

## **Orientation for Directors of the Board FACTSHEET**

**THANK YOU** for becoming a Director on the Board of the Rural Ontario Institute (ROI). You are part of a group of 12 or more individuals from across Ontario who give of your time and talents to ensure that the programs and services of ROI are relevant, appropriate and in keeping with the mission and mandate of the organization. The part you play in ensuring ongoing opportunities for leadership development and rural stakeholder engagement and your involvement in the organization is truly appreciated by many!

The Rural Ontario Institute was created on April 1, 2010 through the amalgamation of The Centre for Rural Leadership (TCRL) and The Ontario Rural Council (TORC). The ROI website can be found at [www.ruralontarioinstitute.ca](http://www.ruralontarioinstitute.ca).

Our vision is simple – “building Vision, Voice and Leadership for a strong and vibrant rural Ontario”; and our mission strategic – “Developing leaders, initiating dialogue, supporting collaboration and promoting action on issues and opportunities facing rural Ontario.”

The role of the staff of the Rural Ontario Institute is to carry out the day-to-day operations of the organization. Staff are located at 7382 Wellington Road 30, R.R. #5 Guelph, ON N1H 6J2.

The Rural Ontario Institute is governed as a non-profit organization through the organization’s bylaws and the Board policies. You will want to become familiar with these documents early in your term as Director. ROI is also a registered charity under the Canada Revenue Agency and, as such, can issue charitable tax receipts to donors. We are required to complete the Registered Charity Information Return (Form T3010N) on an annual basis.

The Board of Directors meets regularly throughout the year. The meetings are usually held at the ROI office north of Guelph. You are expected to prepare for, attend and participate in these very important meetings. Approximately 5 to 7 days prior to each meeting you will receive a pre-board meeting information package by email. It is important that you have read and understand the information prior to attending the Board meetings. In this way, a great deal of information can be dealt with, and issues resolved in a timely and efficient manner.

The Chair of the organization, elected annually by the Board, sets the meeting agenda and chairs each meeting. The positions of Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer will be determined by the Board of Directors at the first meeting of the Board following the Annual Meeting. The Past Chair, Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer make up the Board Executive.

The Board has put in place a number of standing and management committees to support its mandate, programs and activities. Directors are expected to take an active and participative role in these committees as necessary.

**For your protection, the Rural Ontario Institute has Directors & Officers Liability Insurance coverage.** Directors of ROI can no longer rely on the assumption that provided they

do their job, they are free from personal risk for duties they perform or which they fail to perform on behalf of ROI. Directors and Officers Liability coverage transfers this liability to an insurance policy.

The Rural Ontario Institute requires people to serve on its Board who are committed to the cause and who are able to deliver on the following:

- ◆ Understand the vision, mission and mandate of the Rural Ontario Institute.
- ◆ Loyal support of the organization, its programs and activities.
- ◆ Participate in discussions of the Board and various standing and ad hoc committees; at all times keeping in mind the best interests of the organization as a whole.
- ◆ Decisions of the Board are made and based on the collective wisdom of all Directors; therefore it is imperative that all Directors routinely provide input into issues before, during and after Board meetings.
- ◆ Manage the business of the Rural Ontario Institute. Our subscribers, stakeholders, funders, sponsors and donors entrust the Directors with the management of the organization and its programs. Directors develop policy that is implemented through the Chief Executive Officer and staff on a day-to day basis. It is understood that Directors will act in good faith at all times.
- ◆ Act in accordance with the guidelines outlined in the organization's bylaws, policies and procedures.
- ◆ Know and understand the limitations of authority as a Director.
- ◆ Attend and participate in all scheduled meetings. Late arrivals and early departures are disruptive to the Board functioning as a cohesive body. Each Director shares an equal responsibility for decisions of the Board.
- ◆ Review all related meeting information (i.e. agendas, supporting materials etc.) in advance of each meeting and be prepared to discuss the business issues arising from these at any time.
- ◆ Ask questions and seek clarification on issues that are unclear. Directors have a responsibility to be aware of, and knowledgeable on, the organization's issues. Fully informed Directors understand issues and are better equipped to address/make informed decisions.
- ◆ Confidently share areas of experience and knowledge with fellow Directors.
- ◆ Prepare clear and correct reports of meetings and activities as may be necessary.
- ◆ Attend and participate as possible in special events and activities organized by, and for the organization.

**Thank you for agreeing to serve on the Board of Directors of the Rural Ontario Institute.**

We are confident you will find the experience rewarding, fulfilling and beneficial. Should you have questions, concerns, ideas or comments, do not hesitate to contact the ROI office by phone, email or in person at:

Rural Ontario Institute  
7382 Wellington Road 30, R.R. #5  
Guelph, ON N1H 6J2  
Phone – 1-519-826-4204

[rblack@ruralontarioinstitute.ca](mailto:rblack@ruralontarioinstitute.ca) (email to Chief Executive Officer)

Enjoy your time as a Director and know you are contributing to a very worthwhile organization. Your efforts, and the efforts of many around you in a variety of capacities, are contributing to the vision and mission of the organization... as a catalyst for dialogue, collaboration and action on issues facing rural Ontario while delivering leadership training and development to ensure that rural contributes to a healthy vibrant Ontario.”

Thanks again and have a great year!