### **Hallmarks of Effective Boards**

* Staff and board leaders work together to insure that board members are made purposefully useful in a time-efficient way.
* Board sees its primary role as governance and oversight, i.e.:
* Making decisions about the direction of organizational growth;
* Monitoring and contributing to the organization’s effectiveness

at carrying out its mission;

* Helping to secure and guide allocation of resources.
* The board’s work therefore focuses on:
  + *Leadership* rather than supervision
  + *Policy-setting* rather than implementation
  + *Making decisions* rather than completing tasks
  + *Prescribing the “ends”* rather than the “means”
  + *Being governors* rather than project managers or volunteers
* Board chair leads and motivates board, and helps the board to organize itself, often through a standing Board Development & Governance committee which works to build board relationships, knowledge and efficiency.
* Process and policy exist which assures that board members receive information they need (but not more than they need) to focus decision making, stimulate participation, and support an appropriate balance of responsibility between board and staff.
* Board is educated not only about organization’s field or issue, but about basic nonprofit operating realities, nonprofit board roles and responsibilities, current standards and practices.
* Is mindful of composition and seeks to be: diverse and talent-rich, engaging more than one type of individual from more than one area of expertise; informed, available and engaged, attending meetings and representing the organization in the larger community; conscious stewards who are as interested in the business of developing the organization and monitoring its health as they are in promoting its programs; willing fundraisers who help bring in resources.