

H&R MFRC

Board of Directors

Information Package

February 2016



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1 HISTORY

1.1 A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE MFRC

The Halifax MFRC

1985 Maritime Command chaplains helped to establish the Halifax Military Family Resource Centre (HMFRC). Admiral Crickard found significant challenges faced by military families, and a lack of dealing with issues in a systematic manner. He directed that a comprehensive family support centre be initiated, and that it focus on the establishment of a military family support centre that would have the following functions:

- Coordinate existing family related resources and programs.
- Provide a comprehensive Information and Referral service 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.
- Provide selected social services when necessary.

1986 Base Administration Branch of CFB Halifax ran the “Formation Halifax Military family Resource Centre” on a trial basis. Many services were provided in accordance with policies set forth by Maritime Command and site-specific requirements. DND Civilians and military staff trained in specific areas staffed the MFRC.

1988 In response to numerous studies by social workers, chaplains, concerned members/families and health industry professionals, Maritime Forces Atlantic (MARLANT) MFRC was permanently established. The Military Family Resource Centre was established as a unit within CFB Halifax, utilizing DND civilian and military resources from CFB Halifax and other units of Maritime Command, and was modeled on the American Family Support Centre, located in Norfolk, VA.

1998-1999 Adopted National MFSP model; hired an Executive Director; elected a Board of Directors.



1999 Became incorporated under Provincial Societies Act.

2001 Provided support and services to families experiencing Operation Apollo. This deployment for Operation Apollo was the largest single deployment since the Korean War. Historical comparison would be with the Gulf War in 1991 when MFRC's became more known, needed and used. It reinforced to the Canadian Armed Forces, with measurable positive outcomes, the need for an organized family support program.

2002 Moved into a new facility in Windsor Park. The new facility included a state of the art 50 space daycare. Closed the 22 space full time daycare in Stadacona at St. Brendan's church.

2003 Shannon Park closed. The HMFRC Board of Directors agreed to assume responsibility for the Debert MFRC and their Cape Breton Satellite. Halifax MFRC now served CF members and their families extending from Cape Breton, including Amherst, Pictou, Debert and the Halifax Regional Municipality.

2004 Satellite MFRC in Debert was closed. Outreach Program now provides services. Director of Military Family Services introduced the new "Parameters of Practice", which defines the relationships between CAF, DMFS and MFRC's. This document included information on accountability, operations and funding.

2007 Halifax and Shearwater MFRC's Amalgamate to form the new Halifax & Region MFRC with 3 service sites.

The Shearwater MFRC

1991 Steering Committee was formed to do a community assessment and to determine and review the need for an MFRC. Space in the former Hampton Gray Memorial School was provided.



1992 SMFRC became incorporated and registered as a non-profit agency in the province of Nova Scotia, The first Executive Director was hired by the first Board of Directors in 1992 to set up and run the newly formed MFRC.

1993 Became a federally registered charity.

1994 Shearwater Children's Centre opened its doors with 14 spaces

1999 The old post office was acquired from the base for the sum of one dollar and through a generous donation by Cormorant Helicopters the old post office was renovated and opened up as a youth centre. Youth Centre named in memory of Henderson and Sweetman, two Shearwater Sea King pilots who perished in a crash.

2004 Extravaganza lottery is launched as a fund raiser.

The Halifax & Region MFRC

2008 Completed a major renovation and extension to the Henderson Sweetman Youth center in Shearwater.

2009 Both daycares completed playground renovations. Canadian Forces Family Covenant is launched. Program Development and Evaluation position is added.

