

Endow Manitoba Conference Summary

Ken, Warren, Sherrie, Mandy, and Kim attended the Endow Manitoba Conference in Winnipeg from October 27 – October 29.

Sessions ran from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. Because we could not all attend every session, we each attended the following sessions:

- Governance - Sherrie
- Finance and Administration - Ken
- Fund Development - Warren
- Grant Making - Kim
- Strategic Initiatives – Mandy

We met on Tuesday, November 8, 2022 to debrief and discuss what we all took away from the conference. Following are key points that resonated with each of us:

Summary of sessions Sherrie attended:

Understanding your role and responsibilities on the board

Understanding your unique role and responsibility as a board member will help you better oversee and lead your community foundation now and into the future.

Key points:

- Board is critical to foundation's success:
- Board has leadership role:
- Sets parameters.
- Responsible for risk management and strategic plan for foundation.
- Has accountability for outcomes.
- Responsible for credibility within community.
- Members should be 'connectors' within community, ensuring a good understanding of community needs.
- Key functions:
- Governance - make the right decisions the right way. What steps are in place to orient/train board members? Do we have right structures (i.e. sub-committees, right number of people, etc.)? Is there a clear board calendar?
- Oversight - meet all obligations every year. Measurement (budget, obligations defined by mission, regulatory requirements)
- Leadership - is prepared for the future it wants, increasing its impact in community. How prepared is foundation for the future? Understanding risks, how you'll change/mitigate risk, etc. Strategic plan - how to grow foundation, be a champion, develop relationships with stakeholders.
- Roles:

- Chair - 'first among equals' - leadership role
- Treasurer - accountable for all things financial
- Secretary - accountable for all things related to governance (record/minute keeping, bylaws, etc.)
- Duties of all:
- Fiduciary - demonstrating care/concern equal to competency, being prepared and participating fully in meetings, committees, etc.
- Loyalty - placing interests of foundation ahead of our own, not leveraging role for personal or financial benefits, avoiding conflicts of interest.
- Obedience - ensuring operating legally and meeting regularly
- Best practices:
- Understand board type and size accordingly.
- Be dutiful but set that as minimum effort.
- Balance time across the three main responsibilities (governance, oversight and leadership) as equally as possible.
- Ensure we are not spending too much time working IN the organization rather than ON the organization.

Planning for your future board

Planning for your board's succession helps ensure your community foundation's sustainability and growth. Without a board succession plan, your boat's future is uncertain, and the recruitment of new board members can be challenging.

Key points:

- Engage in regular/annual board succession conversations as a full board.
- Assess current board skills and competencies.
- Identify immediate (now) and intermediate (1-2 years) gaps that must be addressed.
- Consider 'board matrix'
- Quantify and qualify those attributes with board/director profiles (job descriptions).
- Develop pool of potential candidates who 'match' those profiles.
- Intentional asks to candidates in the pool.
- Intentional asks to those in community.
- Recruit for skills AND the communities represented.
- Ask ourselves 'Who is not here?' within board when considering succession.

Planning for your community foundation's future

Understanding the critical elements of an effective community foundation strategic plan will help set your boat on the best possible path to its future.

Key points:

- A core responsibility of board is “leadership”.
- Strategic plans should consider 3-5 years. Reflect on entire organization and structures and activities that support it. Intended to improve understanding of what is working.
- Review how environment is changing and how to create opportunities to adapt to changes.
- Engage as many stakeholders as possible in process, enhancing those critical relationships.
- Ensure plan's relevancy to community over time, and that it supports the foundation's vision and mission.
- Key steps:
- Gather all inputs:
 - Internal - how are structures/activities/results doing?
 - External - what are people telling us?
- Assess information:
- SWOT analysis
- Include how did we get here?
- Review/validate/revise strategic framework
- Use lateral thinking to ‘connect the dots’ of insights obtained through assessment to identify collection of strategies i.e. build on strengths? Address weaknesses? Etc. (Reference to ‘Six Thinking Hats’)
- Strategies - what resources are required? How will you measure success?
- Develop implementation and monitoring plan.
- Strategic plan outcomes - data, opportunity to engage
- Overheads will be on Endow Manitoba website.
- Bev talked about the Selkirk Foundation's strategic planning process. She emphasized:
- The importance of an outside facilitator. (They used Shirley Muir, past board member.)
- Important to have all board members there and can also include staff and sub-committee group members.
- Doing strategic planning outside of a regular board meeting, and at a different place different setting helps to create different mind set.

