



**VISTA COVA**

VISION. STRATEGY. LEADERSHIP. FACILITATION

# RTDNA GOVERNANCE SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Lowell Aplebaum, FASAE, CAE, CPF  
CEO  
Vista Cova, LLC

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	3
Responses .....	3
Governance Culture – Behaviors, Processes, Structures and Principles .....	3
Governance – Areas of Excellence, Disconnects, Bottlenecks and Gaps .....	5
Governance Structure and Effectiveness .....	6
Differentiated Roles .....	7
Effective Decision Making .....	7
Governance Communication Flow .....	8
Membership Communications .....	8
Trends to Consider for Future Governance Leaders .....	9
Attracting Future Volunteers .....	10
Nominations and Selection Process .....	10
Diversity and Inclusion in Governance .....	11
One Piece of Advice .....	12
Appendix A: Board Efficiency and Effectiveness Opportunities Survey .....	13
Appendix B: Board Survey Responses .....	15
Appendix C: Interview Responses .....	21

## Introduction

Between February 14, and March 2, 2022, Vista Covva conducted twelve (12) one-hour telephone interviews, fielded a Board Efficiency & Effectiveness survey and a Governance survey to volunteer leaders to better understand governance structures and processes to provide the governance task force with a strong foundation for discussion of the governance cultures, structures, and processes RTDNA should consider as they modernize their governance system.

## Responses

### Interviews

The interview question set was focused on governance cultures, structures, decision-making processes, communications, and future governance leadership. Following are the themes which emerged from the responses. For each section, the themes are listed in the order of most to fewest mentions. Themes mentioned two or fewer times are not found in the summaries below, however full responses can be seen in [Appendix C](#). Unedited representative responses are in *italics*.

### Surveys

The *Governance survey* was sent to non-board, volunteer leaders to gather perspectives on disruptions, opportunities, and priorities that lie ahead for RTDNA while the *Board Efficiency & Effectiveness survey* was sent to current RTDNA Board members to gain insight into current practices and potentials for greater refinement. Where there was consensus between both surveys and interview themes, the responses are captured below. Otherwise, the summary of the Board Efficiency & Effectiveness survey can be found in [Appendix A](#), with full responses in [Appendix B](#).

## Governance Culture – Behaviors, Processes, Structures and Principles

- ✓ Oversized Board
- ✓ Current Structure and Geographic Composition
- ✓ Accountability and Participation
- ✓ Membership Needs and Engagement
- ✓ Diversity and Representation



Mentioned most often in telephone interviews and (both) survey responses were the consequences of an **oversized board** and implications of the **current structure** and **composition**. The oversized board is seen as slowing progress and doesn't allow for nimbleness. It also **inhibits accountability** and allows for the same voices to be heard while others stay silent. Telephone interviewees and respondents to the board survey mention the **regional composition** of board seats prevents the inclusion of the right people, with the right skills, capabilities and industry representation RTDNA needs. In contrast, all respondents from the governance survey said the regional structure works well and is ideal to represent the nation and its newsrooms.

- *Journalism is a living breathing thing. The news is news but the experiences of the journalists are changing day to day. A fully functioning board should be nimble and engaged.*
- *Board is way too big, it's hard to hold everyone accountable.*
- *The board is large, and active participation tends to be more limited. How do we increase the voices of those who want to be heard while managing the strengths and activities of those who can move us forward? Voice needs to be accompanied by action. (Board Survey)*
- *We are lacking a structure that allows the right people to come to the table at the highest level of conversations around the future of the industry. We need stakeholders for all areas that we represent.*
- *Given the ease of travel and remote communication, as well as the absence of strong regional activities, I think moving from geographic representation to skills/duties representation could improve the skillset of the board. (Board Survey)*
- *People can easily escape volunteering for assignments when there are so many people (Governance Survey).*

Interviewees referenced the work around the **1<sup>st</sup> Amendment** and **Ethics**.


- *We have set up a current structure where staff and board meet – confluence - where I think we have created a structure where the figurehead of our first amendment efforts are out there publicly - and I wonder how much of our current structure feeds into that.*
- *RTDNA needs a strong code of ethics in terms of how the association is run and the board members operate. You would hope the board can leave their affiliations at the door, advocate for the industry as a whole, even if it's in conflict with their company. Often what's best for the industry isn't best for their company.*

Respondents also commented on the lack of understanding of **member needs** and how to **better engage members**.

- *We can't grow the membership if we aren't appealing to and learning from our members. We need a Board who is interested in being highly engaged with members. Both in their lane in the industry, and reaching out to different groups.*
- *There is a lack of engagement from membership. Our membership doesn't have a reason or need to reach RTDNA unless there is an issue with their Murrow award submissions. Main touch points are training at convention, Murrow awards and 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment dinner. There could be more engagement.*

Being **innovative** and **evolving from traditional models**, open communication and **space for diverging opinions**, and the **inclusion of diverse** perspectives, backgrounds and groups of people were also mentioned as necessary for an effective governance structure.

## Governance – Areas of Excellence, Disconnects, Bottlenecks and Gaps

- 
- ✓ Voice of 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment and Awards
  - ✓ Advocating for Press Freedoms
  - ✓ Limited Resources
  - ✓ Chair's Role and Influence
  - ✓ Large Board Size and Lack of Participation

The two areas where RTDNA is viewed as excelling in are their work for the **Voice of the 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment** and their **awards**. Mentioned most often was the work of the staff, the collaborative relationship between the staff and the Board and the work of the Executive Director **advocating for press freedoms**.

- *Voice of first amendment is spectacular. There is great growth potential here.*
- *It is good that the Executive's time is now a greater focus on representing press freedom externally. He is advocating and being a vocal voice for first amendment issues. We have been able to truly become the preeminent press freedom association in the country.*

### Disconnects

Mentioned most often was the disconnect between **limited resources** and staff to execute initiatives.

- *We need to listen to staff when they say we don't have capabilities to do XYZ so we are realistic. RTDNA always tries to do everything but cannot – pick the lane we want to influence in journalism.*

The **Chair's role** and **influence** was also frequently mentioned as a disconnect. There is a feeling that the Chair holds the power in the organization and sets the direction. This becomes an issue with the yearly turnover which causes gaps in continuity and changes in trajectory.

- *Changing Chairs yearly means goals change annually. How do you maintain continuity or really accomplish things in a timely fashion without constant course correction? Why does the head of the association have less voice and authority in setting the plan and the goals? RTDNA should set direction and the Chair leads the charge.*
- *The automatic succession of Chair-Elect to Chair to Foundation Chair is logistically sound, but it affects decision making because the leadership changes faster than the Board is able to affect change or establish a vision.*

Comments included references to the dichotomy between the benefits of **institutional knowledge** of veteran board members and the **lack of fresh voices** and insights.

- *Whatever system is in place that allows constantly re-elected board members is an issue. There was a culture that if you weren't on the board you couldn't participate. There needs to be fresh voices and insight when it comes to decision making.*

## Bottlenecks

Mentioned most often was the **large board size** and consequences like the **difficulties of convening** meetings and the **lack of participation** from all board members. Also mentioned is the need for **better board member onboarding**.

- *There are a lot of voices which is good for perspective but there are a lot of places where a lot of these voices want RTDNA involved. They have trouble taking their journalist hat off and putting their association hat on.*
- *There are people who work and those who don't. It is difficult to convene with a large board.*
- *There are veteran members who follow the way it's always been, but they are not teaching new members how to approach their time on the board. New board members might not be clear on how the work is set to be done – we need to onboard and educate them so their new, diverse voices are represented and heard.*

## Gaps

Mentioned most often was the **board composition and regional structure**.

- *Is this the best structure upon which our leadership should be based? Is there an opportunity in leadership to have more consideration than just the geographic one? Disciplinary and other definitions of diversity. If we had a greater diversity in leadership, this could be a more interconnected organization.*
- *Find a balance between geographic representation and diversity of genders, ethnicity, talents, industry sectors, etc. that reflect our membership. You are leaving talented people on the cutting room floor because someone has been in the position and does a good job. You could have 2 talented people from a region - not to make the board larger but more robust.*

## Governance Structure and Effectiveness

### ✓ Committees and Task Force Composition



Mentioned most often was **committees** and **task forces**. Interviewees felt like committees being **composed of Board** members was an issue.

- *The current way that the committees are composed of mainly Board is wildly limiting. Committees are an opportunity to bring in more voices at different levels and get people more engaged. Use this as a pipeline to build future leadership.*
- *Sometimes committees are created and then lag a year before something is done, which creates problems for the committee or association chair. The chair rises to position and has their own agenda and focus. Some chairs are more aggressive about making sure they meet. This isn't incorporated into structure, its personality dependent.*

- *A lot of trust placed in smaller working groups focused on specific projects and goals which works well. Having a smaller body of people who dive into these issues is key.*
- *We are working in an organization where we have a large board, and they are in on every decision. Is there a way that we can streamline responsibilities, utilizing committees and even staff, that can help the Board function at a higher, strategic level without them micromanaging every decision?*

Responses from the governance survey mentioned most the need for **term limits**.

## Differentiated Roles


**Committees** were described as existing to deal with ongoing projects or issues for RTDNA. Some suggested reducing the number of committees while another interviewee said to look for the interplays between the committees to be more effective.

**Task Forces** were described as addressing specific areas of focus, questions or issues. They help move the Board agenda forward and provide the Board with recommendations.

**The Board** was described an advisory board that should develop our strategic plans for the future.

**Executive Committee** was described as the main decision makers serving a functional rather than strategic role.

## Effective Decision Making

- 
- ✓ Input to Decision Making
  - ✓ Clear Expectations and Onboarding
  - ✓ Decision Making Agility

Mentioned most often were comments around **input to decision making**. Some felt that if you are active in your participation you have input or that the **groups seek advice** around specific issues. While another interviewee felt like the **current avenues** for input **aren't very clear** or efficient.

**Clear expectations and better onboarding** were also mentioned repeatedly with remarks calling for RTDNA to set expectations for governance services and provide onboarding and training to set new board members up for success.

Interviewees also mentioned the need for a structure that improves **the speed of decision-making**.

- *We need to streamline the approval process and eliminate as many impediments as possible. There are times that we need to be deliberative and sometimes that we need to move quickly.*

## Governance Communication Flow

### ✓ Improve Communication



Mentioned most often was the need for **clarity** and **better reporting** on the work of Task Forces and Committees.

Respondents also referenced that **better communication** was needed **with staff** around decision-making and incorporating their feedback.

