

H&R MFRC
Board of Directors
Information Package

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1 HISTORY

1.1 A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE H&R MFRC

Halifax MFRC

1985 Maritime Command Chaplains helped to establish the Halifax Military Family Resource Centre. Admiral Crickard found significant challenges faced by military families, and a lack of dealing with issues in a systematic manner. He directed a comprehensive family support centre be initiated, and that 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; and
- 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 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 MFRCs 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 Military Family Resource Centre (H&R MFRC) with 3 service sites.

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 Center opened its' doors with 14 spaces.

1999 The Old Post Office was acquired from the base for the sum \$1. Through a generous donation by Cormorant Helicopters, The Old Post Office was renovated and opened as a Youth Center. The Youth Center was named in memory of Henderson and Sweetman – two Shearwater Sea King helicopter pilots who perished in a crash.

2004 Vacation Lottery Extravaganza is launched as a fundraiser.

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



Halifax & Region Military Family Resource Centre

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.

2016 One of seven pilot sites for the METSpouse program which connects military spouses to national employers.

2017 MFS launched a new Parameters of Practice, the guiding document for delivery of programs and services. Donation of Video Teleconferencing equipment increased our capacity to connect with families including access to the Commanding Officer's monthly family deployment briefing. The Board of Director developed a comprehensive hiring process for a new Executive Director; ending the year with

the hire of a new Executive Director following the retirement of the 17 year Executive Director. This was the final year of the Vacation Extravaganza Lottery.

2018 Modernization was the key theme for the year. Investments were made in technology including virtual programming, Wi-Fi, and Web-Ex license. Transition from a 20 year external accountant to new modernized system on site with oversight by an external accounting firm. The CAF's new Defence Policy was launched, "Strong Secure & Engaged", providing a funding opportunity for us to invest in a full time Special Needs & Inclusion Navigator position, relocation child care, new software systems, etc. Committed to a full time position, Director of Learning and Evaluation; to continually review our programs and services and incorporate Canadian military family research in our decision-making.

2 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2.1 SO, YOU'D LIKE TO BECOME A BOARD MEMBER?

Thank you for considering a decision to join the Halifax & Region Military Family Resource Centre (H&R MFRC), a provincially registered charity, governed by a Board of Directors made up of dedicated volunteers who execute the Mission, Vision and Values of the organization. Board membership is comprised of 51% family members of serving CAF members; governed *by families for families*. The H&R MFRC is a Governance Board (often referred to as the Carver Model) who develop the strategic direction and maintain governance oversight for H&R MFRC programs and services.

Our Board membership is a compliment of varying skills in a range of areas, thus ensuring a high functioning, professional Board governing a professional organization. Members are knowledgeable and committed to developing a strategic plan that ensures families are supported in the unique experience of military life.

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 are some responsibilities of a Board member?

As members of the Board of Directors we:

- Commit to the H&R MFRC Mission, Vision and Values;
- Develop the H&R MFRC Strategic Plan; goals and objectives;
- Act as a voice of the military family community;
- Approve budgets;
- Participate in monthly Board meetings and the Annual General Meeting;
- Participate in annual Board training and conferences;

- Participate on and/or Chair Board Committees;
- Develop and monitor the governance of the H&R MFRC; including governance policy;
- Represent the H&R MFRC at official functions and special events; and
- Act as a goodwill ambassador.

How much work is really involved?

Being a Board member does require commitment and work. The board has monthly meetings (September to June) with the Executive Director (ED) to receive updates on the organization's activities. Members are required to read reports and actively engage in discussions. There are several standing committees that members are engaged, or may be asked to Chair, including Policy Development, Board Development, ED Evaluation, Board Recruitment, Finance, and Executive Committee. All Board members participate in orientation and ongoing Board development training.

On average a Board members volunteer about 20 hours a month from September to June.

What are the benefits to becoming a Board member?

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

- Board Governance training;
- Develop leadership skills;
- Other personal and professional development opportunities, such as conferences;
- Meet new people;
- Develop and enhance professional skills;
- Make a difference to those living the unique military lifestyle;
- Affiliation with an ever evolving organization that meets the needs of the military family community;
- Work with other committed volunteers;
- Subsidized child care to support participation in meetings; and
- Contribute to the success of the H&R MFRC.

