



**Task Force on Volunteer  
Boards and Advisory Councils**

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**Working Meeting  
Tuesday, July 23, 2019**



# Welcome and Introductions

Emerson U. Fullwood  
University Trustee

Chair, Task Force on Volunteer Boards and Advisory Councils



# University Overview

Robert Clark  
Provost

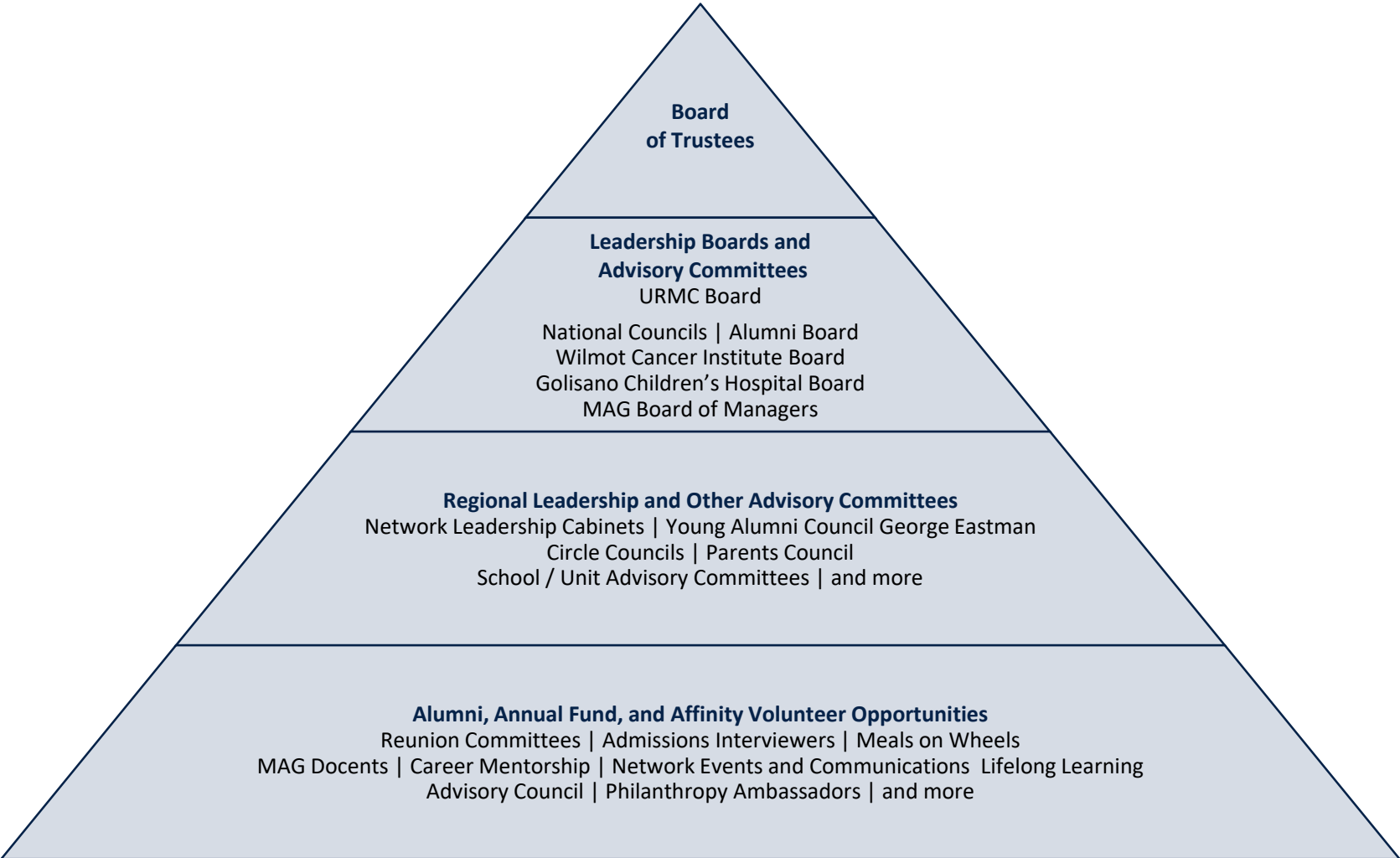
Senior Vice President for Research



# Task Force Project Overview

Thomas J. Farrell '88, '90W (MS)  
Senior Vice President, University Advancement  
Chief Advancement Officer