- *Not sure if Education Committee knows what Safety Committee is doing? Staff does a monthly report of their accomplishments and happenings. Would it be helpful for each committee to publish one with goals for the month, accomplishments, what we are watching in the industry that relates to our sphere of influence.*
- *Not so long ago, there is a historical piece where the staff threatened to leave because there was a lack of communications from the Board - making decisions without inclusion of staff - decisions (like the office) impacting staff without including the staff hurts trust and culture.*
- *I see different communications this year - there is a better system of piecing out assignment and communications amongst the Board members that includes monthly reports, which keeps the Board on track. It makes them more cognizant of what them, as a staff, can do with their feedback. The communication flow is better than it was but will this change be something that continues beyond this year?*

## Membership Communications

- ✓ Value to Membership
- ✓ Engagement Areas




Mentioned most often were suggestions to better **communicate the value of membership** and **service** with RTDNA. There is the feeling that the general membership doesn't know **what RTDNA does on their behalf** outside of the Awards.

- *Would love to highlight the good work of board and advocacy from the Executive Director directly to membership. There is more than discounts on awards. We are fighting for you on the hill, our ethics committee reviews code of ethics and guidelines to ensure we are staying abreast to all changes in journalism.*
- *When we try to sell someone on the membership, the elevator pitch isn't strong. As a board, we are defending the 1st amendment regardless of their membership status. They are glad someone is handling it unless they need RTDNA to come to their aid. In person training was the reason to join decades ago, not a current offering.*



Respondents also mentioned an appreciation for the **communication with membership** and to develop a **more sales driven approach** to cultivating and recruiting members and leaders.

## Trends to Consider for Future Governance Leaders

- 
- ✓ Diverse Perspectives
  - ✓ Incentives and Value
  - ✓ Early Career and Young Folks
  - ✓ Desired Competencies

Mentioned most often was the need to be **intentional** about **bringing diverse perspectives** to the table. There are opportunities for RTDNA to **recalibrate its governance composition** to include front line journalists, thought leaders on topics, and more digital to achieve appropriate representation.

- *Board doesn't represent Radio, TV, and Digital across the entire spectrum. Not a lot of diverse thought from different perspectives from the industry as a result. People on board have the same job in different markets and work in TV or Radio but not Digital. RTDNA had a name change for a reason but the board doesn't reflect that change.*
- *Board now has more women, men, and radio. Black news director from Spokane ran and lost to a white female news director whose company a louder voice and money. This goes back to geographical election issue.*

Interviewees frequently commented on RTDNA **providing value** and **offering incentives**.

- *Organization must be influential and attractive for someone to want to attach themselves to it. Everything we do has to be marketed in a way that makes us stand tall so that young people say this organization fights for me, provides me with great insight as to how I can further my career. Do we offer training or exercise influence on important topics?*
- *How are we informing our decisions as to what we offer and what has value to members? What gets them to spend their money, engage with us, donate their time? If you choose to serve, how can we fill your cup – what do we offer you, how do we hit your passion points?*

Interviewees also mentioned that RTDNA needs to be sincere in **attracting** and **cultivating younger/early career members**.

- *RTDNA says they want younger, diverse members but we don't have pipelines in place. Younger people run for board seats, lose and disappear. Marketing is great for young applicants to scholarships and fellowships but what happens after we say you didn't win and apply next year. Coaching and leadership funnel opportunities are lost.*

RTDNA should seek specific **competencies** and **skills** in these future leaders.

- *Collaborative, active listening, people who allow conversation, forward-thinking. Perspective and institutional knowledge is good but hampers innovation.*

- *Consensus builders, productivity managers, diversity; we need to represent the community.*

## Attracting Future Volunteers

- 
- ✓ Opportunities for Involvement
  - ✓ Representation and Value
  - ✓ Career Enrichment
  - ✓ Corporate Advantages and Support

Mentioned most often were calls for **more opportunities** for membership **to get involved** with RTDNA. **Pathways aren't clear** and interviewees indicated that they aren't sure how much members are **engaging with communications** which result in lack of governance participation.

- *If the biggest invitation to volunteer is through the board it will be hard to bring fresh faces. Our virtues and mission statement are strong but there aren't avenues to get involved and those available have significant barriers.*

RTDNA should **promote the work** it does to make a positive impact on the members' lives as a way of **garnering interest in service**. This could mean many things, like the work on the 1<sup>st</sup> amendment or how RTDNA provides members with a path or network to **achieve their career goals**. This could help membership see ways they could **give back** and **make a difference in the profession**.

A few interviewees mentioned that there has been a **shift in company support** over the years. Some don't care about the line on the resume, others aren't encouraging members to join or providing financial support.

- *Incentives: only those from large newsrooms or who have personal wealth can take part in traveling to the conference and awards ceremonies until RTDNA can help pay their way.*

## Nominations and Selection Process

- 
- ✓ Candidate Recruitment
  - ✓ Company Support

Mentioned most often were challenges in attracting and **soliciting people to serve**. There are currently no **structural mechanisms** to identify future leaders or engage them in governance before taking a seat on the board. Governance survey respondents note that there isn't adequate communication and marketing around running for office.

- *The one complaint that has arisen in recent years is the inadequate communication to candidates and potential candidates about the process of running. Lots of confusion as direction is not well codified*


*but rather based on institutional memory. And sometime that memory is skewed (for a variety of reasons).*

- *Worry that the pool is too small, self-selected, or we need to go out and attract. We need to do a better job of enticing folks to serve. Explain clearly what the work will look like and what they get out of their service.*

Additionally, interviewees and governance survey respondents indicated a grey area of **corporate support** during elections that allows companies to exert their influence and finances to **'buy' seats**.

- *Danger of democracy is that one party (company) can impose candidates whose interests are not Association First. But then, that's politics.*

## Diversity and Inclusion in Governance

- 
- ✓ Commitment to Diversity
  - ✓ Priority in Nominations and Recruiting
  - ✓ Representation
  - ✓ Collaboration

Mentioned most often were needs to **commit to being intentional with diversity** and make it a priority in all RTDNA does. This means but is not limited to diversity of ethnicity, gender, thought, market size, industry, radio, television and digital in governance, membership, staff and within the industry.

- *We wave the flag and have done well bringing fresh new faces. This is a long-term commitment that needs actively pursued. Diversity is more than slogan or workshop, it is a commitment in news coverage, in our staff and board.*
- *There is no governing body that embodies the radio, TV, and digital news – it embodies news directors of radio and TV stations. This leaves out a broad swath of people. Invite people to committees, reserve spots on the board for specific roles in a newsroom. Who is a part of the industry that doesn't have a voice here?*

Additionally, RTDNA should look for **best practices to ensure diversity** and find ways to weave diversity into the nomination and recruiting process. This will be beneficial but it is crucial that it not be tokenism. If there isn't adequate **representation** in governance then others likely won't want to serve because they don't see themselves in the board members.

## One Piece of Advice

- ✓ Diversity of Perspective
- ✓ Governance Structure: Willingness to Evolve
- ✓ Term Limits



Two themes rose to the top when offering a final piece of advice to the governance system review. Interviewees want RTDNA to ensure that **the right voices** and **perspectives are at the table**.

- *The untapped potential of our general membership is big. We should be utilizing all the voices of our membership instead of just the Board. We should be opening volunteer opportunities to the general membership. There is a large learning curve coming onto the board, we can prepare them better.*

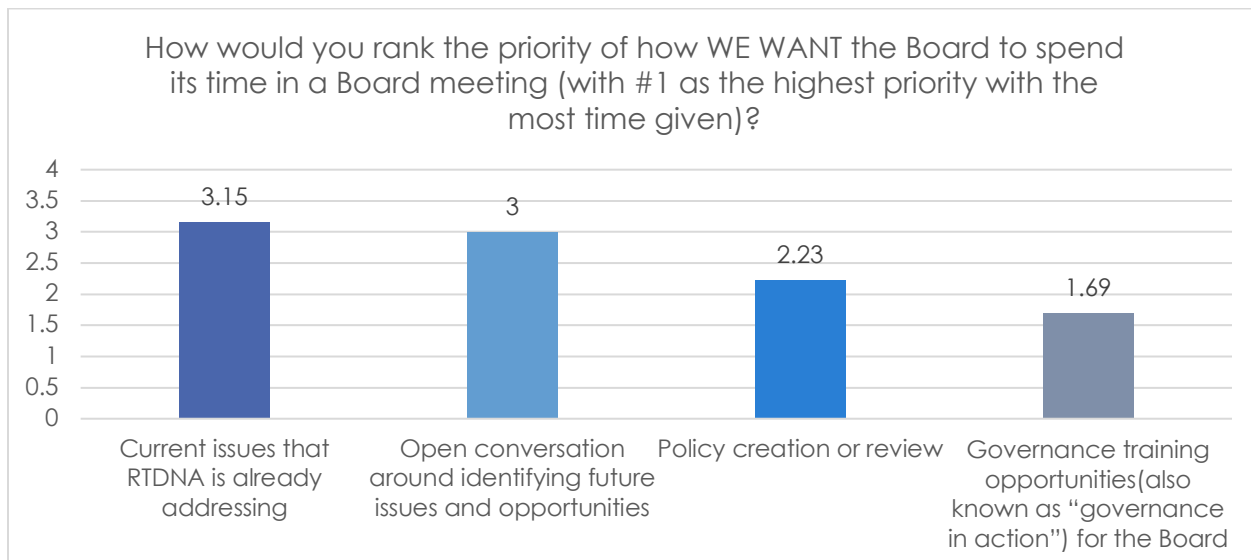
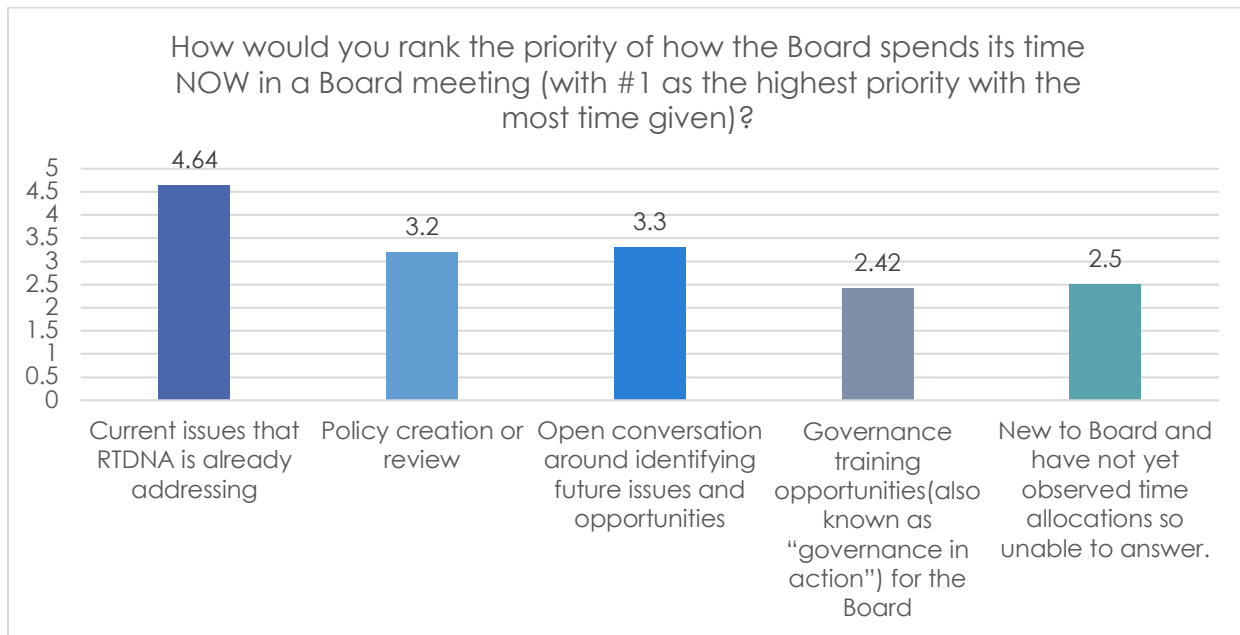
They suggest that RTDNA should review the **structure of RTDNA's governance composition**. One aspect of the structure to consider is determining if the **regional model** remains the best structure for RTDNA and evaluate what is the best size for the board.