- Make the planning fun - include ice breakers/games (Oreo cookie activity); have snacks, wine, etc.
- Number and length of sessions can vary. Most recent planning involved 3 sessions although some years, only 1 session was required.
- Revisiting the strategic plan 2 times/year to keep it alive and in the front of members' minds.
- Selkirk separated their strategic and operating plans.
- Encouraged guarding against 'active inertia' - be honest with ourselves.

Board member orientation best practices

Effectively onboarding new board members helps them not only understand how your community foundation operates, but how best they can immediately contribute to its success.

Key points:

- Board orientation provides board members with history, context and perspectives related to the work of the foundation and the board.
- Aligns new member on role, value and function of foundation.
- Fosters engagement.
- Reinforces culture of inclusion and connection between new and existing members.
- Supports succession planning by providing clear insight into member roles and responsibilities (5 core functions).
- Allows members to 'hit the ground running' and reduces frustrations some new members may feel who don't quite 'get it' or feel under-utilized.
- How to success at orientation:
- Decide on basics everyone should know:
- Core concepts/functions
- Natural cycle of community foundation activities/milestones.
- Keep amount of information easily digestible.
- Suggest board members have annual calendar i.e. AGM, budget process, reporting, granting, etc. Helps board have overview, see big picture.
- Continuous training - include small pieces at board meetings.
- Orientation sessions - should be multiple, accessible, small sessions (i.e. lunch and learns)
- Focus each session on a core concept/function.
- Include as many current board members as possible - culture/experience matters.

- A board role is like a new job - need to approach same way. Being effective means timely, thorough orientation.
- In Steinbach, they offer prospective board members written information prior to coming on board. This is followed by a hour long interview, sharing information and perspectives. Both candidates and the foundation then have time to decide if this is a good fit.
- Linda noted that Endow Manitoba will offer orientation packages to assist f foundations.
- One of comments noted in session is preference for term 'gifts' rather than 'donations' to avoid confusion about endowment structure (fund development focused on longevity and sustainability) as opposed to fundraising.

Sherrie Palmer

Summary of the sessions Ken attended:

The Endow Manitoba Conference was a well organized and informative day and a half. There was something, in the neighborhood of 150 people attending, mainly with the purpose of improving the service of their local Foundation.

The information sessions provided were mainly broken down into five categories: Governance, Finance and Administration, Fund Development, Grant Making and Strategic Initiatives. There was information for everyone and the sessions were sometimes presented by not only Endow Manitoba employees but people from other Foundations throughout the province.

Some ideas or concepts which came to light for me were when we do our strategic planning session for 2023, do we identify the need for a minor adjustment to our strategic plan, do we do an overhaul to our strategic plan or do we do a major exercise identifying strengths, weaknesses sometimes called a SWAT analysis.

Many times throughout the conference the fact that the last three years, for many different reasons such as the pandemic, the world economy and sometimes world politics may impact the type of needs within our community such as food safety and climate change to name a couple. This may provide opportunities for us to find new donors specifically targeting those types of needs that are becoming more dominate within our community.

More than once I was involved in discussions regarding diversity of board members. When I say diversity I mean such things as race, age, skill sets, etc. When we look at change with our board we should ask the question (who's not here) and have a discussion. "Who's not here" could mean whose not here with regards to Grant Application or whose not here with regards to donors. I will bring these questions to our strat planning session in the spring of 2023.

Ken Brennan, Board Chair

Summary of the sessions Warren attended:

1. What is the big dream we have for the foundation?
2. Consider taking a portion (ie: 10%) of every donation and direct that to undesignated funds 3. Raise funds around a specific goal or project.
4. Review scholarship/bursary awards - if not awarded - be redirected into undesignated funds 5. Not all gifts are equal- be aware of cars/houses/equipment etc 6. Should we have a meeting with the residents of the assisted living facility to talk about planned giving 7. Agency funds! Create a list of organizations that could benefit from this: terriers, alliance church, rotary, day cares etc 8. Staying in contact with donors = relevance 9. Get the schools to fund raise for awards, bursaries- expand their impact on future programs: football, band etc 10. Should we have more granting cycles? More opportunities to market/engage with the community.

