



# Board Responsibilities

Serving on the Board of Directors is a rewarding and important responsibility. Simply put, a board of directors is a group of people legally charged with the responsibility to govern a corporation and the unique aspects associated with governing a not-for-profit organization.

## VISION

GAAR envisions a community where REALTORS® are a vital part of every home's story, where home represents joy, hope, comfort and security.

## MISSION

To provide our members with value-added products and services, employ leading-edge technology, uphold high ethical and professional standards, and advocate for private property rights.

## PURPOSE

GAAR is passionate about providing our members with requisite tools for success by constantly looking for ways to assist them in the ever-changing real estate market.

## THE MAJOR DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*(Adapted from [Ten Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards](http://www.BoardSource.org), www.BoardSource.org)*

1. Determine and advance the Association's vision, mission and purposes.
2. Select the chief paid executive (not staff).
3. Support the chief executive and assess performance periodically – usually measured against the strategic plan.
4. Ensure effective organizational planning.
5. Ensure adequate resources (funds, time, volunteers, staff, technology, etc.)
6. Manage resource and financial oversight.
7. Determine, monitor and enhance programs and services.
8. Promote the Association's image.
9. Ensure legal and ethical integrity and maintain accountability.
10. Recruit and orient new board members and assess board performance.

### The Principal Fiduciary Duties of Boards of Directors

**Duty of Care** requires leaders to use reasonable care and good judgment in making their decisions on behalf of the interests of the Association.

**Duty of Loyalty** requires leaders to be faithful to the Association, avoiding conflicts of interest.

**Duty of Obedience** requires leaders to comply with governing documents (*i.e. bylaws, articles of incorporation, policies, etc.*)

### “The board governs...the staff manages.”

**Leadership:** Volunteer leaders are responsible for the direction of the Association. The board governs, develops policy and sets a course for the future. It maintains focus on the mission and strategic goal and four major functions:

#### Functions (4):

- Governance
- Policy & Position Development
- Visionary – Future Focus
- Fiduciary

**Management:** Paid staff and contractors are responsible for the administration of the Association. Staff act as partners to the board, advancing the goals and strategies while taking care of the daily administrative needs unique to nonprofit organizations.

### Unique Terminology

**Not-for-Profit** refers to the legal corporate status of the organization. (It does not imply an exemption from paying or collecting *state sales tax*.) **Nonprofit** is the casual reference to Not-for-Profit.

**Exempt Organization** is a reference to the IRS designation exempting the organization from paying most federal income tax (with exception of **UBIT – Unrelated Business Income Tax**.)

**IRS 501(c)(3)** designation most often refers to organizations with a religious, charitable, scientific or educational purpose.

**IRS 501(c)(6)** designation refers to trade associations, business leagues and professional societies.

### Strategic Objectives

1. Promote and support public policies that advance the real estate industry, private property rights, sustainable real property ownership and housing opportunities.
2. Support and enhance a meaningful and long-term relationship between REALTORS® and consumers.
3. Be the most comprehensive, reliable and accessible source of real estate information for REALTORS®.
4. Improve the competency and professionalism of REALTORS®.
5. Strengthen relationships with REALTORS® and within the REALTOR® community.

## Board Tools

Documents available to leaders in **Dropbox**.

### GAAR Board of Directors

GAAR Strategic Plan

GAAR Board Members

SWMLS Board Members

Meeting Schedule

Governance Report

### Committees

Committees & Purpose, Rosters, Reports

### Budget – GAAR/SWMLS (Overviews)

GAAR/SWMLS Financial Statements

Anti-trust Policy

Governance Report

### GAAR Meeting Agendas & Packets

GAAR Meeting Agendas & Packets Archive

### GAAR Governing Documents

Bylaws, Policies and Minutes

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## Why Does GAAR Have Guiding Principles?

The Guiding Principles were created to give a common language to service on the Board of Directors. The principles are practiced and learned by each director and each director gives a personal commitment to the principles. The principles guide the ongoing business of the Board of Directors. Should any of the principles be violated, it is the obligations of each director to auto execute and for the remainder of the directors to mentor others in upholding the commitment.

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## Guiding Principles

- 1. We commit to integrity.** To honor this commitment:
  - We will do what we say
  - We will be on time
  - We will do the “right” thing even though no one is watching.
  - We will treat each other and members with respect, always remembering that “cooperation” with each other is the hallmark of our success.
  - We will work as a team, collaborating to reach the “best” decision.
- 2. We commit to act with high standards of professional conduct.** To honor this commitment:
  - We will be present and prepared.
  - We will be open-minded and thoughtful as we consider all sides of an issue.

- We will encourage creative thinking and conversation.
- We will put aside personal agendas and attend to the business of the Association.
- We will be involved in activities of the Association in addition to participation in Board of Director meetings.
- We will dress professionally.
- We will follow the rules that govern the Association.

- 3. We commit to clear communication in all dealings.** To honor this commitment:
  - We will listen attentively and not interrupt.
  - We will listen twice as much as talking.
- 4. We commit to accountability and fiscal responsibility.** To honor this commitment:
  - We will honor transparency in all business dealings.
  - We will be proactive in budgeting for the programs of the Association, taking care with member dues.
- 5. We commit to being mindful of the needs of the Association members.** To honor this commitment:
  - We will engage in discussions that include the needs of all brokers.
  - We will engage in activities that unite brokerages, whether big or small.
- 6. We commit to “do not harm”.** To honor this commitment:
  - We will use appropriate language, never engaging in name calling or belittlement of others.
  - We will respect diversity.
  - We will serve all members, and fairly administer the programs supported by the Association.
  - We will consider policy that benefits all members, taking into consideration that the needs of the brokerages and the brokers may be different.

## Committees

Committees *recommend* →  
Board *approves* →  
Staff and volunteers *implement*.

**Standing Committees** – identified in the bylaws, appointed annually, on-going committee work.

### GAAR Grievance Committee

**Purpose:** To determine if complaints are potential violations of the Code of Ethics or determine if matters are arbitrable.

### GAAR Professional Standards Committee

**Purpose:** To hear ethics complaints and arbitration.

### GAAR Mediation Committee

**Purpose:** To mediate disputes arising as a result of Real Estate transactions.

### GAAR Executive Committee

**Purpose:** To conduct business between meetings of Board of Directors.

### GAAR Nominating Committee

**Purpose:** To present a slate of Officer and Director nominees for election.

**Ad Hoc Committees** – formed for specific or immediate needs and disbanded upon completion of work (*a.k.a. Task Force*).

### Public Policy Advisory Committee

**Purpose:** To participate in public policy & protect private property rights.

### LEAP (Leadership, Education, and Action Programs)

**Purpose:** To investigate, recommend, and provide resources for developing innovative programs that grow leadership in the Association and support member development.

### RPAC Fundraising Committee

**Purpose:** To increase awareness of RPAC and to raise funds to meet national goals.

### Community Relations Committee

**Purpose:** To create opportunities to serve the community through education, information and public service.

### GAAR Networking & Specific Membership Committees

#### Affiliate Committee

**Purpose:** To provide a forum which enables affiliate members to network and exchange ideas and information, provide industry information to REALTOR® members, and create opportunities for developing business partnerships.

#### Appraisal Committee

**Purpose:** To provide a forum for appraiser members to interact with other appraiser members of GAAR and share common ideas and goals with each other.

#### Young Professionals Network (YPN)

**Purpose:** To provide a forum for young real estate professionals to network and learn.