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

Our Board membership is a compliment of varying skills in a range of areas, thus ensuring a high functioning, professional Board governing a professional organization. The Board of Directors is made up of no less than seven, no more than fifteen voting members and no more than four ex-officio non-voting members such as the Base Commander's OPI, MARLANT Formation Chief, and Executive Director. To ensure the H&R MFRC is a community-based organization, 51% of Board membership must be civilian family members of CAF members; this ensures that families have significant involvement in the governance of services.

How do I become a Board Member?

The Recruitment Committee is responsible for recruiting and nominating potential Board members. This committee works to recruit a fair representation among ranks and civilians with a wide variety of skills and experience. One important attribute that the Board is looking for when recruiting new Board members is energy, enthusiasm, and commitment to the organization.

The nominating process is 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 application will be forwarded to the Recruitment Committee. You will be contacted by them and asked to participate in a short interview. The interview is a chance for you to ask questions about the Board, and an opportunity for the 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 notified if you have been short listed as a candidate to join the board.

During the Annual General Meeting in June your name will be put forward and you must be officially elected to the Board of Directors 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;
- Board Professional Code of Conduct;
- Confidentiality Agreement;
- Board Member Agreement;
- Criminal Records Check (CRC)/Vulnerable Sector Check;
- Child Abuse Registry (CAR) Screening Form (if volunteering in areas with children); and
- Income Tax Form t1235-09 (Directors/Trustees and Like Officials Worksheet).

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

3 QUICK FACTS

3.1 ABOUT MFRC

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

The H&R MFRC 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 H&R MFRC is approximately 7,000.

The H&R MFRC 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 H&R MFRC coordinates existing resources, develops other resources, as needed, and facilitates the development of initiatives based on evolving needs or changes of the military family and CAF community. An annual evaluation of programs ensures that the H&R MFRC is moving in the right direction and meeting outcomes.

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.

H&R 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 an after-hours phone service to respond

to urgent questions and concerns. Programs and services are delivered at our locations in Windsor Park, Shearwater as well as through a Satellite Office in Sydney, Cape Breton.

What exactly is the Board's role?

By Nathan Garber, Editor-in-Chief, Non-profit 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; and
- 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. Some thoughts on approaching your job as a Board Member:

1. Be prepared to participate responsibly; ask questions, participate in discussion;
2. Be a proactive; read all materials in advance of meetings; be prepared to work;
3. Remember that member's work on behalf of the organization/community. Employee's fall under the responsibility of the Executive Director;
4. Hold one another accountable for group behavior and productivity;
5. Honor different opinions and perspectives with curiosity and without judgement; encourage members to express opinions;
6. Think upward and outward, rather than downward and inward. Take focus off the internal operations of the H&R MFRC and focus outward towards the needs of the community the H&R MFRC serves;
7. Tolerate issues that cannot be quickly resolved; yet do not tolerate putting off the big issues;
8. Support the Board's final choice and decision;
9. Remain focused on the problem to be solved and what results we seek to achieve;
10. Agenda are built on the organization's strategic direction, not individual interests or personal agendas; and
11. Support the Chair in Board management.

What is the 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 organizational goals are carried out are the paid employees. Boards that are fortunate enough to have qualified, experienced professional employees in their centre can take comfort in knowing that the H&R MFRC 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 the H&R MFRC and it makes it difficult for them to do their job effectively with Board interference. Take the time to understand the difference between

governance versus operations and Board members responsibilities and the employees.

Do not interfere with the management of centre employees. While it is important to develop positive working relationships with centre employees, it is equally important to understand it is not your role 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 employees 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

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 H&R 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 H&R MFRC.
7. Promote active participation of military members and their families in the ongoing development and operations of the H&R MFRC.
8. Promote programs and services of the H&R 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 H&R MFRC operation.
11. Authorize signing authority for the Executive Director, for expenditures not exceeding \$1,000.00.
12. Ensure the liability coverage is obtained for all Board and staff members, and MFRC volunteers.