- *We can't structure the board based on formula of geography but we also can't alienate them. Find a way they can play into the larger governance. Could there be a 16-region task force that works alongside the board?*
- *The board needs to take a fresh look at how we are structured, make sure it fits our industry and the future of the industry. We need to be willing to change and vote ourselves out of office.*

Setting **term-limits** and evaluating the term structure for the Chair are also frequently mentioned in interviews and survey responses.

## Appendix A: Board Efficiency and Effectiveness Opportunities Survey

RTDNA took the opportunity to evaluate its current Board practices to assess areas of strength and opportunities. In total, there were 14 respondents to the Board Survey.



## Building Stronger Relationships and Teams

Mentioned most often was the need to create opportunities for **team building** and hosting **social functions**. Responses mention the challenges of in-person meetings due to the pandemic but they hope for opportunities to spend time together to develop trust and strengthen relationships.

Also, frequently mentioned was the **large board** and how it hampers building close working relationships. A few mentioned that establishing **teams** or **smaller working groups** as possible solutions.

- I would love to see teams of board members, perhaps paired with outside professional to identify and respond to industry needs and opportunities.

## Meetings – Enhancing the Mission and Strategy Focus

In general, responses indicate that the board meetings are **well organized** and **executed**. Mentioned most often was the need to **establish timetables** for debates and discussions and making sure the conversations are **strategically focused**.

## Opportunities for Advancing RTDNA Outside of Board Meetings

Mentioned most often was the effectiveness of the **one-to-one reach** out mandate of the current Chair.

- *I think the one-to-one outreach we are doing is valuable. We need to make that a core part of the regional director mission.*
- *I think board members could make a stronger effort at recruitment and evangelization.*

Providing **professional development** and **training** opportunities was frequently mentioned as ways to amplify RTDNA's mission. Hosting **events** and providing **networking** opportunities are also ways to add value.

- *Bring in outside voices to speak to topics the organization can and should be engaged in. Think training, safety, equity. Have a 15-minute session with a guest each meeting. For example, bring an industry executive, someone to challenge us.*
- *Provide built in networking relationships - radio board members could meet. TV could meet. Mini-networking sessions could then be used for programming ideas.*

## Aspects of Successful Board Service

The feeling of accomplishment mentioned most often was **positively impacting journalism** and making a difference in the lives of journalists. Also frequently mentioned was establishing RTDNA as a prominent leader with influence that **provides value** to its members.

## Appendix B: Board Survey Responses

**As you reflect on the board relationships and dynamics that are critical to building a leadership team that can work to advance RTDNA's mission, do you have any reflections or suggestions on how we can build closer individual board relationships and a stronger team as a whole?**

### **Social Functions and Team Building –**

- *Additionally, as we can hopefully put the pandemic behind us, more board social functions would help with relationship building. I gained a lot at the board dinner in Denver as I was just trying to get to know everyone.*
- *The event at Kathy's house in Denver was a good way to build team cohesiveness for the board.*
- *Only thing I'd suggest is finding ways to have more in-person gatherings.*
- *More board activities together.*
- *One of the only ways to build more relationships and create a stronger team is to spend more time together - formally and informally. But the opportunities to do that are limited by our already busy schedules and the challenges posed by COVID.*
- *In my experience, face to face interaction and trust developed over time is so critical to building the relationships that allow a leadership team to work well together. While meeting remotely or on conference calls is more efficient and affordable, I think it reduces the ability to build those "commitment to the team" relationships that are so vital to a volunteer board.*
- *Small or large group "Zoom happy hours" could also strengthen relationships (Kneeland does this occasionally, as I'm sure many other groups do). This informal bonding time is just as important as the formal committee work we do when it comes to building relationships and a stronger team.*

### **Better Onboarding and Clear Expectations –**

- *I think there needs to be a clear expectation on how many hours a board member needs to dedicate annually to the organization with meetings, conferences, etc.*
- *Early/actionable training for new board members for them to be most effective*
- *I would suggest we build some onboarding training strategies (basic functions of board, strategic vision explanation, logistical questions, mentorship, etc.). That would have helped get me up to speed faster.*

### **Reduce Board Size and Increase Inclusivity**

- *Frankly, it might be easier to build relationships and a stronger team if there was a smaller board. This has its trade-offs (more work for the people who remain, bigger regions for them*

*to cover if we stick with apportioning seats by geographic region, likely less diversity among the board, etc..*

- *Shrinking of board size to have more intimate, impactful team building, vision creation, and issue focused action.*
- *The Board is not inclusive. Too much time is spent on internal board politics and issues versus what is happening in newsrooms. Several board members have expressed concern over the "politics", rudeness, and lack of productivity.*

### **Establish Teams and Smaller Working Groups –**

- *I would love to see teams of board members, perhaps paired with outside professional to identify and respond to industry needs and opportunities.*
- *There are so many board members, it would be nice to maybe create opportunities for smaller group conversation or assignments that involve smaller groups other than/in addition to committees.*
- *If we had more opportunities for open small group meetings on various topics based on areas of interest (more on this below), that would help.*

### **Thought Leadership and Information Sharing**

- *Providing "TED talks" and/or a "retreat day".*
- *Enjoy hearing thoughts from other news leaders, sharing thoughts about challenges in our industry.*

### **Existing Examples of Good Leadership**

- *What Ellen is doing right now with her task force is very effective in building a team.*
- *I really like the tone Allison has set - more of this enthusiastic support and engagement, please!*

**As you reflect on how the Board uses time in its meetings - how the agenda is structured, how time is allocated, how elements of presentation/discussion/deliberation/decision are balanced - are there any improvements you think would enable the Board to be more mission and strategy focused?**

### **Spend Less Time –**

- *Less time spent on introductions. We've got around 25 people between the RTDNA/F boards and another 5-6 people on the staff. At one minute each, that's 30 minutes of introductions and it usually averages out to more than that. I know this runs somewhat contrary to the*



*relationships and team building. Perhaps if there are other avenues for people to get to know each other, we can spend less time on introductions.*

- *Less discussion on parliamentary procedures and more LIMITED discussion on the issues themselves. Need clear timetable for debate and discussions.*
- *We frequently let debate that would better be had at the committee level take place at full board meetings.*
- *It does seem like the board is too large to manage valuable input from all members.*
- *Trivial discussions can drag down the board when more important topics are worth more debate. Staff and EC should spend the time on the minutia, board should think 30,000 views.*

#### **Positive Aspects –**

- *I've found the board meetings to be on point and well executed.*
- *I like all things Boardable!*
- *I think the staff run a very good organization and the agenda is well structured.*
- *Board meetings are becoming more efficient. Organization by staff in advance with pre-meetings has helped in debate and decision making.*
- *The first two meetings I attended seemed efficient and well-structured to me.*

#### **Preparation and Time Commitment –**

- *Struggle is managing our time with our own jobs. It's hard to ask for more commitment from the board.*
- *Board needs to be fully engaged and prepared to make the work lighter for all. Need to make sure there are ways to encourage that and make it measurable and accountable.*
- *Run the meetings with efficiency and create opportunities to hear from those working in newsrooms. The Board feels out of touch with what is happening in newsrooms.*

#### **Onboarding –**

- *New members need a short training course so they understand what is going on (parliamentary rules, etc.)*
- *I often feel like some board members (not officers) come to board meetings unprepared, and the need to explain things to them or "catch them up" can slow things down.*

**Are there any opportunities you would identify where the Board could better advance organizational mission outside of their Board meeting time?**

---

#### **Outreach is Effective –**

- *I think the one-to-one outreach we are doing is valuable. We need to make that a core part of the regional director mission.*
- *I like the outreach efforts our current chair has undertaken. I think board members could make a stronger effort at recruitment and evangelization. A stronger committee presence would help.*
- *Allison is doing a good job getting the board members to better interact with other members and get feedback. I would suggest continuing that and making sure all candidates/members understand the expectation.*
- *Board employees would benefit from spending time in newsrooms each year to hear from the need of news leaders. We communicate out, but we should also listen.*

### **Professional Development and Training –**

- *There smaller learning experiences we can be offering to make RTDNA more tangible to the news leaders - maybe virtual, maybe in person.*
- *Bring in outside voices to speak to topics the organization can and should be engaged in. Think training, safety, equity. Have a 15-minute session with a guest each meeting. For example, bring an industry executive, someone to challenge us.*
- *We could also build some trainings/networking discussions based on topic - like hiring or training.*

### **Host Events and Create Networking Opportunities –**

- *We would benefit from a nationally organized first amendment day activity with likeminded partners. Think GoRed day. It's something that RTDNA could take the lead on.*
- *Is it possible to set up more networking/ discussion/ brain storming opportunities?*
- *Provide built in networking relationships - radio board members could meet. TV could meet. Mini-networking sessions could then be used for programming ideas.*

### **Identifying and Electing the Right Leaders –**

- *I've seen some pretty amazing committee work being done this term. I think it's about identifying leaders within the board who will keep the missions moving forward and keep their teams accountable.*

