Exercise - Your Board Model

Consider the board model components listed below and talk about a few of the corresponding questions that are most relevant to you.

Components of a board model:

1. Formal Board Policies
   - What is in your bylaws?
   - Conflict of interest policy?
   - Term limits?
   - Gift acceptance policy?
   - Board giving/donations policy?
   - What are the officer positions and how are they chosen?
   - What is quorum?

2. Structures
   - What committees do you have?
   - What task forces do you have?
   - Who is on each; board and/or staff, others?
   - How do individuals get on a committee/task force?
   - Who chairs or leads each committee and how are they chosen?
   - What does the organizational chart look like; where is the board on the chart?

3. Meetings
   - How often does your board meet?
   - How are meetings facilitated?
   - Does your board retreat; how often; for what purpose?
   - Do you regularly achieve a quorum?
4. Board Agendas and Reports
- Who sets the agenda?
- Are agendas adhered to or do the conversations usually deviate from the agenda?
- What reports does the board routinely receive?
- Who decided what reports to provide the board?
- Are reports on the agenda as discussion items or are they verbal updates/summaries?

5. Communications
- How does the ED share information with the board?
- How do board members share information with one another?
- Do board members communicate with and have contact with staff (beyond the ED)?
- How does the board get input (if at all) from individuals outside the board and the ED (e.g. staff, constituents, clients, volunteers, members, donors)

6. Decision Making
- What decisions come to the board?
- What does not come to the board for decision-making?
- Who decides what decisions to bring and what not to bring to the board?
- How are decisions made?

7. Board Membership
- What is your process for recruiting board members?
- What does your ideal board member profile look like and who decided it? In other words, how have you decided what kinds of individuals you are looking for?
- How are new members oriented? (E.g. is there a written plan, a buddy system, who do they meet with in the beginning, etc.)
- Is there a process for outgoing members (e.g. how do you keep them engaged if at all)?