Finance Committee Charter

***About this Tool***

This tool is intended to serve not-for-profit organizations of all sizes and organizational structures. Many not-for-profit boards use standing committees which are responsible for matters that fall within their purview. While federal law does not mandate any particular management structures, many not-for-profit organizations establish a Finance Committee as a standing committee of the board of directors. Generally, for the purpose of maintaining independence, members of the Audit Committee do not serve on the Finance Committee; in practice, some joint membership between the two committees may exist. Refer to state or other local government laws and regulations to ensure compliance in committee composition. This tool contains sample elements that can be used in the creation of a finance committee charter. As with any policy of this nature, the NFP may wish to consult legal counsel for assistance in developing a finance committee charter that is appropriate for the organization.

Purpose

The Finance Committee (the Committee) is established by [insert organization’s name] board of directors to recommend financial policies, strategies, and budgets that support the mission, values and strategic plan of the organization. Its purpose is to ensure the financial health and integrity of the organization in pursuit of its mission to [insert organization’s mission statement].

The Committee is chartered, on behalf of and as directed by the board of directors, to accomplish the following objectives:

* provide oversight for the development and review of the annual budget;
* perform long-term financial planning and ensure that financial objectives align with the organization’s strategic plan as set forth by the board of directors, recommending corrective actions to the board as appropriate;
* review, on a regular basis, the organization’s internal financial statements and recommend actions to be undertaken by the board as needed;
* review the organization’s personnel benefits package and recommend actions to be undertaken by the board as needed; and
* when the need arises, investigate and provide guidance regarding financial implications of a pertinent issue or transaction as directed by the board.

In addition, the Committee works in partnership with the audit committee to provide independent and objective oversight of the organization’s financial policies and procedures.

Structure and Composition of the Committee

The organization’s Treasurer shall serve as the chair of the Committee. All those members appointed to the Committee shall possess the requisite expertise and background in finance, accounting, investment management or executive leadership. The Committee will be comprised of no less than [XX] and no more than [XX] members who are independent of the organization’s management in accordance with its bylaws. All committee members, excluding the chair, may serve [insert number of years for the term, number of terms, and if there are staggered terms].

*Functions and Responsibilities*

1. **Annual operating and capital budgets**

The Committee is to obtain an understanding of the organization’s financial environment. Committee members oversee the preparation of the organization’s annual operating and capital budgets and present the annual budgets to the board of directors for approval. Its members should monitor the budgets in comparison to actual results on a regular basis and question any inconsistencies or unusual variances. Any changes to the budgets during the year are reviewed by the Committee, which then recommends these changes to the board for approval.

1. **Long-term financial planning**

The Committee is to oversee the organization’s long-term financial planning, including the financial aspects of new programs and services, changes to the organization’s operations, capital expenditures, and other financial needs that fall outside of the annual operating budget. In carrying out this objective, the Committee will monitor and review the financial performance of the organization, as a whole and with respect to its major programs or business lines, against approved budgets, long-term trends and not-for-profit industry benchmarks.

1. **Internal financial statements**

The Committee must review, on a regular basis, the organization’s internal financial statements, including a more detailed periodic review of assets. Annually, the Committee will receive a report from the Audit Committee, review the financial statements and communications provided by the independent auditors, and provide guidance to the board of directors as needed to ensure the reliability of financial reporting year-round, recommending changes as appropriate. Committee members must understand the different types of assets held by the organization, as well as any risks associated with those assets, and the financial reporting requirements related to each asset class.

1. **Personnel benefits review [if appropriate]**

The Committee is responsible for the review of the organization’s personnel benefits package. Committee members review salaries and bonuses, insurance, and retirement options for reasonableness and competitiveness and present any changes and/or suggestions to the board of directors for approval.

*Meetings*

The Finance Committee shall meet at least [XX] times per year, or when necessary as convened by the Committee’s chair.

**Approved by the Board of Directors originally on [insert date] and updated on [insert date].**