

## **Paws & Claws Humane Society Board Candidacy Information**

Congratulations! You have taken an important step in your relationship with Paws & Claws Humane Society by considering service on our Board of Directors.

To help you make this important decision we have assembled information describing the responsibility of Board membership and the process for joining the Board. We also provide forms that we ask you to complete and return to us, so whether by election at our Annual Membership Meeting or by appointment by the Board, an informed decision can be made.

To create a well-rounded Board, we strive to have many areas of expertise represented, from management and finance to animal care and marketing. Attached is a questionnaire regarding your experience in a number of areas of vital importance to a well-rounded board. Your answers on this questionnaire will help us to identify how your expertise fits with other members of the board. Also, please submit either a resume or the attached PCHS Board Candidate Profile. Finally, please submit a signed Board Candidate Agreement form indicating your willingness to abide by the terms of this agreement should you become a PCHS Board member.

The following information and documents are available:

- \* [The process of becoming a Board Member](#)
- \* [The role of the PCHS Board](#)
- \* [Expectations of a Board Member](#)
- \* [Board Candidate Profile](#)
- \* [Candidate Skills Assessment](#)
- \* [Board Candidate Agreement](#)

Please review these documents carefully before you decide to pursue this path. Board service may not be for everyone. If after considering this information you decide to continue, please complete the forms and submit them to Paws & Claws Humane Society, 602 7<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Rochester MN 55901, or by e-mail at [info@pawsandclaws.org](mailto:info@pawsandclaws.org).

Thank you, and good luck!

Sincerely,  
Dan Estes  
PCHS Board Chairman

## The Process of Becoming a PCHS Board Member

There are two ways to become a Board Member of Paws & Claws Humane Society. The first is by appointment when an opening occurs on the Board. This is left to the discretion of the Board. The second is by democratic election at the PCHS Annual Membership Meeting. For any Board member, whether selected by appointment or election, you must be a member of PCHS at the time your service on the Board commences.

At each Annual Membership Meeting, board seats are up for election by the Membership. To be considered for these seats, candidates can be nominated by the PCHS Board of Directors. Facilitated by the PCHS Nominating Committee, candidates will be considered for their background experience and vision of priorities for PCHS. The Nominating Committee will forward on to the Board of Directors the names of those individuals it feels will best serve the interests of PCHS. There are advantages to this approach. By going through this process, your candidate information (Candidate Profile) will be included in the Annual Membership Meeting mailing (scheduled for approximately 60 days prior to the meeting) and posted on the PCHS web site. This gives you exposure, making you a "known quantity" to voters.

If you choose to go through the process of becoming a candidate, please complete the appropriate application forms, and return them to:

Paws & Claws Humane Society,  
602 7<sup>th</sup> Street NW,  
Rochester MN 55901

or by e-mail at [info@pawsandclaws.org](mailto:info@pawsandclaws.org).

# The Role of the PCHS Board

Basic responsibilities of the PCHS board include:

1. Helping to shape and achieve the PCHS mission of:
  - Promoting and providing humane protection and shelter for abandoned or lost companion animals.
  - Seeking adoptive homes for companion animals under our protective care.
  - Providing public education regarding the societal problem of animal overpopulation.
  - Promoting the principles of responsible companion animal care.
  - Advocating the spaying and neutering of all companion animals.
2. Selecting and supporting the Shelter Manager and assessing his or her performance.
3. Ensuring effective organizational planning.
4. Ensuring long-term financial viability.
5. Exercising fiduciary responsibility and oversight.
6. Ensuring adequate resources and assisting in the raising of operational funds.
7. Determining, monitoring, and strengthening PCHS programs and services.
8. Enhancing the public standing of PCHS
9. Ensuring legal and ethical integrity and maintain accountability.
10. Recruiting and orienting new board members and assessing board performance.

What is *NOT* included?

1. Giving formal or informal assessments of individual staff performance. That is the Shelter Manager's job.
2. Giving instruction or direction to staff in how to carry out operations. That, too, is the Shelter Manager's job.
3. "Saving" staff in times of crisis. A Board Director's eyes are to be set on the horizon. Emergency management is the job of the Shelter Manager, within the boundaries established through official policy.
4. Running operational programs or committees. Board Directors cannot simultaneously "govern" and "manage" without interjecting the opportunity for confusion among involved parties.
5. Undermining the Board by voicing dissent outside of the Board meeting. Board members sometimes disagree, but members shall **never** threaten the organization by subjecting it to the upheaval of inappropriate dissension. The board is to speak with one voice, or not at all. Board members at all times are to exhibit and maintain the discipline and decorum that is rightfully due the position and its responsibilities.

## Expectations of a Board Member

**"Commitment to the Membership and to the organization's mission."** We act as the agents of the Membership, and as such, we must be committed to that trust. This is even more important than a commitment to the mission, because "mission" is an outcome of the Board's work on behalf of the Membership. At times, the process of how we do our work as a Board is as important as the work PCHS does to save animals because our work enables the organization to carry out that work with integrity.

**"Propensity to think in terms of systems and context."** As a member of the Board, your ability to think of the whole of our work rather than its parts is critical to our ability to create an overarching framework of policies and accountability. Focusing on pieces, rather than how the pieces fit together into a powerful organizational purpose, is a distraction that the Board can ill afford. Tactical or daily operational issues should remain in the capable hands of PCHS's professional staff members and its volunteers.