### **Discussions on Strategic Opportunities**

- *This is where the "open conversation around identifying future issues and opportunities" referenced above needs to happen. Given the fact that we have just a few meetings a year and that we're typically on a tight schedule of what we need to accomplish, the regularly scheduled board meetings aren't the place to have an open, wide-ranging discussion about what we could or should be doing. We have a "moonshot" committee that meets infrequently and doesn't seem to have clear goals or an agenda. It would be good to organize a "retreat" or open meeting some time built around different topics (how to make conventions better, issues we ought to tackle in the future, etc...) That way, people can pick and choose the topics of conversation they're interested in and can come up with more solid ideas or proposals. This beats an amorphous "what's the future of journalism/RTDNA"*

*meeting where the subjects are vague, the practical ideas few, and which easily becomes a large, boring meeting that is often sidetracked. The committee structure allows for this to an extent - but I'd question how much time they have for forward-looking opportunities rather than talking about the agenda that's at hand. The retreat held many years ago seems to have been fruitful. Perhaps if we build an extra day into the spring/FAD meeting, we can do it once a year without imposing too much of an additional burden on everyone's time. There's no time to do this around the convention (which is already busy and a 2-4 day commitment), no one has time or wants to do it around our December meeting, and if we did it in conjunction with FAD, it doesn't add another trip to our schedules. It's good to brainstorm and to have to think and talk about ideas without a time limit (which is why board meetings aren't the place for this kind of thing). Perhaps interested board members could give short "TED talks" on ideas or themes that interest them to spark discussion.*

**At the end of your term of service, what experiences and accomplishments will indicate that your board service was successful?**

**Positively Impacting Journalism—**

- *The time spent on the board will be successful because of the voice lent to discussions on promoting our profession and protecting our rights of free press.*
- *Tangible work product from committee work - new programs, policies, resources to share with members.*
- *Making a difference to help news leaders improve the credibility of journalism in America.*
- *Making journalism better and protecting journalism and journalists,*
- *That RTDNA is out front in being a champion for the role journalists play in our democracy.*
- *Contributions to recommendations for best practices in newsrooms.*
- *Journalism is protected and strong. We offered trainings that helped news leaders and newsrooms expand into areas that will well-position them for the future.*

**Improving RTDNA –**

- *Our success will be measured by the power and prominence of the organization, the influence we achieve and how we use it.*
- *That we can advance the mission, make the organization more valuable and top of mind for all news leaders.*
- *I'd want to know whether we have eliminated practices that were obviously outdated, are we intentionally more inclusive as an organization.*
- *For me, signs of success include higher board engagement, increased membership, making at least one tangible impact as it pertains to each pillar.*
- *Making the organization better and finding its focus.*

**Value to Membership and Increased Membership –**

- *If the members in my region felt I/the organization was responsive to their needs.*
- *Increased RTDNA membership!*
- *I would hope it would be that the members in my region felt their voice was valued. Also, that RTDNA became even more of an industry voice to the "boots on the ground" employees in our industry.*

**Personal Reasons –**

- *I'm proud of my contribution to the board and hope others think it has been successful. I'm still willing to contribute more.*
- *The collaboration and connections made with my colleagues in the business. Learning and growth from the board experience.*

## Appendix C: Interview Responses

**The RTDNA Mission is "to promote and protect responsible journalism."**

**What governance culture (behaviors, processes, structures or principles) would you expect from a modern, future oriented, 21st century membership organization with this mission?**

### **Current Structure and Implications –**

- *The current structure makes sense in terms of an executive body that oversees the association and to have a subcommittee structure for ideas, goals, strategies.*
- *Single purpose mission is vital – everyone who is a part of it needs to be focused on our purpose. What is our goal as an organization? Budget – task force – events – all focused on the mission statement.*

### **Regional Composition –**

- *Because the board is geographical we sometimes get lucky but this has a few impacts. In the past, we have not been diverse because we didn't seek it but we are doing this now. We are limited to whoever from the region applies. It can create a situation that is company heavy (TEGNA example – 5 news directors who run and win – then it is the question of who we are missing). Notion of we've always done it this way.*
- *Geographic set-up; we have warm bodies from a region, but it skews representation on the board. TV, Radio, Digital – but traditional makeup of membership lacks the digital voice, small markets who are serving small communities and large network markets or companies.*

### **Skills Based Board –**

- *More in favor of selecting a skills-based board and helpful if they are given geographic areas to keep in touch with. The main benefit from the traditional structure that you create a grouping that you engage with.*
- *I would like us to look at stakeholders in industry and maybe make it a skills-based division of board. (Board Survey)*

### **Consequences of an Oversized Board –**

- *We are a big board this at times makes progress difficult. We could pair down.*
- *We need to be strategic getting away from filling spots just to fill spots.*
- *I would expect to see a smaller more focused board comprised of active and engaged members that can set the policies and goals of the organization.*

### **Nimble and Reactive –**

- *Governance structure that is more nimble and reactive. This our full-time job. Most board members have busy jobs, getting meetings scheduled can be difficult. There have been missed opportunities or actions that should/could've been taken but by the time it gets to discussion the time has passed. This*

*is a factor of having a small dedicated staff – we are trying to be largest association representing our members so we rely on the board.*

- *Journalism is a living breathing thing – the news is news but the experiences of the journalists are changing day to day. A fully functioning board should be nimble and engaged.*
- *Be nimble, journalism is moving target – what and who is journalist changes daily/hourly depending on who is in the situation.*
- *We get very much stuck in the way it has always been - the way we have always done it.*

#### **Accountability and Participation –**

- *Board is way too big hard to hold everyone accountable. Engagement comes from the same people and vice-versa the same people don't engage.*
- *Behaviors – outward passion and desire for participation.*
- *Board members stay active.*
- *Some people work and others don't. Those who don't work try to come in at the 11th hour to change things, which is frustrating.*
- *Any structure is only as good as the people, their commitment to the organization (there is a lack).*

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Amendment –**

- *We have set up a current structure where staff and board meet confluence where I think we have created a structure where the figurehead of our first amendment efforts are out there publicly - and I wonder how much of our current structure feeds into that.*
- *Those on the governance board would advocate for free speech. Look for areas where journalism is threatened and thwart these efforts. Recognize, protect and train excellent responsible journalism.*
- *We must continue to be an organization that is fighting for journalists and making our voices front and center on a bunch of issues (voice of the first amendment). We need to embrace this to remain modern - the next generation isn't joining just to say the join.*

#### **Ethics –**

- *As a journalism organization, we should stick to the ethics we promote to members.*
- *A strong code of ethics, in terms of how the association is run and the board members operate. You would hope the board can leave their affiliations at the door, advocate for the industry but ultimately as a board member they are working for the betterment of the industry as a whole even if it's in conflict with their company. Often what's best for the industry isn't best for their company.*
- *Would like to see the ethics committee be more active in setting and updating policies. Landscape changes i.e. social media, huge push from younger folks to keep it real on social media – mistake, will put RTDNA on the path to be more irrelevant.*

#### **Diversity –**

- *We made progress in last few years but there is more to do, this is an ongoing exercise.*
- *Bring everyone into the tent – diverse voices are crucial.*
- *A board that is diverse experiences and opinions.*

#### **Membership Needs, Engagement, and Communication –**

---

- *There is a lack of engagement from membership. Our membership doesn't have a reason or need to reach RTDNA unless there is an issue with their Murrow award submissions. Main touch points are training at convention, Murrow awards and 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment dinner. There could be more engagement.*
- *We can't grow the membership if we aren't appealing to and learning from our members. The Board needs to know and understand what the membership needs and wants. We need a group of individuals who are interested in being highly engaged with members. Both in their lane in the industry, and reaching out to different groups. Board members need to make sure they hear different aspects in the industry.*
- *We need to understand what our members - including the new ones - expect about being a member.*

#### **Innovative –**

- *We have had status quo committees, need to take a fresh look at day-to-day workings of governance and board. Making sure we are staying current.*
- *Rooted in tradition but need evolution. Willingness and flexibility/ability to evolve with the times.*

#### **Open and Productive Communication –**

- *Open dialogue, we can disagree but we need to communicate. There needs to be a safe space for those who diverge on opinions. We've become a world not willing to listen to each other but we lose sight of our commonalities. Our organization needs to find ways to leave politics, race, creed, etc. at the door.*
- *Open to different viewpoints, but moves toward resolution without denigrating those who disagree with the winning.*

#### **Mission, Vision, Board and Staff –**

- *Leave staff alone to carry out the vision and mission (not suggesting we have this in the current board).*
- *Staff isn't in the trenches of the industry. Some committees and working groups are having discussion that give assoc. a perspective that inform program topics, challenges, resources needed, experiences people are looking for. Board should do strategic thinking (come a long way from minutia but not enough). Decision making goes to board of directors by default/always done this way.*
- *RTDNA could do more to communicate, in different ways and spaces, the value of journalism, facts, truth, contextual reports and storytelling. Government structure isn't poised for this – could start a task force. People confuse commentary for news.*

#### **Financial Stability –**

- *We have done a good job remaining financially sound.*

#### **Transparency in Governance –**

- *We meet, make decisions, and only publicize information when it impacts membership, we could do more.*

**We would like to talk about RTDNA governance overall, as defined above, and how it is positioned to achieve this mission – where does it excel, where are there gaps, and where are there any bottlenecks or disconnects?**

### Excel

#### **Voice of the 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment –**

- *An excellent tool, should be more than task force, a permanent fixture.*
- *Voice of first amendment is spectacular, great growth potential – rights of journalists. (1st amendment, legislation, protected, right to gather info is unfettered). Lots of future development opportunity.*
- *Excel at voice of 1st amendment task force, board has pressured Dan to expand this area of the mission – he’s done a good job autonomously.*
- *It is good that the Executive’s time is now a greater focus on representing press freedom externally. He is advocating and being a vocal voice for first amendment issues. We have been able to truly become the preeminent press freedom association in the country.*
- *ED is very active advocating for press freedoms – if he hears about them he dives in and helps, it’s the responsibility of Regional Director to make sure press threats are brought to the ED.*

#### **Staff –**

- *Staff is wonderful.*
- *Developing a board/staff collaborative relationship that didn’t exist previously.*
- *Autonomy that we provide our ED is a good thing.*

#### **Awards and Recognition –**

- *Recognizing outstanding journalism and journalists*
- *Serves on Murrow, first time in a long time they are addressing modernizing their contest. Starting to pull the organization into the future.*

#### **Regional Representation –**

- *Lots of regions represented. It’s good to have people all over with lots of coverage, and minimal gaps where board members are located.*

#### **Outreach –**

- *Outreach, public persona, could be better but moving in the right direction.*

#### **Executive Committee –**

- *Executive Committee moves fast, quickly and engaged.*

### Bottlenecks:

#### **Oversized Board –**

---



- *Too many people on the board – attempt to shrink board a few years ago and failed.*
- *The board is large, there are a lot of voices which is good for perspective but there are a lot of places where a lot of these voices want the organization involved. They have trouble taking their journalist hat off and putting association hat on. It is difficult to keep wrangling all those perspectives all the time.*
- *We need a smaller board than we are now.*
- *The size of board makes conversation is unwieldy.*
- *The biggest thing is composed of news directors as board members who are overwhelmingly busy with full-time jobs. Building coalitions, finding consensus, making decisions, finding times that work for everyone is challenging as they run newsrooms nationally.*