2010 Shearwater site receives Wing Commanders team award, Shearwater wins Lt Governors Community Spirit Awards.

2011 H&R MFRC receives CEFCOM award for support to operations in Haiti, Arabian Sea and Horn of Africa.



2012 Family Information and Referral Service Team ceases being CAF members posted to the MFRC. FIRST changes to after-hours phone coverage and the Halifax site is no longer manned 24/7. H&R MFRC wins LFAA Commanders commendation for support to injured soldiers

2013 Supported HMCS Toronto during three departures, three homecomings and over 140 activities. MFS funding cut announced resulting in staff reductions, cut later over turned and funding restored. Evaluation of Military Family Support Programs and Services, Chief of Review Services, January 2013. On the Home front: Assessing the well-being of Canada's Military Families in the New Millennium, Special Report to the Minister of National Defence. November 2013 Ombudsman

2014 Halifax site proudly hosts Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall, staff sit on several MFS national working groups including Parameters for Practice, Communications and Marketing, Evaluation, Childcare, Accreditation, Funding.

2015 Pan AM Games Torch Relay held at the Halifax site. Work begins on accreditation, pilot site for Veterans Family Services.



2 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2.1 SO YOU'D LIKE TO BE A BOARD MEMBER?

Thank you for considering joining the Halifax & Region MFRC Board of Directors. Becoming a Board member provides you with a unique opportunity to actively participate in the governance of one of the best charitable organizations in the country. We are very proud of what has been accomplished by former and current volunteer Board members. They have all played an active role in building and enhancing the programs and services that we provide in support of our Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) community and partners.

What does a Board member do?

As a member of the Board of Directors you:

- Represent the MFRC at official functions.
- Act as a Goodwill Ambassador.
- You are committed to the MFRC and its Mission.
- You develop Governance Policy.
- You are a voice of the community.
- Attend special events.
- Approve budgets.
- Attend Board and Annual meetings.
- Participate on Board Committees.
- Develop the strategic plan, goals and objectives.
- Much more!



How much work is really involved?

Being a Board member does require work. You are required to attend monthly Board meetings, read reports prior to meetings, and possibly chair a Board committee. There is also Board training, orientation and development workshops and special events. On average the position requires about 20 hours a month September – June.

Okay, but what is in it for me?

There are many reasons to be a volunteer member of the Board of Directors:

- Child care is provided.
- Training and other personal and professional development opportunities.
- Meet new people.
- Develop new skills.
- Attend Conferences and a cool Board retreat.
- Make a difference in the CAF community.
- Leadership development.
- Great t-shirts.
- Be affiliated with a really great organization.
- Work with other awesome volunteers.

Do I need to have special skills or can anyone join the Board?

Our Board of Directors is made up of no less than seven, no more than 15 voting members and four ex-officio non-voting members such as the Base Chief Petty Officer/Wing Chief Warrant Officer and Executive Director. To ensure the MFRC is and stays a community-based organization, 51% of all of our Board members must be civilian family members of CAF members. This policy is intended to ensure that families have significant involvement in the governance of services within their communities. The remainder of the Board can be made up of military and or other community members



The nominating committee recruits potential Board members. This committee works to recruit a fair representation among ranks and civilians with a wide variety of skills and experience. While it is not necessary to have specific skills or experience it can be a benefit to the Board. The most important attribute that the Board is looking for when recruiting new Board members is energy, enthusiasm and commitment to the organization.

2.2 HOW DO I BECOME A BOARD MEMBER?

The nominating process is really quite simple. Any member of the Halifax & Region CAF community may recommend potential Board members, or an individual may put their own name forward for consideration. All potential Board members names are submitted to the Chair of the Board Nominating Committee.

Once you have indicated your interest in becoming a member of the Board and completed the application and screening forms, your name will be forwarded to the Nominating Committee. You will be contacted by them and asked to participate in a short interview. The interview is really quite a painless process. It is a chance for you to ask questions about the Board, and an opportunity for the Nominating Committee to get to know you better and to explain more about the work of the Board of Directors. After the interview, you will be invited to attend a Board meeting to ensure you understand the role of the Board. It is also a chance for you to meet the rest of the Board and for you to get a feel of what is involved.

After you have attended a meeting and if there is a vacancy on the Board you may be co-opted onto the Board until the Annual General Meeting in June at which time you must be officially elected by the community in a general vote.

What forms do I need to complete?

