasurer. With the exception of treasurer, these roles are mainly honorary, as the usual functions of officers (setting meeting agendas, facilitating meetings, minutes taking) are shared and rotated among the board.
- In general, a consensus building approach is taken in board decision making, although very occasionally a majority vote is defaulted to.
- Board meetings begin with a brief shared meditation and check-ins and include reports from committees and the ED (supported by advance written reports), and business items.

EXPECTATIONS OF INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS

This starts with an understanding of the fundamental legal duties of each individual board member, which include:

- Duty of Care — Each board member has a legal responsibility to participate actively in making decisions on behalf of the organization and to exercise their best judgment while doing so.
- Duty of Loyalty — Each board member must put the interests of the organization before their personal and professional interests when acting on behalf of the organization in a decision-making capacity. The organization's needs come first.
- Duty of Obedience — Board members bear the legal responsibility of ensuring that the organization complies with the applicable federal, state, and local laws and adheres to its mission.

In support of and/or in addition to the legal requirements, RMERC expects each individual board member to:

- know the organization's mission, policies, programs, and needs
- prepare for, attend, and conscientiously participate in board meetings
- participate fully in one or more committees or task forces and/or take on special assignments
- faithfully read and understand the organization's financial statements and meeting notes
- follow the organization's bylaws, policies, and board resolutions
- serve as a trusted advisor to the Executive Director and staff as they develop and implement RMERC's strategic plan

- assist in identifying and recruiting other board members when needed
- serve as active advocates and ambassadors for the organization and fully engage in identifying and securing the financial resources and partnerships necessary for RMERC to advance its mission
- help identify personal connections, networks, and resources that can benefit the organization's fundraising and reputational standing, and advance RMERC's mission
- contribute to an annual performance evaluation of the Executive Director and staff as appropriate
- review outcomes and metrics created by RMERC to evaluate its impact, and regularly measure its performance and effectiveness using those metrics
- maintain confidentiality about all internal matters of RMERC

SKILLS & QUALIFICATIONS

We recognize that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. We thus seek the following *collective* array of skills among our board *as a whole* to support the work of the organization. Please review the following list to consider what you might uniquely offer in service to the board.

- Relationship with the Dharma – as teacher and/or committed practitioner
- Communication and interpersonal skills
- Media/Marketing (website, social media, etc.)
- Finance/Accounting
- Legal
- Human Resources
- Business/Organizational/Non-profit Leadership
- Board governance
- Philanthropy/Fundraising
- DEIA Stewardship
- Project Management
- Community Organizing/Development
- Technology
- Data Analysis

In addition, we look for each director to bring the following personal attributes:

- Commitment to their personal practice
- Curiosity
- Commitment to and passion for Ecodharma and addressing the ecological and social polycrises of our times
- Experience with and deep connection to Land and the more than human world
- Deep listening
- Systems thinking
- Personal integrity
- Interpersonal skills and relational competency – including mindful listening, the ability to welcome and include different and multiple perspectives with respect, and an understanding of the importance and impact of social location and power differential.