John Lippincott  
President Emeritus, Council for Advancement and Support of Education  
Of Counsel, Marts & Lundy



**Board  
of Trustees**

**Leadership Boards and  
Advisory Committees**  
URMC Board

National Councils | Alumni Board  
Wilmot Cancer Institute Board  
Golisano Children's Hospital Board  
MAG Board of Managers

**Regional Leadership and Other Advisory Committees**

Network Leadership Cabinets | Young Alumni Council George Eastman  
Circle Councils | Parents Council  
School / Unit Advisory Committees | and more

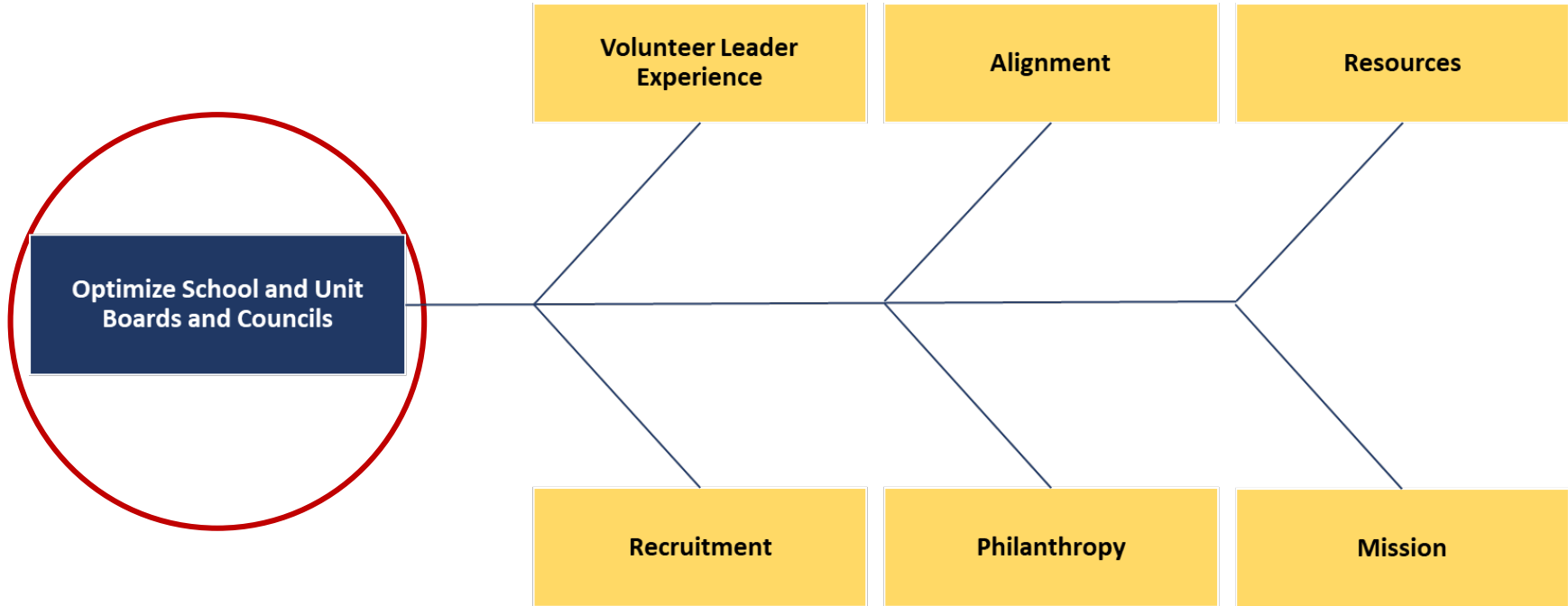
**Alumni, Annual Fund, and Affinity Volunteer Opportunities**

Reunion Committees | Admissions Interviewers | Meals on Wheels  
MAG Docents | Career Mentorship | Network Events and Communications Lifelong Learning  
Advisory Council | Philanthropy Ambassadors | and more