For the safety and security of our volunteers, clients and staff we request the following forms be completed:



- Application Form
- Code of Ethics
- Declaration of Confidentiality
- Board Member Agreement
- Criminal Records Check (CRC)/Vulnerable Sector Check
- Child Abuse Registry (CAR) Screening Form

Thank you for your interest in the Halifax & Region MFRC Board of Directors, we hope you consider joining this group of very dedicated, dynamic and fun group of volunteers.

3 QUICK FACTS

3.1 ABOUT MFRCS

The aim of the Military Family Resource Centre is to work towards developing a sense of community between the Military Family Resource Centre and military families. This is through the provision of programs, information and referral, and confidential intervention and emergency services.

The Military Family Resource Centre serves as a central agency, liaising with various existing resource agencies, both military and civilian, to enhance their effectiveness, for the benefit of 24,000 Regular and Reserve Force men, women and children comprising the military family community in the Halifax Regional Municipality, Cape Breton and Central and Northern Nova Scotia.

The total military population from Canadian Armed Forces units serviced by the Halifax & Region MFRC is approximately 7,000.

The Military Family Resource Centre is comprised of an independent, democratically elected volunteer Board of Directors. 51% of the Board Members are civilian family members of military members. Through the leadership and strategic direction of the Board, the staff of the MFRC coordinates existing resources, develop other resources (as needed) and facilitate the development of initiatives of individuals and groups. Military members and families determine the priorities for the centre. An annual evaluation of programs ensures that the MFRC is moving in the right direction.

The Centre gained respect from within the military family community during Operation Friction, Operation Apollo and Operation Altair mainly a result of the volume and quality of work performed during ship deployments to the Persian Gulf. Calls to the Centre increased



dramatically during this period, as well as the acceptance and use of the Centre's various programs and services.

Halifax & Region MFRC provides a variety of services and programs for children, youth, adults and families facing the unique challenges of the military lifestyle. As well, there is a 24/7 phone line staffed with information and referral specialists who can respond to questions and concerns day or night. Programs are offered at locations in Windsor Park, Shearwater as well as through a Satellite Office in Sydney, Cape Breton.

3.2 WHAT EXACTLY IS THE BOARD'S JOB?

By Nathan Garber, Editor-in-Chief, Nonprofit Boards and Governance Review

In the past fifteen years, there has been increasing interest in organizational governance in both the private and non-profit sectors. In the corporate sector, it was a number of spectacular scandals that resulted in calls for governance reform. In the voluntary sector, this examination of the board's role has been driven partly by the experience of the private sector, but more importantly by the changing environment in which non-profits operate. This environment is characterized by:

- Increased competition for board members.
- Increased need for self-generated income.
- Increased expectations for accountability.
- Increased competition from for-profit services.
- Increased professionalization of non-profit managers.

All of these have added complexity to the job of the board member and led to confusion and conflict around the respective roles of board members and managers. Today, we routinely use the word "governance" to differentiate the role of the board from that of managers, but this use of the word is relatively recent, dating back no more than fifteen or twenty years, and the differentiation is still problematic.

In response to the confusion around the role of the board of directors and perceived inadequacy in board performance, many books have appeared, each offering a prescription for board improvement. At the heart of each prescription is the author's view of the board's role and responsibilities and in most respects these roles and responsibilities are remarkably similar. In part, they derive from the legal view of board members as fiduciaries, but with few exceptions, these prescriptions are derived from the notion that the board can operate in splendid isolation from the day-to-day realities of the organization – that governance can be easily differentiated from management and operations.

This is easy to do in books, but in real life, the differentiation is not so clear-cut. In trying to keep boards out of management, and managers out of governance, we are ignoring the realities of most of the non-profit sector. In large part, governance, management, and operations are artificial constructs that merge and crossover depending upon the nature of the organization, the environments in which they operate, and the people who inhabit them. In defining the roles and responsibilities of boards, the history, culture, purpose, community, and people involved are far more important than any governance model.