### **Participation and Meetings –**

- *When you meet face to face there is an obligation that people prep, the lack of this leads to pieces falling off.*
- *There are people who work and those who don't. It is difficult to convene with a large board.*
- *It is difficult to always gather all the leaders when we need them as well.*
- *There are people who serve to just be busy – some just want position of power and influence, lack participation and contributions.*
- *Structure of board meetings – less reporting focused, more strategic discussion.*
- *Some board members are passive but the demand of rigorous day jobs makes it difficult to ask for more.*
- *You need to come prepared. Not just listen only, you need to contribute, be thoughtful, side conversations, outside consultation with others for perspectives.*

### **Committee Composition –**

- *Committees have been comprised of board members*

### **Onboarding New Board Members –**

- *There are veteran members who follow the way it's always been, but they are not teaching new members how to approach their time on the board. New board members might not be clear on how the work is set to be done – we need to onboard and educate them so their new, diverse voices are represented and heard. Some rules are in place to be efficient but sometimes they stifle good conversation.*
- *Board members don't come from association world, they don't know best practices – should we defer to Tara for insights.*

### Gaps:

### **DEI –**

- *Efforts to get rid of diversity committee, change name to DEI – give them a seat at every board meeting. If sincere in picking best candidates, this should be a part of the organization in a permeant way.*
- *We are not focused on getting different levels of the industry involved in our organization now. We just did a Murrow award task force, there were appointments but a call for more diversity was made*

*in hindsight. Part of the problem is that our current Board doesn't have the diverse representation (of discipline, etc.) that it needs for the broad considerations needed.*

### **Board Composition and Regional Structure –**

- *Is this the best structure upon which our leadership should be based? Is there an opportunity in leadership to have more consideration than just the geographic one? Disciplinary and other definitions of diversity. If we had a greater diversity in leadership, this could be a more interconnected organization.*
- *Regional representation was important at the time when you needed them there to connect the regions to the organization. Now it is easier to connect with others around the country. Right now, we don't need the same kind of regional directors. The Murrow Awards are based off regions - how would this impact that?*
- *Board needs appropriate representatives of the industry – large market and small market managers, radio, digital, television, and corporate pieces of the industry represented. We have been governed and elected by region, which makes sense given history but we didn't have ease of communication we have now. We need a board that represents factors in the business.*
- *Using geographic region model as the only way to bring diversity is a weakness. Need a balance between geographic representation and diversity of genders, ethnicity, talents, industry sectors, etc. that reflect our membership. You are leaving talented people on the cutting room floor because someone has been in the position and does a good job. You could have 2 talented people from a region - not to make the board larger but more robust.*
- *Examine the composition of the board and asses if there are enough radio managers, digital, too many TV manager, do we have corporate and academia. Engage a more representative group of leaders.*
- *Regional representation is still appreciated – trick is making sure there are active and engaged regional directors best to advocate, train, testify and protect.*

### **Training –**

- *Training is sporadic, period of providing great training (virtual/in-person) and then none. Historically securing grants from huge organizations that was allocated for training – we don't have the staff member who was championing this, and there is a lack of organizations willing to give money for journalism training.*

### **Membership –**

- *Do they know what we do and what we do for them?*
- *Who are we educating? How are we educating? Who are we placing our focus on? This can be informed by membership structure and how we are offering opportunities.*
- *How are we keeping the organization alive? We need to be a recruiter – we do this through training.*

### Disconnects –

#### **Limited Staff and Resources –**

- *We have great ideas but no staff to execute. We can't do everything – focus on what we can do well, work on fundraising to afford more staffing to execute programs that meet our standards.*

- *Despite the challenges of the past two years, we have been able to take the leadership role in society back. However, we have been challenged internally because of resource and circumstance.*
- *We need to listen to staff when they say we don't have capabilities to do XYZ so we are realistic. RTDNA always tries to do everything but cannot – pick the lane we want to influence in journalism.*

#### **Chair Structure –**

- *Chair seems to hold all the power in the organization but isn't fully knowledgeable about the workings. Changing chairs yearly means goals change annually. How do you maintain continuity or really accomplish things in a timely fashion without constant course correction? Why does the head of the association have less voice and authority in setting the plan and the goals? RTDNA should set direction and the chair leads the charge.*
- *Lot of trust is put in the Chair, not a lot of micromanaging*
- *We are blessed this year by having an engaged and energetic, visionary Chair of the Board. This hasn't always been the case. There have been Chairs who have not had the time to be an active leader, to establish a broad vision and help carry it out. Part of this is in the face of societal upheaval (COVID, race relations as examples).*
- *Traditionally placed power in Chair – slows progress because there are pre-conversations and they seek council.*

#### **Institutional Knowledge and New Voices –**

- *We benefit from wisdom of people who are around but will hand over the reins. New personalities who are exerting new organization influences, leading committees. 2-3 brand new members who are running committees – refreshing not just the old guard way to wait turn.*
- *Whatever system is in place that allows constantly re-elected board members is an issue. There was a culture that if you weren't on the board you couldn't participate. There needs to be fresh voices and insight when it comes to decision making.*

#### **Talent Dependent –**

- *Consistency of efforts/longevity is based on who is on the board and what talents they bring. Example of a board member who is active in providing webinars, if they leave there will be a gap.*
- *Organizations work well when recognizing smart, passion productive people and puts them in places to move in positive ways.*

#### **Voting Process –**

- *Wish there was a way to enhance process of committees bring their work to the executive committee for a vote. People spend time and effort for something that could be declined, how can they communicate more upfront to ensure they are presenting best proposal. EC or board should have full knowledge/documentation of the issue prior to a meeting where there is a vote.*
- *If a committee is doing great deal of work and needs approval by board, waiting for the next board meeting to get approval slows process. Awards committee would likely be most frustrated by this because it can be a year before some of these changes can take place.*

### Who does RTDNA represent –

- *What our name is now and what it used to be, the board is news directors – the gap between a true org that reps radio/tv/digital news as a whole and one that reps news directors at TV and Radio stations. Controversy – MMJ multimedia journalist, entry-level reporters working, mentions WV incident... not well-positioned to speak for industry because most news directors are hiring them and sending on assignment. Companies for whom the news directors work MMJs are a big part of the model as inexpensive labor. Tough to be impartial as an advocate for the industry as a whole due to inherent conflict of interest. Felt like they should've been a leader but couldn't. Do they convene people to talk about it? Hard to make a statement because the board is the folks putting the MMJs in those positions.*
- *They have different experiences, they are one-man bands (reporter/photographer/live shot engineer) they worry about getting it on-air, online. Would be an insightful process to figure out. EX: station in WV getting ready to do live shot gets hit by a car. RTDNA didn't do anything but could we have said what can be done for reporter safety given new economics?*

### Scholarship Funds –

- *We are giving away more scholarship money to less and less applicants.*

**Think about the relationship between the parts of RTDNA governance– including the RTDNA Board, Committees, and Task Forces. What works well about the current RTDNA structure and what might strengthen effectiveness? (Examples of areas you might consider for comment are clarity of roles, sense of shared purpose, or even quite simply, how aware the arms of governance are of each other.)**

### Committees and Task Forces –

- *The current way that the committees are composed of mainly Board is wildly limiting. Committees are an opportunity to bring in more voices at different levels and get people more engaged - a pipeline to build future leadership would be a smart move.*
- *Our committees should involve more non-Board members, members of the organization that do not sit on the Board but have known expertise. This could give us new perspectives and enhance member involvement, giving a greater sense of ownership in the direction of the organization. We need more external voices involved.*
- *Committees – evaluate and determine what we should keep or discontinue. As we do this, look at purpose and expectations of these committee members. The trust working group has good leadership. Participants were unabashed about throwing every idea they have out there and they have a great plan of attack.*
- *Awards Task Force – took a hard look at how we handle awards, amazing to be a part of it. It was organized and ran well by staff. Tara kept on track, funneled thinking to the right direction, kept us strategic.*
- *Standing committees aren't always effective, downfall to those involved due to feeling undervalued.*

- *When it comes to committees, the biggest surprise is that the committees are made up of Board members. We didn't have outside voices really. We have been trying to bring new voices into committees and task forces - but it isn't as open as it could or should be.*
- *Sometimes committees are created and then lag a year before something is done, which creates problems for the committee or association chair. The chair rises to position and has their own agenda and focus. Some chairs are more aggressive about making sure they meet. This isn't incorporated into structure, its personality dependent.*
- *We should take another look at our committee structure. Currently, every year the Chair has the opportunity to recalibrate the Committee structure and appoint task forces. Only the Nominations Committee are mentioned in the by-laws - all the others have been created over time or are currently created for today's issues. I think the current structure addresses today's issues, but I think of our two main task forces (trust and governance). The Trust TF has moved with lightning speed. In the process of their speed, the outcome coming to the Board is strong but it made the process bumpy at times. The dependency is who leads the Task Forces and the committees and how engaged they are.*

#### **Staff –**

- *Tara's title isn't accurate – she has most association experience, understanding of journalism, should have more clout and a voice. People have been listening to her more, there is a healthy understanding of her value.*
- *Kudos to Tara/Alison who champion these programs.*
- *The basic structure is having a staff that is well-informed, passionate, and commitment to the mission of RTDNA.*
- *Running things through Tara feels like it slows process because she's one person. RTDNA has improved dramatically since she joined – understands associations, different journalism associations.*
- *Interested to see how Michael does with communications – we are doing great things for membership but no one is aware.*
- *The staff at RTDNA is as excellent as possible, we are seeing that with our recruitment. Dan and Tara have started a great partnership. He's doing legislation and being the face and she is maintaining the day-to-day strategy and focus.*
- *Staff is amazing, a continuous thread.*

#### **Oversized Board –**

- *The board isn't aware of all the committees and their activities.*
- *Shrink the board.*
- *We are working in an organization where we have a large board, and they are in on every decision. Is there a way that we can streamline responsibilities, utilizing committees and even staff, that can help the Board function at a higher, strategic level without them micromanaging every decision?*
- *The board isn't aware of all the committees (officers and EC are) another function of the large size of board.*
- *With 25 people on the board its hard.*
- *Board is too large and doesn't allow for decision making that garners buy-in...*
- *We need fewer elected Board members to run more efficiently. The officer structure of the Board is good. The size of the Board is unwieldy - 25 members including 5 officers. A Board of 9-12 would be a good number to have - if we eliminated the regional director positions. It exists when geographical regions were needed for timely communications between the Board and members - we now can*