# Task Force Charge

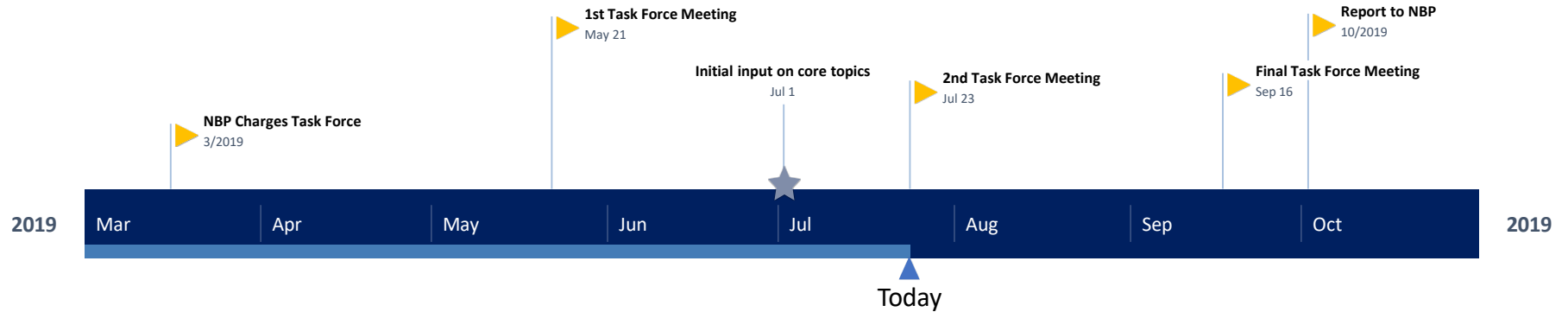
- Review and address the structure and practices of the National Council program and other senior level advisory boards at the University and the Medical Center.
- Make specific recommendations to improve current practices, using the comprehensive review report and associated materials as a guide.
- The task force is expected to report its findings and recommendations to the Committee on Nominations and Board Practices in October 2019.

# Purpose and Goals



# Task Force on Volunteer Boards and Advisory Councils

## Project Timeline





# Benchmarking

**Carnegie  
Mellon  
University**



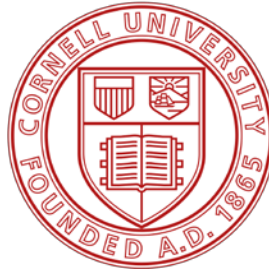
**PRINCETON  
UNIVERSITY**



**JOHNS HOPKINS  
UNIVERSITY**



**OSU**  
Oregon State  
UNIVERSITY



**MIT**

**UIC** University  
of Illinois  
at Chicago

**Tufts**  
UNIVERSITY

# Benchmarking

- Educational Advisory Board(EAB) / Coast to Coast
  - Rice
  - Tufts
  - Carnegie Mellon
  - Boston College
  - Caltech
  - Princeton
  - Emory
  - WashU
  - Chicago
  - MIT
  - Notre Dame
  - University of Southern California
- CASE 50  
*(Council for Advancement and Support of Education)*
- Association of Governing Boards (AGB)

TASK FORCE ON  
VOLUNTEER BOARDS AND ADVISORY COUNCILS



**VOLUNTEER  
ENGAGEMENT  
REVIEW**

**JOHN LIPPINCOTT**

**PRESIDENT EMERITUS, COUNCIL FOR ADVANCEMENT AND SUPPORT OF EDUCATION  
OF COUNSEL, MARTS & LUNDY**



## VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT REVIEW

- **WHY?**
- **WHAT?**
- **HOW?**



## VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT REVIEW

- **WHY UNDERTAKE THIS EFFORT?**

To optimize both the impact and the experience of those who volunteer their time, expertise, and philanthropy in support of the University of Rochester and the University of Rochester Medical Center.

- **WHY UNDERTAKE THIS EFFORT?**

... and because it is sound business practice.

... and because it is very much in the spirit of Meliora.

... and because the University is at an inflection point where volunteer partners can play key roles.

... and because UR is a higher education leader.