Many factors and conditions can affect the roles and responsibilities of boards of directors, including:

- The extent to which the organization depends upon board members for delivery of programs.
- The extent to which the focus of the organization is on fund-raising vs. direct service.
- The level of risk involved in the service, and the degree of vulnerability of the clientele.
- The stability of income and the way it is generated.
- The stability of the social, political, and economic environment in which the organization operates.
- The extent to which the organization is subject to external oversight.
- The skills of the executive director and staff.
- The diversity of the community and clientele.



Any of the above might have a profound effect upon the roles that the board is required to perform, and the extent to which governance, management, and operations can be differentiated in a particular organization.

As managing non-profit organizations has become more complex, everyone would like to make it simpler. Directors would like to have clearer responsibilities, fewer and shorter meetings, and less conflict. Executive directors would dearly love to spend less time on board matters and more time on service development. Some authors suggest that the way to do this is to insist that the board confine itself to governance. Such Governance models are appealing, as they seem to simplify the board's role. But we should never forget that the images presented are idealized and nearly always unattainable to more mortals. When it comes to our own boards, it is just as important to look carefully at our own organizational needs and define our board responsibilities based upon the reality of our own situation.

Nathan Garber is the Editor-In-Chief of Nonprofit Boards and Governance Review. Principal of Nathan Garber & Associates, he draws upon more than 30 years of experience in the non-profit sector to his work helping voluntary organizations to strengthen their boards and plan strategically.

Some thoughts on approaching your job as a Board Member

1. Be prepared to participate responsibly. Do your homework, come prepared to work.
2. Remember that you work on behalf of the ownership, not the staff. Be careful that you don't become more connected with staff than with the "moral owners" of the organization.
3. Be responsible for group behavior and productivity.
4. Be a proactive Board Member.
5. Honor differing opinions without being intimidated by them. Encourage colleagues to express opinions.
6. Think upward and outward, more than downward and inward. Take focus off the internal operations of the agency, and focus outward towards the needs of the community the agency was established to serve.
7. Tolerate issues that cannot be quickly resolved; yet do not tolerate putting off the big issues.



8. Support the Board's final choice.
9. Obsess about ends – what results are we seeking to achieve?
10. Don't expect agendas to be built on your interests, the organization is not there for you.
11. Support the chair in board discipline.

3.3 BOARD'S RELATIONSHIP WITH STAFF

While it is true that the Board of Directors has the responsibility for guiding the direction of your centre, it is always important to keep in mind that the people who ensure that your goals are carried out are your paid staff. Boards that are fortunate enough to have qualified, experienced professional staff in their centre can take comfort in knowing that their centre is in capable hands. If you wish to keep qualified staff working for you, it is important you remember they are critical to the success of your organization, and support them in carrying out their responsibilities. How can this be done?

Let them do their job. This is especially true of your Executive Director. You have hired this person to manage the day-to-day operation of your centre, and it makes it difficult for your Executive director to do his or her job effectively with Board interference. Take the time to understand the difference between your responsibilities and those of your staff.

Do not interfere with the management of centre staff. While it is important to develop positive working relationships with centre staff, it is equally important not to give them direction. All employees of your centre report to the Executive Director. If they feel that they also have to report to the Board it puts unnecessary pressure and may affect their performance. This does not mean that staff are not willing to support Board Members with their work. All it means is that the Board should discuss any requests they may have with the Executive Director first.



APPENDIX A – BOARD MEMBER APPLICATION

HALIFAX & REGION MILITARY FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE

BOARD MEMBER APPLICATION

The following series of questions will help us get to know you better, and help us to assess if our needs match up with your unique skills and talents. Confidentiality is assured. The following information will be used only to ensure a match between your interests and the needs of the organization.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: (Day) _____ **(Evening)** _____

(Cell) _____

Email Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Occupations/Position: _____

Please complete the following questions. You may also wish to forward the Nomination Committee a resume, or letter stating your experience.

Do you have any prior volunteer experience?

If yes, please list the organization, length of involvement (dates), positions held in the organization.

What skills would you like to improve on by being an MFRC Board Member?



Is there any personal information you would like to share about your life experience, which you feel, might be relevant to your role as a Board Member?

