



Board Evaluation

Item 2E
December 9, 2021
Board of Directors

Report: TCHC:2021-72

To: Board of Directors (the “Board”)

From: Governance, Communications and Human Resources
Committee (“GCHRC”)

Date: November 30, 2021

PURPOSE:

To propose a renewal of the Board’s evaluation process to continue to assess the effectiveness and performance of the Board following the procedure approved by the Board in 2017, modified to consider the comments received through the 2020 Board Evaluation process, and to seek the Committee’s input on the nature and quantity of questions being proposed as part of the evaluation process.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Chair of the Board:

1. consider an alternative evaluation tool to support the implementation of the 2022 Board Evaluation survey;
2. consider the retainer of an external adviser to assist in the facilitation of the 2022 Board Evaluation survey;
3. approve the Questions, as set out in Attachment 1 to this report, as the basis for the 2022 Board Evaluation survey; and
4. direct the appropriate staff to assist the Board Chair in taking all necessary actions to implement the following recommendations.

GCHRC

This report was received by the GCHRC on November 30, 2021.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

Decision History

At its February 2020 Board meeting, the Board approved the implementation of a Board Evaluation process.

<https://www.torontohousing.ca/events/Documents/Board/2020%20Board%20Meetings/February%2020%202020%20Board%20Meeting/Item%206C%20-%20Board%20Evaluation%20-%20Board%20Report%20-%20FINAL.pdf>

At its meeting of December 15, 2020 the results of the 2020 Board Evaluation Survey were considered by the Board.

<https://www.torontohousing.ca/events/Documents/Board/2020%20Board%20Meetings/December%2015%202020%20Board%20Meeting/Item%206B%20-%202020%20Board%20Evaluation%20Results%20FINAL.pdf>

Pursuant to its Charter, approved by the Board at its meeting of April 27, 2021, the GCHRC is responsible for “Overseeing the design, implementation, and reporting of an annual evaluation of the performance of the Board, committees, and individual directors and reporting and making recommendations to the Chair of the Board and to the Board as appropriate.”

Pursuant to the Chair’s Mandate, approved by the Board at its meeting of April 27, 2021, the Chair of the Board is responsible for evaluating the Board’s effectiveness and suggesting improvements thereto.

Through the course of the 2020 Board Evaluation process, some concerns were raised by Board members regarding the evaluation process employed for that exercise.

Evaluation Process

The evaluation process permits the Board to measure its governance practices, committee work, knowledge and performance. Attachment 1 sets

out a survey of questions for the Board of Directors that were utilized as part of the Board's 2020 Evaluation exercise in order to assess the Board's performance, skills, knowledge, and practice. Subject to the GCHRC's advice in this regard, it is proposed to utilize those same questions as part of the Board's 2022 Evaluation process in order to provide a consistent evaluation measure of performance and effectiveness, and to track improvement and areas that continue to require assistance.

Google Forms was used to conduct the 2017 and 2020 Board Evaluation process. While this free online tool permits survey responses to be tabulated and information contained in those responses to be analysed, some Directors found it to be problematic in the context of the 2020 process.

A number of alternative survey tools are available that would support this exercise at minimal to moderate cost. At present, the City of Toronto is undertaking the 2021 Toronto Employment Survey through the use of an online survey tool. The Toronto Public Library Board conducts a Board Evaluation survey that it has developed in-house. At present, TCHC employs third parties to conduct its tenant satisfaction and employee engagement surveys. GCHRC and the Board Chair may wish to consider following that same practice on an intermittent basis, beginning in 2022 in order to incorporate insights from a third party into its Board Evaluation process, on an ongoing basis.

At the same time, the costs associated with engaging an external service to conduct a Board Evaluation is wide ranging and informed by the scope of work that is required. While a simple online survey could be conducted, through a third party, at a moderate cost, the cost of the exercise would increase if elements such as individual interviews with Board members was to be added to the scope of contracted work.

The scope of any assignment by the Board, to a third party retained to undertake a Board Evaluation process will need to be informed by the Board's budget governing professional and consulting fees, or the budget for this aspect of the Board's budget increased. Such an increase may need to consider the need for equivalent offsets, within the Board's overall budget.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS:

Board evaluation is a process designed to assess performance of the full Board. When it leverages best practices such as evaluation systems with

clear and measurable plans for improved performance, a Board is better positioned to meet its mandate.

Upon review of evaluation findings, the Board has an opportunity to revisit practices to ensure effective Board performance. The results will assist with issue identification, tracking a Board or committee's progress, and shaping the Board and Committees' work plans.

SIGNATURE:

"Darragh Meagher"

Darragh Meagher
General Counsel and Corporate Secretary

ATTACHMENT:

1. TCHC Board Evaluation Questions

STAFF CONTACT:

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