**"Ability and eagerness to deal with values, vision, and the long term."** Our work is about translating values into policies. The staff's work is about turning policies into action. The Board is the only collection of people who are equipped and tasked to carry this out. We are the stewards of the organization's vision.

**"Ability to participate assertively in deliberation."** Failure to voice one's views, as they represent one's interpretation of the organization's values, is a failure to do one's duty as a Board member. Active participation in the Board's work is a requirement.

**"Willingness to delegate, to allow others to make decisions."** Individual Board members must be willing to share power with others on the Board, subordinating individual interests to the will of the group. Individuals must also be willing to delegate to staff, allowing for the exercise of the Board's authority to be unencumbered by operational minutiae, while encouraging our staff's professional growth to be unhindered by obtrusive Board meddling.

# PCHS Board Candidate Profile

**Candidate Name:**

Address:

Phone:

Fax:

E-mail:

Statement of Intent - Policy Interests & Priorities

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Paws & Claws Humane Society Background and Experience

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Professional Background & Education/Training

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Memberships and Affiliations

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# PCHS Board Candidacy Skills Assessment

We would like to sincerely thank you for your interest in joining the Board of Directors of Paws & Claws Humane Society (PCHS). Please take the time to complete the following information. This information will assist the PCHS Board in creating and maintaining a well rounded, diversified and experienced set of members.

Please complete the following rating yourself on a scale of 0 to 5 (zero is “no background or experience”; five is “expert” level of knowledge):

- Community Leadership – Connections to others in the Olmsted County Community, ability to open community doors. *Please describe your connections and community involvement.*
- Resource Development – Fundraising experience, or experience in asking for donations of \$10,000 or more. Please describe experience.
- Planned Giving – Experience in handling structured gifts, planned giving. Please describe experience.
- Financial Planning – Professionally trained or have credentials / skill development in this professional area (outside of work with PCHS). Please describe training, credentials and actual experience.
- Accounting - Professionally trained or have credentials / skill development in this professional area (outside of work with PCHS). Please describe training, credentials and actual experience.
- Marketing / PR - Professionally trained or have credentials / skill development in this professional area (outside of work with PCHS). Please describe training, credentials and actual experience.
- Business Management - Experience running a business or managing a large budget area within a company (outside of work with PCHS). Indicate size of budget and number of staff in business area and describe general experience.
- Personnel / HR - Professionally trained in this area or have had people reporting to him/her; experience in mentoring, developing staff and providing performance reviews (outside of work with PCHS). Please describe training and actual experience.
- Governance – Professionally trained or has credentials / skill development in this professional area (outside of work with PCHS). Please describe training, credentials and actual experience.

- Strategic Planning / Team Building / Organizational Development - Professionally trained or have credentials / skill development in this professional area (outside of work with PCHS). Please describe training, credentials and actual experience.
- Legal - Professionally trained or have credentials / skill development in this professional area (outside of work with PCHS). Please describe training, credentials and actual experience.
- Animal Protection - Professionally trained or has credentials / skill development in this professional area (outside of work with PCHS). Please describe training, credentials and actual experience.
- Veterinary - Professionally trained or have credentials / skill development in this professional area (outside of work with PCHS). Please describe training, credentials and actual experience.

**Please feel free to include any other experience or education you might have that you would like to highlight.**

## Board Candidate Agreement:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand that if elected as a member of Paws & Claws Humane Society Board of Directors, I have a legal and moral responsibility to ensure that the organization does the best work possible in pursuit of its goals. I believe in the purpose and the mission of the organization, and I will act responsibly and prudently as its steward.

Specifically, I will:

1. Interpret the organization's work and values to the community, actively reflecting these values in my personal and professional life. This might include speaking on behalf of the Board or the Society if specifically requested to do so by the Chairperson, Communications Committee Chair or, in certain circumstances, the Shelter Manager.
2. Attend all board meetings, as well as participate in special projects, assignments and retreats as requested by the Board Chair, to the best of my abilities. If at any point my attendance hinders the Board's progress, I will expect the Board Chair to take appropriate action.
3. Arrive at meetings well versed in the issues under consideration and prepared to make decisions in a way that enhances the ability of the board to execute its work.
4. Work in a professional, courteous and respectful manner to support a culture of appreciation. This includes being candid in discussions, but always recognizing and supporting the decisions of the Board and Organization regardless of my own vote on any such decision.
5. Ensure that adequate board representation occurs for major fundraising and/or special events and activities by actively participating in or attending these events if requested to do so.
6. Maintain a membership of Paws & Claws Humane Society as well as making a personal financial contribution at a level that is meaningful to me.
7. Assist the organization in seeking any, and all contributions, both monetary and otherwise, that I am able.
8. Act in the best interests of the organization, and excuse myself from discussions and votes where a conflict of interest exists.
9. Stay informed regarding PCHS operations, animal protection issues, and other issues relating to Humane Societies.
10. Assess my performance, honestly, as a Board Member on an annual basis.
11. Understand that if I do not fulfill these commitments to the organization, I will expect the Board Chair to discuss my responsibilities with me and take appropriate action.

### **PCHS Assistance to Board Members:**

The organization will assist board members in fulfilling their responsibilities in the following ways:

1. Financial reports and an update of organizational activities will be made available that will allow me to fulfill my Board responsibilities.
2. I may request agenda items to the Board President to address specifics of these issues if needed.
3. If the organization does not fulfill its commitments to me, I can call on the Board Chair to discuss these issues and take appropriate actions.

Signed:

(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Candidate, Board of Directors