*communicate directly. This shift needs proper communication, how the 14 regional director positions were eliminated, messaging it that we are doing this to be more inclusive.*

- *There is a group of past leaders that for many years were ignored and then became a feedback loop that was largely based around criticism of current practice. Efforts have been made to include their input and feedback recently.*

#### **Communication –**

- *Communication of the staff and chair is very good. If you don't read emails you aren't informed. Zoom has made communication easier – more thorough conversations.*
- *Knew nothing as a member. Doesn't know exactly what's going on, the communication isn't here.*
- *Alison has done a good job insisting that RD needs to reach membership by doing 5 members reach outs once a month to stay on pulse and inform.*
- *Behind in communication to membership. Incremental improvements on newsletter, website – social presence lacks. Members don't know what we do besides Murrow Awards or how we benefit them.*
- *Likes to use of Boardable, it helps streamline as to not overwhelm email threads.*
- *Internal communication could be improved.*
- *Charge to every committee to create content for the website – safety writes/shoots/records content about safety and security.*

#### **Engagement –**

- *The flaw is you have a few people participating in a lot of committees – there are too many people not doing enough.*
- *We need passion from the board – we need to make sure that when they commit they engage and participate.*
- *Like any organization, our Board has two or three cliques of Board members and officers that are interested in accomplishing certain items or doing things in a certain way. The pet projects that arise of the Board that eat up staff time without being tied to the strongest advancement of mission. It is well intentioned, but not consistent with what we have identified as a priority.*

#### **Trust and Decision Making –**

- *Government discussion before, ideas on whiteboards but nothing was done – no one was empowered to make changes suggested. Excited by possibilities. We have a shared purpose, agree with goals, great interaction considering varied disciplines.*
- *Need to empower smart people and trust them, not efficient to have distrust.*
- *Board needed to hear more about what was going to be asked of them, they have good marching orders. RTDNA can succeed when the expectations are set at the beginning.*

#### **Open Dialogue and Healthy Dissent –**

- *Arduous process of deciding to hold in-person conferences/banquets. There needs to be respect for divergent viewpoints.*
- *End of year last year voting for in-person events. The votes were split – there were a lot of differing opinions and people didn't want to hear the other side. You need to be able to express dissenting opinions but not made to feel bad – and this was the experience, because of which some said they wanted to discontinue board service.*

- *Votes to hold in-person conference and gala – will there be negative fallout? Surprised that some voted to cancel when there was commitment to attendance, likely motivated because they weren't planning on going.*

#### **Executive Committee –**

- *At the Board level there are feelings around Executive Committee having a bit too much power and not seeking outside opinions (decisions around events/COVID). EC is the right size to make decisions and have conversations at strategic level.*
- *The EC operates very effectively and timely. Goes to show that a smaller board could do this.*

#### **Right people in the right places –**

- *A credit to the leaders doing a good job in assigning positions of responsibility. Pick the right people to be engaged and passionate leaders of Task Forces and Committees to get the work done.*

#### **General Membership –**

- *If you aren't on the Board or a direct report, you aren't in tune with what is going on with the organization (outside of Murrow entries). We need to utilize all the people we bring on in a better way. Committee and volunteering is the best way to get people in tune with the organization. Right now we are not getting enough varied voices and feedback.*

#### **Geographic Board Composition –**

- *We have a geographic requirement to be on the board that is no longer needed. Makes nomination process cumbersome. There are other things that are more important, diverse representation and representation of talents – not who is the best person in FL or GA...*

#### **Term Limit –**

- *In favor of 3 year officer term, enough turnover on Board, this commitment provides continuity. 1st year is prep: participate, pay attention, be on EC, work with staff. Being on the foundation gives opportunity to continue to be influential, tie up loose ends.*
- *Term limits for officers. (governance survey)*
- *Have term limits. Until recently there were a few people who served on the board for several decades. In fact, that may still be true. (governance survey)*

### **How would you describe the differentiated roles of the Board, and the Committees/Task Forces?**

#### **Committees –**

- *Putting the committees/task force together is a puzzle, need voices but can't assign them everywhere. We must be smarter about committees and task forces – roll back the number of committees we focus on.*

- *Lots of interplays – how are ethics and safety not related to education? How is ethics not related to safety and security? The realization that we are all a part of the same ecosystem, everyone wants to find the effective lane for their own committee work.*
- *Lots of committees effective but there are disengaged members who are there to fill out the committee – those who are engaged are spread thin.*
- *Committees exist to deal with ongoing projects or issues for the org. They can be nimbler and to be a guide so things aren't lost. More granular, talk to small groups.*
- *Standing committees aren't necessarily doing things to support mission.*

#### **Task Forces –**

- *The Task Force looks for a specific place of focus, identifying a Board member with a greater expertise and then others who may be interested. Committee/TF push Board agenda ahead.*
- *Task forces address specific question or issue – can exist for a finite amount of time, specific recommendation that it take to board which board can adopt or amend i.e. Governance – tried at board level but cumbersome and no action items.*
- *Working groups are most effective, wellness and diversity working groups. There were conversations that staff were included in and how to address from programing perspective/resources. Great feedback from staff and that they felt valued, one of the most meaningful board experience. Would love to have people leave their board experience with the feeling that they contributed!*

#### **The Board –**

- *The board is more advisory and fiduciary and less participatory. Board doesn't carry out future vision role well. Board is consistent, CYA, dotting I's – only meets 4 times a year.*
- *In a smaller reduced board capacity with people who are thinking about the future, they could meet more frequently (shorter meetings that allows focused/strategic discussions).*

#### **Executive Committee –**

- *Main decisions makers meeting monthly, functional rather than strategic (legal, financial, events).*
- *People on the EC work hard and are dedicated, some on the board are not.*

#### **Board Participation and Accountability –**

- *Some participate and some mail it in. Consistently gets talking point from certain board members and nothing from others. Some are here because it looks good on their resume and others who are there due to passion.*
- *In general, we haven't done a great job making sure that people do their part. Being a part of the board is a resume builder, but don't stop there. Regional directors would give reports. There isn't accountability for people with their role and what they should do.*
- *Regional directors have set role, at large need to be assigned set duties. As trustee, there are no set duties – I'm just trying to sell the organization to people.*
- *At large could be removed... their roles aren't clearly defined – structure that says at large must head X committee.*
- *There can be more accountability with fewer people to manage.*

#### **Chair Terms –**

---



- *The change of the Chair can change the structure and work/work flow of the committees in big swings.*

#### **Communication –**

- *Q&A for Murrow awards to submit best entry – not sure if the entirety of board knew it was happening. We can be more helpful in supporting each other, use personal social media to spread the word. We can't help each other if we don't know what's going on.*

**As you think about effective decision making, are the appropriate groups empowered to make the necessary decisions? Are there any specific bottlenecks or structural barriers to effective decision making?**

#### **Input to Decisions –**

- *Inactive board members might feel like too many decisions are being made without them.*
- *As an active board member you have input to decision making process.*
- *I am not sure the current avenues of input to governance are clear or efficient.*
- *We reach out to ask for input on the issues where we are advocating.*
- *It is hard that sometimes those making the decisions do not always wear the business of the association 'hat'.*
- *If Dan is going to speak on a controversial topic he will consult the chair – should this be a bigger 'right group' to get feedback? Delicate balance.*
- *There are times when committees look at an issue, make recommendation without regard to finance OR without regard to impact to staff. No concept of time/work/energy staff will have to spend – who will champion and what cost to other programs.*

#### **Clearer Expectations and Onboarding –**

- *The expectations of involvement for governance are not clear. Will you be expected to have a strong voice on the issues? Which issues? I am not sure folks know what they will be expected to represent on the Board.*
- *Overall, the structure is there but everyone needs to understand what that structure is and how can they best participate. As a new board member, I didn't understand my role. Lacked onboarding and training. Hope that with Tara we can see a greater opportunity here.*
- *RTDNA has several long-term board members (20+, 10+ years). New voices take time getting comfortable and they go away quickly because they feel like they lack contribution and know-how.*
- *When you have new board members, they don't understand parliamentary procedure, they need better onboarding.*

#### **Faster Decision Making –**

- *RTDNA needs a faster structure to decision making.*
- *We need to streamline the approval process and eliminate as many impediments as possible. There are times that we need to be deliberative and sometimes that we need to move quickly.*
- *This isn't their fulltime job which are demanding. If EC needs to get on a call coordinating with 6 busy people.*

### **Bylaws –**

- *The bylaws restrict who is empowered to make which decision, etc. We should take a fresh look at the bylaws and see what changes would bring us up to speed.*
- *The corporate membership structure is detrimental to the organization – given bylaws can't get the clout corporate has at RTDNA – this is a reason things are left undone.*

### **Staff –**

- *Board has given more power to smaller staff with positive impacts.*
- *Tara is effective but don't want a single point of failure. If we lose her, are the rest of the team trained up?*

### **Size of Board –**

- *Board is large and unwieldy, lag time in scheduling, email correspondence for votes.*
- *At other organization, they shrunk board and added 2 appointed positions. The benefit was we had someone on board who was expert in tech space with interesting outside perspective.*

### **Always Done This Way –**

- *There are long-standing board members who hinder progress but there is benefits from institutional knowledge.*

**As you reflect on governance communication flow, are communications between the arms of governance such that each arm understands what it needs to about the goals, direction, and activities of the others to be collectively effective?**

### **Value to Membership –**

- *When we try to sell someone on the membership, the elevator pitch isn't strong. As a board we are defending the 1st amendment despite their membership status. They are glad someone is handling it unless they need RTDNA to come to their aid. In person training was the reason to join decades ago, not a current offering.*
- *Our mission is to promote RTDNA as an influencer, not just marketing our business. ED is phenomenal and staff supporting him is great. Our organization is on top of all issues in this business.*
- *Don't do a good job of this. I think if you asked our membership what we do we do they would say the Murrow Awards. They don't understand what we do in terms of freedom of press, lobbying, etc. We don't do a good job of marketing ourselves to our membership (corporate members – talk to the same 3-4 people at a time). Market to members and potential members to show what you are doing to help journalism – financial health of RTDNA would be wonderful if this can be done. Don't publish what we fight for and our wins.*
- *From communication standpoint, would love to highlight the good work of board, and advocacy work at the ED level directly to membership. There is more than discounts on awards. We are fighting for you on the hill, our ethics committee reviews code of ethics and guidelines to ensure we are staying abreast to all changes in journalism.*