Warren Neufeld, Vice Chair

Summary of the sessions Kim attended:

Why is effective community granting important:

- Demonstrates the relevance of your community foundation to the broader community.
- Strengthens community connections and relationships (donors, grantees).
- Builds a more robust network of community serving organizations.
- Provides the best community value with the available granting funds.

How to create an effective community granting process:

- Build relationships with grant-eligible organizations
- Who are they? What are their needs? How will the grant support their work? Why does their work matter to us? To our community?
- Treat applicants as partners.
- Seek to understand the needs of your community.
- Community research and consultations.
- Develop "deep community knowledge" within your foundation.
- Approach the work from a place of humility, compassion, and gratitude towards the community-serving organizations.

Steps to building an effective grant application process:

- Start at the end – Determine your goal.
- Reach out.
- Gather information thoughtfully.
- What information do you need?
- What is the best way to get it?

Why is connecting grants to community priorities important:

- The community knows its needs better than anyone.
- Community foundations are entrusted by their donors to serve the needs of community.
- Demonstrates the community foundation's value in the community.

Ways to enhance the process:

- Ensure diverse perspectives make up the grants decision making body.
- Engage with community to better understand their needs.

The outcome of connecting grants to community priorities:

- Being confident your community foundation is serving community need.
- Strategic grant making practices providing greater community impact.
- Deepening the connection of the community foundation with the community.

Key Takeaways:

- Make applications easy to complete, one page preferably
- Create a scoring template so all applications are scored fairly
- Ensure grant policies are fair and flexible so that the needs of the community are being met
- Reduce barriers so everyone can apply, applications should be assessable, maybe not all groups are comfortable doing an application online
- Reach out to groups that have never applied before to provide assistance
- Reach out to past Grant Recipients to find out if process was user friendly and how to make improvements
- Treat applicants as partners
- TRY YOUR BEST TO SAY YES

Kimberly Lavallee

Summary of the sessions Mandy attended:

Concurrent Session #1 Best Kept Secret – Building Community Awareness

Heard from Westshore Community Foundation about how their experience sharing a donor story on their website and social media created a snowball effect with donors, local media and awareness for their foundation.

Key Takeaways:

- Used Multiple medias to reach mass audience
- Board needs a 2 minute elevator pitch
- Need to see a message or logo 7 times to retain information – where can we be?
- Have conversations with grantees and donors to learn their story and share

Concurrent Session #2 Building Understanding of your Community's Needs

CFPD presented about our experience with the pilot program with Endow Manitoba and the work we are doing with the Community Assessment Report.

Key Takeaways:

- Data is a challenge – go beyond stats, who do you need to talk to?
- 3 Questions to Ask – What brings you hope, what discourages you, what connects you?
- Analyze the data collected – set grant priorities – share the data!
- Do Community Conversations – share stories that evoke feelings

Lunch Indigenous Philanthropy Panel

Panel discussion about philanthropy in the Indigenous Community – their path to this point

Concurrent Session #3 Crafting an Effective Communication Strategy

Discussed the difference between awareness & engagement and how to build a communication strategy with two way communication to invoke engagement. Winkler Community Foundation discussed their pay it forward May initiative.

Key Takeaways:

- Listen and Tell
- Strengthen Community Relationships, helps other know you and you know yourself better, facilitates discussion.
- Why should they care?
- 4 stories to tell: Grant stories, Donors stories, Leadership Stories & Foundation 101
- Asset based language being homeless vs experiencing homelessness
- Write for the medium you are using
- Good place to start sharing your message is a monthly newsletter

Concurrent Session #4 – Connecting with Donors of Tomorrow

Swan Valley Foundation discussed how they used a promotion within their local coop during the pandemic to reach new donors in one of the only locations still open for in person visits. Representatives from the Winnipeg Foundation discussed the different age categories of donors and

Key Takeaways:

- The Next Generation of Canadian Giving Report
- Boomers – Direct Mail & 1on1 Meetings
- Generation X – social media & storytelling
- Youth – Crowd Funding & Events
- Global Thoughts – Local Action