Additional Interest?

To ensure that all segments of our community are represented on the Board and served in the best and most effective and representative way possible, please respond to the following:

Language(s): English French Other: _____

I belong to the following demographic group(s): Please check all that apply

<input type="checkbox"/>	Regular Force Member	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Reserve Force Member	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Retired Military Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Air Force
<input type="checkbox"/>	Civilian	<input type="checkbox"/> Army
<input type="checkbox"/>	Partner of a Regular Force Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Navy
<input type="checkbox"/>	Partner of a Reserve Force Member	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Partner of a Retired Military Member	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Adult Child of a Military Member	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Parent of a Military Member	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____	



What skills do you have to offer the Board?

	Finance/Accounting
	Communications
	Leadership Experience
	Program Experience
	Organizational
	Knowledge of Government Regulations
	Evaluation
	Other

	Public Relations
	Public Speaking
	Community Contacts
	Clerical
	Law
	Personnel/HR
	Fundraising
	Risk Management

Please tell us your reasons for wanting to be a member of the Halifax & Region MFRC Board of Directors.

**Please note that members of the Halifax & Region Military Family Resource Centre Board of Directors are required to sign a Code of Conduct, Code of Ethics, Declaration of Confidentiality, and are subject to a police Criminal Record Check, Vulnerable Sector Check and Child Abuse Registry Check.*

Thank you for your application.

Personal information shall not be used or disclosed for purposes other than those for which it was collected, except with the consent of the individual or as required by law. Personal information shall be retained only as long as necessary for the fulfillment of those purposes.



APPENDIX B – BOARD MEMBER AGREEMENT

HALIFAX & REGION MILITARY FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE

BOARD MEMBER AGREEMENT

I, _____ understand that as a member of the Board of Directors of the MFRC, I have a legal and moral responsibility to ensure that the organization does the best work possible in pursuit of its goal. I believe in the purpose and the mission of the organization, and I will act responsibly and prudently as its steward.

As part of my responsibilities as a board member:

1. I will interpret the organization's work and values to the community, represent the organization, and act as a spokesperson.
2. I will attend at least 75% of board meetings, committee meetings, and special events.
3. I will actively participate in one or more fund-raising activities.
4. I will act in the best interests of the organization, and excuse myself from discussions and votes where I have a conflict of interest.
5. I will stay informed about what is going on in the organization. I will ask questions and request information. I will participate in and take responsibility for making decisions on issues, policies and other board matters.
6. I will work in good faith with staff, volunteers and other board members as partners toward achievement of our goals.
7. If I do not fulfill these commitments to the organization, I will expect the board chair to call and discuss my responsibilities with me.

In turn, the organization will be responsible to me in several ways

1. I will be provided, without request, quarterly financial reports and an update of the organizational activities that allow me to meet the "prudent person" section of the law.
2. Opportunities will be offered to me to discuss with the executive director and the board chair the organization's programs, goals, activities and status: additionally, I can request such opportunities.



3. The organization will help me perform my duties by keeping me informed about issues in the industry and field in which we are working, and by offering me opportunities for professional development as a board member.
4. Board members and staff will respond in a straightforward fashion to questions I have that I feel are necessary to carry out my fiscal, legal and moral responsibilities to this organization. Board members and staff will work in good faith with me towards achievement of our goals.
5. If the organization does not fulfill its commitments to me, I can call on the board chair and executive director to discuss these responsibilities.

Signed: _____ Date _____

Member, Board of Directors

Approval: Board of Directors _____ Date: _____

Review Date: _____



APPENDIX C – BOARD MEMBERS CODE OF ETHICS

HALIFAX & REGION MILITARY FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE

BOARD MEMBER CODE OF ETHICS

Board Members have an obligation to do more than just meet legal standards. Board Members are expected to meet moral standards of conduct as well.

