BCCPAC Representation Report

7.13

February 2009

Submitted by: **Ron Broda, President**

Name of Event: Volunteer Vancouver Leader's Circle

Date of Event: February 4th, 2009

Location of Event: Vancouver

I attended a seminar in the Volunteer Vancouver Leader's Circle Series titled "Governance as Leadership: Reframing the Work of the Nonprofit Board". There were approximately 24 other Chairs of nonprofit board in attendance of this session facilitated by Mr. Brian Fraser.

The main premise of this seminar is that most boards are too focused on the fiduciary segment of their responsibility and focus little if any at all on the strategic and generative aspects of their role. The model promoted is one in which boards shift from being performance "monitors" to performance "stewards". In order for this transformation to occur there must be clear expectation for all; Board, Staff and members. Where there is an absence of these clear expectations the vacuum will be filled with assumptions that may not align with expectations.

Strategic plans must be developed within the parameters of what an organization has already agreed to do, its constitutional purpose(s). Most boards devote little time to this, at most a session one day per year. This type of planning needs to be a regular agenda item.

In understanding the generative nature of board deliberations it was emphasized that the question that must be foremost in the minds of directors is the "why" of the organization (purpose, mission, vision, values). What does the board value most about the organization? The modes at play (fiduciary, strategic and generative) can best be viewed as a triangle. That triangle is not always equilateral. Changing circumstances in the organizations environment and constituency can shift the balance or distribution of this triangles sides.

A study of nonprofit organizations in the Silicon Valley of California revealed that while the level of understanding of the different roles of board and staff was important, the key common factor in the standout organizations was the level of trust and effectiveness of the working relationship between the Board Chair and the organizations Executive Director or chief staff person.

This was a very worthwhile seminar. More of this type of training is essential to the development of BCCPAC as a sustainable and effective organization.

Respectfully submitted;
Ron Broda, President