- **WHAT ARE THE KEYS TO EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT?**
  - ✓ Linkage to organizational strategy
  - ✓ Focused statement of purpose
  - ✓ Governing board recognition
  - ✓ Clear distinction from governance role
  - ✓ Explicit member expectations

- **WHAT ARE THE KEYS TO EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT?**
  - ✓ Thoughtful process for member selection/diversity
  - ✓ Written policies, procedures, guidelines
  - ✓ Term definitions
  - ✓ Adequate investment of staff time and budget
  - ✓ Professionalized staff support



- **WHAT ARE THE KEYS TO EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT?**
  - ✓ Appropriate on-boarding and off-boarding
  - ✓ Proper training of members
  - ✓ User friendly tools for members to do their jobs
  - ✓ Substantive and interactive meetings
  - ✓ Strong chair

- **WHAT ARE THE KEYS TO EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT?**
  - ✓ Systematic evaluation
  - ✓ Culture of valuing advice
  - ✓ Ongoing communication
  - ✓ Member recognition and long-term engagement
  - ✓ Leadership commitment

■ **HOW DO WE GET THERE FROM HERE?**

- ✓ Own it
- ✓ Start at the end
- ✓ Be creatively systematic
- ✓ Focus on performance, not conformance
- ✓ Rinse and repeat

■ **HOW DO WE GET THERE FROM HERE?**

- ✓ Clarity of mission
- ✓ Transparency of expectations
- ✓ Intentionality of practice
- ✓ Coordination and collaboration
- ✓ Systematic evaluation



UNIVERSITY of  
ROCHESTER

VOLUNTEER  
ENGAGEMENT  
REVIEW

**THANK YOU!**

# 3 Discussion Topics:



## Method:

1/3 – Overview and information sharing

2/3 – Discussion

# Ground Rules

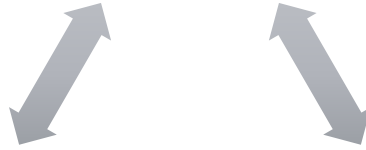
- Enterprise versus parochial balance
- We won't get it done today
- Remember the mission
- Lea has the clock

# Discussion Approach

1. Best practices
2. Task Force feedback
3. Preliminary recommendations
4. Discussion and input



Faculty/ Academic  
Programs / Research



Infrastructure



Patients

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Financial Resources

Competitive Marketplace





# Guided Discussion: Mission Clarity and Expectations

Thomas J. Farrell '88, '90W (MS)  
Senior Vice President, University Advancement  
Chief Advancement Officer

# Guided Discussion: *Mission Clarity and Expectations*

- Mission statements and position descriptions
- Size, composition, and terms
- Meetings



# Best Practices:

## *Mission Statement/Position Description*

### **Mission Statements**

- Clear statement of purpose
- Tied to strategic goals
- Actionable
- Appropriate to a volunteer advisory body
- Related to roles undertaken by members

### **Position Descriptions**

- Link to mission statement
- Define measurable contributions
- Outline expectations - attendance, philanthropic support, participation
- Describe advisory, advocacy, philanthropic, other expectations

# Best Practices: *Size, Composition, and Terms*

- Conducive to meaningful deliberations and discussions
- Downsizing via attrition
- Paced growth for start-ups
- Three-year term with up to 2 renewals
- Terms facilitate recruitment and end points for service
- Relate to personalized and overall engagement strategies

# Best Practices: *Meetings*

- Scheduled 6 months (or more) in advance
- Leadership puts challenging issues on the table for input
- Background information shared in advance of meetings
- Ensure all members have an opportunity to speak
- Summarize what was heard/ manage action items

# Feedback: *Mission Statement*

- Groups have a general and informal sense of mission/purpose
  - Key functions are understood as:
    - Philanthropic support (85%)
    - Advocacy (80%)
    - Ambassadorship (67%)
    - Fundraising (61%)
- 84% agree mission/goals are clear. However, most groups' missions have not been reviewed/revised in past several years
  - 4/10 active committees reviewed their mission statement within the past 3 years



# Feedback: *Position Description*

- Expectations are generally described and conveyed but lack formality and intentionality
- Survey results
  - 83% agree experience is aligned with expectations provided during recruitment
  - 16% neither agree nor disagree
  - 1% disagree
- Members report that recruitment often includes sharing outdated positions descriptions and/or informal or verbal review of responsibilities

# Feedback: *Size, Composition, and Terms*

- Most groups are at/around their identified target size; ~20 average
- Undefined terms and/or term limits not adhered to are common
- Opportunity to be more purposeful about diversity in all its forms
- Target group size appears linked to anticipated meeting attendance in many cases