As a member of this Board, I will:

- Represent the interests of all served by the Halifax & Region Military Family Resource Centre and not favor special interests inside or outside the MFRC.
- Not use my service on this Board for my own personal advantage or for the advantage of my friends or supporters.
- Approach all Board issues with an open mind, prepared to make the best decisions for everyone involved.
- Do nothing to violate the trust of those who elected or appointed me to the Board or those we serve.
- Focus my efforts on the mission of the MFRC and not my personal goals.
- Never exercise authority as a Board Member except when acting in a meeting with the full Board or as I am delegated by the Board.
- I will not engage in discussion of MFRC matters or cases within or outside the Centre except on a need to know basis as required or when legally obligated to do so for the appropriate conduct of the Centre's business.
- When approached by potential clients, I will encourage them to contact the Centre's staff and will not intervene in any follow-up actions by staff.

Date _____

Board Member Signature

Chairperson



APPENDIX D – DECLARATION OF CONFIDENTIALITY

HALIFAX & REGION MILITARY FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE

DECLARATION OF CONFIDENTIALITY

As a member of the staff, volunteers, or Board of Directors of the Halifax & Region Military Family Resource Centre (MFRC), I may be entrusted with knowledge of the personal and private affairs of clients and staff of the MFRC.

I hereby undertake not to divulge any matter or case within or outside of the MFRC except on a need to know basis when legally obligated to do so for the normal conduct of business.

I recognize the sensitivity of clients and staff issues regarding confidentiality and promise to safe guard the personal information while acknowledging the legally mandated exceptions to confidentiality, to include:

- a. Suspected child abuse.
- b. Possible victim of violence.
- c. Criminal activity.
- d. Past crimes.

Any such concerns or anomalies regarding confidentiality declaration (in bold type above), may subject me to disciplinary/administrative measures including not being eligible for future employment with the MFRC (staff), or dismissal for volunteers or members of the Board of Directors.

Date

Signature

I have explained the implications of signing the Declaration of Confidentiality to _____ and am fully satisfied that he/she is aware of the necessity to hold the affairs of clients and staff of the **MFRC** in absolute confidence.

Signature



APPENDIX E – TERMS OF REFERENCE: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

HALIFAX & REGION MILITARY FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Position Title: Board of Directors

Responsible To: CAF Community, MARLANT, 5th Canadian Division & 12 Wing

Term: Two Years

Purpose

To be responsible for the overall smooth operation of the MFRC, and to work with the Centre staff and volunteers to ensure the goals and objects, as stated in the Strategic and Operational Plans and Constitution, are pursued in good faith.

Authority

Responsible to the CAF Community supported by the MFRC, their families and to our CAF partners.

Membership

A volunteer Board of no less than seven (7) and no more than fifteen (15) elected, voting members, of whom at least 51% family members of military personnel. Ex-officio (non-elected) member of the Board may include; Base/Wing/Fleet Chief, Commander Representative and the Centre's Executive Director.

Meetings

The Board of Directors shall meet on a monthly basis except for July and August.



Term of Commitment

Two years, renewable commitment; offices of Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary are two-year renewable commitments; appointments of Committee Chairs are also a one-year renewable commitment.

Responsibilities

1. Identify social and community needs of the area the Centre supports, on an ongoing basis, and respond to identified needs on a priority basis.
2. Hire the Executive Director.
3. Participate in the planning of MFRC programs and services, in consultation with the Executive Director.
4. Develop and approve governing policies and procedures for the Centre, as recommended by Board committees or the Director.
5. Review and approve annual operating budget, and monitor this budget through the review of financial statements presented at the Board meetings.
6. Ensure responsible expenditure of all funds held by the MFRC.
7. Promote active participation of military members and their families in the ongoing development and operations of the MFRC.
8. Promote programs and services of the MFRC within the area the Centre serves.
9. Ensure a written evaluation on the Executive Director is conducted annually.
10. Initiate, as required, trust agreements with a trust company for the purpose of creating a trust fund in which capital and interest will be available for use in the MFRC operation.
11. Authorize signing authority for the Executive Director, for expenditures not exceeding \$1000.00.
12. Ensure the liability coverage is obtained for all Board and staff members, and MFRC volunteers.