- *The more we connect what the board does to the membership to try and get them more involved would be better. Most of our membership is driven by awards due to decent discounts to enter. People join RTDNA not because they are inspired by mission but because they want to save money to submit their award entries. RTDNA may be 1600-1800 members strong but not engaged.*

#### **More Social Media Engagement –**

- *Social media should be the way we communicate, but we still send emails that go to spam – we could modernize. March 2nd and a major event is next week, is this being blasted? Lack of engagement on posts that are happening.*
- *We send weekly newsletter – what's the open rate? Need more activity on socials.*

#### **Effective Areas of Communication –**

- *Effective communication is generally around awards – email sent out drives you to enter the awards. We haven't nailed the best way to continually capture the attention of our membership throughout the year.*
- *Love the communication with membership. Staff has done a great job it looks good, feels good and represents the organization well.*

#### **Value of Corporate Membership –**

- *Would be nice if there was a quarterly brief to the right people at corporate level, here is this what we've done for you. Wear your sales hat – make phone calls to these people at specific times and recall them. Use Facebook as sales tool, friends on FB with all these people – time to call news director (I knew they were on vacation etc. personal touch). NextStar closes on new station, sending email congratulating on acquisition. Look at people who got Paul White awards – these people have money. What are we doing to cultivate them after giving them awards – we do nothing and lose potential funding.*

#### **Lack of Capacity –**

- *Lots of information that could be taking place with membership, lack of capacity to communicate. There was a time when we actively did blog posts.*

**Many organizations are also taking a fresh look at what will be needed to attract, cultivate, nominate, and select future governance leaders with the competencies, leadership qualities and range of inclusive perspectives and diversity needed for the future. What changes or trends are occurring or are on the horizon that RTDNA should consider when thinking about this topic? For example, do candidates have more or less time to contribute or do they care about different things than candidates might have cared about 20 or 30 years ago?**

#### **Diverse Perspectives –**

- *We need to look for leaders in broadcast TV news rooms, radio news rooms, we need to expand horizons in digital. We are all performing on the same platforms – who do we include in the group?*
-

*We don't have digital newspaper representation but we should. Everyone is doing digital but not traditional for RTDNA.*

- *Board now has more women, men, and radio. Black news director from Spokane ran and lost to a white female news director whose company a louder voice and money. This goes back to geographical election issue.*
- *Who do we have on the board that is localism and legislation with lawmakers – risky because as journalist you shouldn't have interactions... Who are we encouraging to join us that has expertise and relationships that we can leverage to do our best work in advocacy and legislation?*
- *You need to think about different levels in the industry and appropriate representation on governing body – you are electing a corporate person, instead of how it is done now.*
- *Board doesn't represent radio/TV/digital across the entire spectrum. Not a lot of diverse thought from different perspectives from the industry as a result. People on board have the same job in different markets and work in TV/radio. There was a name change for a reason but the board doesn't reflect that change.*
- *Need to be diverse in composition – not just white and older.*
- *The safety committee invited someone with expertise on journalism safety one way to increase the industry diversity. Invite thought leaders to committee that aren't board members.*
- *Don't just be behind decision makers. We need journalists on the front line it seems like composition only managers.*
- *Not looking at diversity of size of company, industry, ethnicity, background.*
- *We will need to extend beyond broadcast and reach out future newsroom leaders. People in the trenches benefit from our work and are who we need to pay attention to.*

#### **Incentives and Providing Value –**

- *Offer discounts, the scholarship program is underutilized.*
- *Are they here for a resume builder or to effect change?*
- *Organization must be influential and attractive for someone to want to attach themselves to it. Everything we do has to be marketed in a way that makes us stand tall so that young people say this organization fights for me, provides me with great insight as to how I can further my career. Do we offer training or exercise influence on important topics?*
- *When there are job openings at my company I go to RTDNA to see who to hire.*
- *RTDNA has to prove our worth of time – not just to members but to those who want to serve. How are we informing our decisions as to what we offer and what has value to members? What gets them to spend their money, engage with us, donate their time? If you choose to serve, how can we fill your cup – what do we offer you, how do we hit your passion points? How do we restructure board to have a topic of interest and place them where they are most passionate about?*

#### **Early Career and Young Folks –**

- *Be sincere about attracting younger members. RTDNA says they want younger, diverse members but we don't have pipelines in place. Younger people run for board seats, lose and disappear. Marketing is great for young applicants to scholarships and fellowships but what happens after we say you didn't win and apply next year. Coaching and leadership funnel opportunities are lost.*
- *Young folks are appreciative and find us necessary but it's not what they want to do with their time.*
- *Do a better job explaining why we are important. If you are 27 and see no one in your age bracket you are de-incentivized to join.*

### **Competencies Needed –**

- *Collaborative, active listening, people who allow conversation, forward-thinking. Perspective and institutional knowledge is good but hampers innovation.*
- *Consensus builders, productivity managers, diversity, we need to represent the community.*
- *They need to be willing to receive feedback – not every good idea can go someplace.*

### **Challenges and Weaknesses –**

- *If we only have opportunities for 2-3 at large, they wait on the sidelines waiting.*
- *Our industry is rooted in principles of democracy. Nomination as opposed to anyone on ballot and straight vote, this needs handled carefully.*
- *It would be healthier if we had term limits. Does this deter new leaders from running/getting involved.*

### **Culture Shifts –**

- *In the past, networking opportunities took place at the numerous in-person events which benefited individual careers. It was a different culture, lots of money on travel, sponsorship at events, networks would spend money on conventions. Now news culture is immediate, managers have more direct reports, higher expectations. Networking takes place with own personal brands, building relationships on twitter and not at conferences.*
- *20-30 years ago, everyone thought it was a wonderful career, now folks hate it. We are losing people in the industry every day.*

**Lack of Time –** Was mentioned 2 times as a huge factor to service.

### **Ensuring New Perspectives and Voices –**

- *If we are going to continue to have contested elections for regional seats, how do we ensure that there are new perspectives and voices?*

### **Growing Interest in RTDNA –**

- *There is a growing interest in the organization so more volunteers should not be a problem.*

### **Tribalism –**

- *There is a trend to not be part of groups because you don't need a group to do what you want.*

**Thinking of future volunteers: What do you believe will be the most effective ways of garnering their interest in and willingness to serve? Are there currently any possible detractors you can think of that would discourage them from serving?**

### **Opportunities for Involvement –**

- *We get membership because of the Murrow awards. How many members do more than this? Read articles? Follow on social media? Volunteering for a committee?*
  - *We are an association driven by Murrow Awards. (Governance Survey)*
-

- *How are we proactively creating more opportunities for volunteers to get involved? Task Forces, smaller ways? And, yes, the committees too.*
- *As long as the biggest invitation to volunteer is through board it will be hard to bring fresh faces. Our virtues and mission statement are strong but there aren't avenues to get involved and those available have significant barriers.*
- *Open the opportunity for people to get involved and not be passive members. We need a mechanism to say this is a voice that we need at the table.*
- *We need effective communication with members – are we regularly communicating enough with members that we encourage them to participate? We need to think more about how to leverage the connections and networks we have so we can hand select folks to make the elevator pitch to join.*

### **Representation and Value –**

- *Are they serving with either self-interest or to give back? Those who give back are further along in their careers. What are their pain points and do they think we can make a difference for them? Market RTDNA to show its effective and making a difference, this attracts people who want to give back or be involved because the work is appealing and impactful.*
- *There is always a risk if the top leadership is not effective. Also, if the leadership reverts to a cliquish network, it would be tremendously detrimental. We have to be active in ensuring our Board is diverse.*
- *They see you are protecting journalism and that is a plus. Showcase representation so they think 'that's a great thing! I want to be involved in that'.*
- *People hear from the chair, not the board – not a lot of ways to engage them. This hurts the funnel, members aren't seeing the people making decisions. When we want them to be leadership, they don't see themselves represented on the board. Board is cliquish and closed off from general membership.*

### **Career Enrichment –**

- *Providing services to members that will help them build their career is more incentive than resume builder. Consider an editor wants to be news director, does RTDNA give them a path/networking/critical thinking skills to help them achieve goals? More we do to make better news leaders we will make them leaders in our organization. Do a good job they return and spread the gospel.*
- *People want to be heard, that their ideas and concerns matter.*
- *If we don't evolve in ways we want to quickly, they are going to see us as dated, stale, legacy organization that is stuck in the past. Awards or advocacy for press freedom are a resume builders among journalists.*

### **Company Support –**

- *Line on the resume isn't as impressive as it used to be, not because RTDNA lost prestige – bosses aren't looking for that type of network.*
- *How do you reach these people? Look to companies for people for leadership. As part of your membership we hope you would encourage members of your company to participate.*

### **Call for Support –**

- *I don't think this is a problem - when there was a call put out in error, there was a quick response of volunteer interest. This is a potential untapped resource that we should look to get involved.*
- *We need to take a people first approach and look to opportunities with face-to-face meetings. We have 3 major events yearly – how are we showcasing our work and enticing these folks? At FAD you are in front of 200 strong, corporate and individual members. How are we putting the call to action out there?*

#### **Detractors to Service –**

- *Time commitment, doesn't need to feel like another full-time job. By setting the expectations and providing a scope of what the job will look like will set someone up for success and provide them with a glimpse of what contributions they can make.*

#### **Who Can Serve –**

- *We should look at who is allowed to serve? Is there a pervasive feeling that you can't serve if you are not at a specific echelon or career milestone? Bringing together a different range of expertise and tenure will enhance our work. Think about the younger voices we are missing because they might not expect a seat at the table.*

### **As you reflect on the current systems of Nominations and Selection throughout RTDNA, what do you believe works well and what could be strengthened?**

#### **Getting Candidates –**

- *We need to identify qualified people early on, track and engage them.*
- *Trouble getting people to run, we make calls and see who wants to get involved.*
- *Worry that the pool is too small, self-selected, or we need to go out and attract. We need to do a better job of enticing folks to serve. Explain clearly what the work will look like and what they get out of their service.*
- *Recruiting to run is difficult, what's the incentive? We ask for work, financial contributions, and for them to attend events that their station won't pay for it.*
- *Not enough people run. It ends up being someone on the board to seek more nominations.*
- *No funnel to identify people and make them feel comfortable in the governance space before jumping into a Board role. They are often direct recruit from the person they are replacing, or someone who has no experience in the association. A new person who is there for two meetings and feels uncomfortable sharing ideas.*

#### **Company Support –**

- *If someone up from one station group is up for election, a company will add 50 more members to put their company's representative on the Board to 'buy' a seat. Then the station group can say they have representatives on the Board of RTDNA. How do we prevent purchasing Board seats if we are allowing companies to buy seats?*
- *Problem is you need to have a company that supports you being on the board, the amount of trips time taken from running their newsroom.*