# Feedback: *Meetings*

- Balance of meeting content can be skewed toward presentation
- Follow up (minutes, etc.) is a common practice across most groups
- Survey results
  - 90% agree that their groups have meaningful discussions
  - 7% neither agree nor disagree
  - 3% disagree

# Recommendations: *Mission Clarity and Expectations*

## **Mission Statements and Position Descriptions**

1. Review, standardize and update all mission statements and position descriptions. (review every 3 years)
  - Outline clear expectations on what the purpose is and how it is tied to strategic goals for each group.
  - Create a central repository of all mission statements and position descriptions.
  - Establish clear expectations regarding member responsibilities.
2. Define the review and approval processes for commissioning and decommissioning leadership committees.
3. Formally share mission statements and position descriptions with individual members and the group on an annual basis.

# Recommendations: *Mission Clarity and Expectations*

## **Size, Composition, and Terms**

1. Review and set targets for committee composition.
2. Establish process to monitor committee composition, including size and terms via the unit and central office.
3. Establish a standard calendar (e.g., fiscal year) for committee terms.

## **Meetings**

1. Set standards for number of meetings. (2 a year minimum).
2. Craft agendas thoughtfully to allow time for strategic discussion and input. (Not just reporting out.)
3. Establish an agenda review process for quality control.





# Guided Discussion: Practice

Thomas J. Farrell '88, '90W (MS)  
Senior Vice President, University Advancement  
Chief Advancement Officer

# Guided Discussion: *Practice*

1. Communications
2. Member identification, nomination pipeline, recruitment and orientation
3. Member experience, recognition, and succession planning





# Best Practices: *Communications*

- Offer at least two planned communications with committee members between in-person meetings per year
- School/unit leadership should provide informal progress reporting and key updates
- Committee staff should check in on individual board members working with the committee chair and leadership

# Best Practices: *Member Identification, Nomination Pipeline, Recruitment, and Orientation*

## **Identification and Pipeline**

- Sustained commitment to diversity across groups
- Leverage progressive engagement of volunteers
- “Social network thinking” in identification processes
- Councils are seen as a pipeline for prospective trustees

## **Recruitment and Orientation**

- School/unit leadership should play a central role in member recruitment
- Maintain central recruitment “clearinghouse” process for coordination, equitable placement and diversity
- Acknowledge new members through a welcome letter from University leadership
- All members participate in an formal orientation program

# Best Practices: *Member Experience, Recognition, and Succession Planning*

- Empower and prepare volunteers to fulfill their roles
- Communicate impact and contributions to the group and individual members
- Acknowledge departing members by University leadership
- Discuss and plan for next steps/future roles for departing members

# Feedback: *Communications*

- Most groups receive some form of communication between meetings – mostly electronic.
  - Content varies but often takes the form of newsletters, major announcements.
  - Direct contact with individual members relating to the committee experience is less formalized. Small number do annual review.
- Survey results
    - 78% agree the quantity and substance of updates between meetings is appropriate to support their effectiveness on the committee
    - 15% neither agree nor disagree
    - 7% disagree

## Feedback:

### *Nomination Pipeline, Recruitment and Orientation*

- Across most committees, nominations come from multiple sources, including leadership, advancement staff, and current members.
- Many groups acknowledge the opportunity to strengthen and/or formalize pipeline processes.
- Recruitment is done directly by deans and unit directors for most groups. Most groups also described a process by which new members are welcomed by school/unit leadership.
- Most groups add new members on a rolling basis vs. a synchronized term start timeframe.
- Orientation processes are primarily informal across most groups, and most identified this as an opportunity for improvement.

# Feedback: *Member Experience, Recognition, and Succession Planning*

- Recognition of contributions and impact – both at a group and individual level – happens to some degree across many groups.
- Opportunity is acknowledged across most groups to more proactively address other opportunities and/or next steps for term expiring members.

# Recommendations: *Practice*

## **Communications**

1. Provide standardized progress reporting and updates from school/unit leadership.
2. Plan individual check-ins with each member at least once per year.
3. Issue regular communications from committee chair.
4. Establish regular communications between school/unit leadership and committee chair.
5. Prepare an annual report highlighting committee accomplishments, progress, and challenges.
6. Establish central and unit web sites for leadership boards.