- *Past election, a few competitive races – one the weight of parent company creating ads for social media. When you go against big TV corporation and you are just someone who wants to make a difference that's challenging.*

#### **Nominations –**

- *Easier for board to nominate rather than hold an election – helps diversify the board.*
- *It is very opaque - hard for me to imagine someone outside the organization knowing how it works - or even those inside. It feels messy with floor nominations, etc.*

#### **Old Systems –**

- *Used to have appointed state coordinators would become regional director by-election and move up.*
- *We used to have a state reps - should we have levels of engagement leading up to a board position so they can better understand the commitment of being on a Board?*

#### **Nominations Committee –**

- *Our nomination and recruiting system for Board and officer positions can work well when we have an engaged and energetic Nominations Committee. It is Chaired by the Immediate Past Chair, has 2-3 additional Board members appointed by current Chair. The last few years we have been doing an open call for nominations but prior to that it was not done. It was an old boys/girls network but its improving. We have gotten a more robust, diverse selection of candidates. We have more diversity in many categories than we had in previous years. This shifted as a mandate from past few Chairs but this is something that could regress in the current structure.*

#### **Ways to Participate –**

- *A smaller, manageable board that can devote the time and recruit a 2nd tier of participants who can engage but at a lower level. With RTDNA's current structure there are no opportunities to participate unless on board.*

### **Any thoughts on how the arms of governance embody a commitment to diversity and inclusivity and any places for growth?**

#### **True Commitment to Diversity –**

- *We wave the flag and have done well bringing fresh new faces. This is a long-term commitment that needs actively pursued. Diversity is more than slogan or workshop, it is a commitment in news coverage, in our staff and board.*
- *We need to be more deliberate – in the last 2-3 years we've acknowledged. Careful not to just check a box on DEI. We need a diverse board, staff, and be more representative of the membership.*
- *I've been vocal that RTDNA needs to recruit diverse members to the board. We need to have more conversations about this, it needs addressed because we all want this but it gets put in the rear view to other progress.*
- *This is strongest when the leadership of the organization carries the voice for this as a priority. This has to continue to be a priority for the composition of the Board and how we serve our members.*
- *We need diverse representation on the board. We can do better but racial diversity is there.*



- *Change the Diversity to DEI Committee and give it a bigger seat at the table. Find someone passionate to chair it.*

#### **Diversity as a priority in nominations and recruiting –**

- *We need to have a priority of diverse representation when it comes to nominations - and it has to be natural and of value. It cannot be tokenism.*
- *Diversity needs to be a pillar in recruiting members, board members, anyone. Diversity needs to come at all levels, we are better than we were but there is always room to grow.*
- *Could be a board that has a slot for minorities groups, but don't want a tokenism situation.*
- *It has to be less tokenistic in approach and more holistic – it needs embedded in all we do.*

#### **Industry Diversity –**

- *There is no governing body that embodies the radio, TV, and digital news – it embodies news directors of radio/TV stations. This leaves out a broad swath of people. Invite people to committees, reserve spots on the board for specific roles in a newsroom. Who is a part of the industry that doesn't have a voice here?*
- *We need a governance group or committee that is set up with the mission of RTDNA in mind, but not based on location or membership numbers. We need to look more at a targeted decision so we have a diverse group including aspects of industry, race and ethnicity, gender.*
- *RTDNA could talk about the need for diversity in the industry as much as we talk about ethics. No real diversity to speak of on staff everyone is white, turnover is slow – easier to diversify the board.*

#### **Black Journalist Perspectives –**

- *Black journalists thought RTDNA was meant for white folks. NABJ are a very well run organization with a different mission than ours. There isn't a focus on partnering with them, but we could explore that.*
- *Yvonne, a Black candidate, lost the election despite wanting to be on the board, it was a lost opportunity.*
- *It's a fact in our industry that Black and White journalists have different experiences, radio/news journalists have different experiences.*

#### **Best Practices to Ensure Diversity –**

- *What is the best practice for RTDNA to ensure diversity in the election process? If you are just electing randomly, you won't have diversity.*
- *What about a policy that says we need a minority rep for a certain % of board, if not we appoint them.*
- *Do membership orgs require a full member vote for board members? Smaller committee that selects/elects board members?*

#### **Representation –**

- *Our business is wanting in gender and minorities in leadership positions. News business is in a crisis. We are seeing diminished viewership and consumer participations. One way out of this is for consumers to see themselves in those reporting.*
- *"No one looks like me who is serving." People look at board and don't want to spend their time there.*

- *Composition of board regionally is an issue. Yes, there are different sized markets and needs, but if you pick the right people you can have someone who can speak to the broader issues not just what's happening in Utah.*

#### **New Faces –**

- *It is a problem when we rely on the same person to be in the same positions year after year.*
- *Lacking in this area but its acknowledged – not just ethnicity and race but in background.*

#### **Challenges –**

- *They can only join committees but the committees aren't doing anything or they don't feel comfortable. This is because committees are board members and its intimidating, a big issue.*

### **If you could give RTDNA one piece of advice as it considers strengthening its governance for an even more effective future, what would that advice be?**

#### **Diversity of Perspectives –**

- *Ensuring the people on the Board represent our industry in diverse ways (racial, ethnic, types of new media, types of companies).*
- *Think more about who RTDNA represents and look at who doesn't have a seat on the board and figure out how to get them there.*
- *Look at the name of RTDNA and ensure there is a fair split on board between Radio, TV and Digital.*
- *Widening the umbrella and not filling open slots in a traditional way. Consider how to bring more diverse voices into the tent. Consider the best compositions – you could add 2 student members, 2 academic etc.*
- *We need the ability to bring the right people to the table for the conversations RTDNA needs to have about future of Journalism. Its unpredictable, in flux, and faces serious challenges.*

#### **Regional Model –**

- *If we were to eliminate regional director positions, we would resolve some of the turnover issues. Is there a distinct role regional directors play and do they need to be on the Board to do so?*
- *We can't structure the board based on formula of geography but we also can't alienate them. Find a way they can play into the larger governance. Could there be a 16-region task force that works alongside the board?*
- *I like the regional director structure or you lose the region-specific issues.*
- *Likes that the board is geographically driven – learns about issues in the Midwest, beneficial to know that these issues exist.*
- *When you build a team, you don't chose a player based on location you pick the best out there.*

#### **Reduce Size of Board –**

- *Reduce the size of the board – because more manageable and allows for better communication. More voices can be heard, with bigger groups same people tend to talk and same stay quiet.*
- *Shrink the board.*
- *A smaller board.*

- *Board could be smaller but are there consequences? Does this reduce membership? How many board members bring members with them? Would fewer board members hurt convention attendance?*

### **Evolve and Move Away from the Way It's Always Been Done –**

- *A key part of this will be convincing people - including long serving leaders - that just because we have always done it that way does not mean that we always do it that way in the future.*
- *We need to be willing to change. The board needs to take a fresh look at how we are structured, make sure it fits our industry and the future of the industry. Need to be willing to vote themselves out of office. Be open to potential change.*
- *Appreciates institutional knowledge but other ways to get this at the expense of excluding new voices. RTDNA needs to overcome old boys club and cliquishness.*

### **Tapping into General Membership and Industry –**

- *The untapped potential of our general membership is big. We should be utilizing all the voices of our membership instead of just the Board. We should be opening volunteer opportunities to the general membership. There is a large learning curve coming onto the board, we can prepare them better.*
- *Look inward to the industry it serves to find some of these answers. How is the industry it serves trying to connect with viewers, users, audiences? We need to be better informed about what they need to know, how they need to know, when they need to know it. How are you recruiting new members? There are strategies in the newsrooms we can use to flush out new ideas.*
- *Find a way to give members a reason to join – we are stagnant, issues of survival.*
- *Broader reach to membership through connective programs that focus on the future -- careers, recruiting of the industry. Conversations -- formal and informal -- candid dialogue about the success and short comings of the organization to fulfill member's needs. (Governance Survey)*

### **Attendance and Participation –**

- *There are some who attend committees but not going to board meetings. This isn't done maliciously – they have every intention to do good but the same people were missing meetings every month. Some who weren't attending were very active in the committee but you get the same voices.*
- *Find engaged, active and committed board members who are willing.*
- *RTDNA could ask more of its board, some participate and others don't. No mechanism to ask people to do more other than an aggressive chair. Tara does a good job of creating opportunities for folks to do more.*

### **Term Limits –**

- *I don't believe in term limits. Every two years, there is an election for a seat on the Board - and they are staggered so it is half the Board at the time.*
- *Institutional memory is good, unless it's not. Overreliance on people who have been on the board forever – term limits for board members are crucial.*
- *Most members do not see any local affect made by their representatives if they even know who their representative is. That would be a reason why nomination and election participation is so low. What difference does it make? Members see no change in the region from their reps and the same officers keep showing up on the same elections and doing the same things. Term limits force the issue. I'm not sure "one and done" is effective for the Chairs. Consider whether a 2 year term would be more helpful*

*in order to add some time and some power to the position in order to get a vision accomplished beyond presiding over a conference. It may be worthwhile to task committees with specific annual reports showing progress toward goals for members to see. (Governance Survey)*

#### **Conflicts of Interest in Decision Making –**

- *The Board needs to take off the work ‘hat’ when they are on the Board. There should be a careful eye in the decisions being made (like for awards) that there is not a conflict of interest - that the decisions are based on what is best for the industry - not just for an individual region, company, etc.*
- *Get of corporate membership structure.*

#### **Prioritization and Sun-setting Programs –**

- *If there are programs and efforts that have served their time and no longer bring the same reward, the Board should grow stronger in sun-setting those programs. We may be sacrificing depth for breadth.*
- *Determine our sweet spot, and do more of that.*

#### **Reducing Number of Committees –**

- *Fewer committees might be better.*

#### **Better Communication Between Arms of Governance –**

- *Committee chairs should convene to share what’s on their horizon and how can you tie in? Missing opportunities for collaboration and innovation when we don’t know all the great work we are doing.*

#### **Elections –**

- *There is a Chair Elect election every other year, Treasurer Elect every three years. I think we should actively recruit people to run for Board positions with contested elections with well qualified candidates for every position. Anyone who is eligible can run. In cases where there are long time Board members serving it can discourage others from running.*
- *More competitive elections would replace those who don’t make accomplishments.*

#### **Board Culture, Strategy, Vision and Mission –**

- *We always need to watch and vigilant on Board culture - mission focused and looking to be partners and inclusive.*
- *The board structure and function is only tangentially related to these things. It's about the vision, the ideas, and the execution of them that will make that future more likely. The structure and function of the board can have some effect on it (the can help facilitate or retard them) - but even the best board and best functioning board are nothing without ideas, vision, and execution (Board Survey).*