# Recommendations: *Practice*

## **Identification, Nomination Pipeline, Recruitment, and Orientation**

1. Develop a comprehensive, centralized nominations and potential candidate database and process for tracking pipeline.
2. Review current membership composition, term limits to determine short and long term recruitment needs.
3. Establish clear selection and approval process for members. Centralized office should participate in process to help with consistency and coordination.
4. Develop standard orientation elements for all volunteers at the enterprise and unit level.
5. Engage boards/ committee members in standardized nomination process



# Recommendations: *Practice*

## **Member Experience, Recognition, and Succession Planning**

1. Assess resources and tools needed across committees to support volunteer work; consider whether technology (volunteer platform) would enhance effectiveness.
2. Review leadership (chair) term limits and determine short and long term succession planning needs.



# Guided Discussion: Coordination, Collaboration, and Evaluation

Thomas J. Farrell '88, '90W (MS)  
Senior Vice President, University Advancement  
Chief Advancement Officer

# Guided Discussion: *Coordination, Collaboration, and Evaluation*

1. Coordination and connections
2. Staffing/leadership
3. Metrics, inputs, and surveying



# Best Practices:

## *Coordination and Connections, Staffing/Leadership*

### **Coordination and Connections**

- Consistent commitment to quality and a sense of common purpose enhance the volunteer experience
- Committee members benefit from interacting across groups
- Purposeful connections to the Board of Trustees and/or the University of Rochester Medical Center Board are important

### **Staffing/Leadership**

- High levels of volunteer engagement require an investment of staff and leadership time
- Collaboration with a central volunteer engagement office on best practices and coordination

# Best Practices:

## *Metrics, Inputs, and Surveying*

- Identify and track a set of agreed-upon metrics and performance indicators across all leadership committees
- Identify and track performance indicators for individual committee members
- Survey all committee members every three years
- Gather input from school/unit leadership, secretary and staff to complement volunteer feedback

# Feedback: *Coordination and Connections*

- Exposure to peer groups is limited, and primarily occurs via social occasions – lunches, dinners.
  - Linkage to Board of Trustees and/or URMC Board is primarily through shared membership (e.g., chair is a Trustee) but not strongly formalized beyond that.
- Survey results
    - 46% agree their committee is connected/exposed to other volunteer leadership groups, including the Board of Trustees or URMC Board
    - 29% neither agree nor disagree
    - 25% disagree

# Feedback: *Staffing/Leadership*

- Staff partners, including those from schools/units and from Advancement, are well known to committee members.
- Additional staff support could be helpful in accomplishing some of the enhancements and improvements identified.

# Feedback: *Metrics, Inputs, and Surveying*

- Commonly tracked items include:
  - Total number of members
  - Meeting attendance
  - Philanthropic participation rate
  - Philanthropic gift total or average
- Some opportunity exists to more purposefully leverage metrics and tracking to inform pipeline practices.
- Most do not survey beyond what is offered centrally across all groups.

- Survey results
  - 78% agree their committee periodically reflects on progress in meeting its mission and goals
  - 16% neither agree nor disagree
  - 6% disagree



# Recommendations:

## *Coordination, Collaboration, and Evaluation*

### **Coordination and Connections**

1. Formalize relationship and structure (reporting/hierarchy/ meeting coordination) between committees and BOT/URMC Board.
2. Integrate above into mission statement and/or orientation.
3. Develop joint board meeting structures as appropriate.

### **Staffing/Leadership**

1. Delineate volunteer management roles and responsibilities between central office and school/unit programs, identifying critical areas of standardization and centralization.
2. Establish orientation/professional development program for Deans/ Directors.
3. Add one new professional staff and one administrative staff person.  
(Form central Boards program.)

# Recommendations:

## *Coordination, Collaboration, and Evaluation*

### **Metrics, Inputs, and Surveying**

1. Identify and track a set of agreed-upon metrics across all committees.
2. Survey all committee members every year.
3. Gather input from school/unit leadership and staff to complement volunteer feedback.



# Closing Discussion

Emerson U. Fullwood  
University Trustee

Chair, Task Force on Volunteer Boards and Advisory Councils

# Next Steps

- Formalize and distribute preliminary recommendations and findings (September 1)
- Task Force Teleconference Meeting (September 16)
- Complete and deliver report to Nominations and Board Practices (October 3)
- Board and University guidance on next steps – execution plan
- Report to Task Force