Succession Planning Process

Submitted for Board Adoption

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Succession Planning Process

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Resolution

The Southeast Service Cooperative Board is responsible for and committed to the success of SSC, the enrichment of its employees, and the seamless continuation of services to its members and partners. We, therefore, approve and adopt the Succession Planning Policy and recommended process as presented by the Executive Director, Administrative Team and Personnel Committee.

Board Policy: Succession Planning Policy

The SSC Board of Directors is committed to 1) ensuring continuity and high quality of operations and services, 2) compliance with statutory requirements, and 3) a comprehensive succession plan that supports workforce development and retaining highly productive, fulfilled employees.

A change in executive leadership, as well as other critical positions, is inevitable and can present unique challenges. Southeast Service Cooperative will maintain a succession planning process that prepares the organization for changes in leadership and other critical positions to ensure the stability and accountability of SSC while successors are sought and secured.

Executive Director Succession Planning: It is the responsibility of the SSC Board of Directors to assess long term leadership needs to help ensure the selection of a qualified and capable leader who is a good fit for the SSC’s mission, vision, values, goals and objectives, and who has the necessary skills to lead and manage SSC. The Board of Directors shall be responsible for implementing a succession planning process relating to the Executive Director position. This process will be reviewed and revised as needed by the SSC Board Personnel Committee when an Executive Director transition is anticipated. Copies of a recommended process will be held by the Board Chair, the Board Clerk, and the Executive Director.

Critical Positions Succession Planning: The Executive Director and administrative staff are responsible for implementing a process relating to all other critical positions. The process and data will be reviewed and updated annually by the Executive Director and administrative staff to ensure it is current and accurate.

This Succession Plan Policy is hereby approved this date of ________________ by:

________________________________________  __________________________________________
Southeast Service Cooperative Chair  Southeast Service Cooperative Clerk
Name: ________________________________  Name: ________________________________
Date: ________________________________
What is Succession Planning?

Succession planning is the process of identifying critical positions within our organization and developing action plans for individuals to assume those positions. It is a comprehensive plan that addresses current and future staffing requirements to ensure a pipeline of talent available to execute our organizational strategies and goals.

Succession planning is a future focused, systematic approach to assessing, evaluating, and developing a pool of talented individuals who are willing and able to fill critical positions. It assists leadership in identifying and capturing necessary institutional knowledge that may be lost due to retirement, promotion, and general attrition. It is a tool we can use to help meet the necessary staffing needs of SSC. Through succession planning, we will identify individuals with the skills and potential to perform in future roles, to strengthen the overall capability of the organization, and ultimately, to achieve business goals.

Several key factors can be found in good successful succession planning, including:

- Senior leaders are personally involved and hold themselves accountable for growing leaders - nurturing and developing employees happens within the organization.
- Employees are committed to their own self-development.
- Success is based on a business case for long-term needs, linked to strategic planning and investment in the future.
- Workforce data and analysis inform the process.
- Leadership competencies are identified and used for selection and development.
- A pool of talent is identified and developed early for long-term needs.
- Development is based on challenging and varied job-based experiences.
- Succession planning addresses challenges such as diversity, recruitment, and retention.

Conducted effectively, succession planning is linked with the entire HR process, including:

- Performance management
- Compensation
- Recognition
- Recruitment and retention
- Workforce planning

Why should we do succession planning?

Our staff are our most valuable asset. We rely on them to carry out our mission, provide services and meet our organization's goals. We need to think about what would happen to those services or our ability to fulfill our mission if a key staff member left. Three important findings by HR experts drive our succession planning:
1. Developing leaders internally takes time and effort, but these homegrown candidates are more likely to be successful than external candidates. (2012 study by Matthew Bidwell, an assistant professor at the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton School)
2. Most successful organizations focus succession planning on every employee rather than those who have been somehow identified as “high potential”.
3. Internal candidates may not always be the best candidates – for instance, there may be a need for greater diversity, or the organization wants to move in a dramatically different direction. Therefore, succession planning must include comprehensive analysis of internal workforce talents and development needs and must include strategies for recruiting externally.

With pending retirements and other anticipated changes, we must be prepared to identify the competencies needed to execute our business strategies and to determine how to best develop and retain talent. Succession planning is a living process and should be used as a continual checks and balances to identify what talent is currently available, what talent may be leaving, and how to prepare to capture necessary knowledge and disseminate it to future successors. It should be designed to:

- Identify individuals with the potential to assume greater responsibility in SSC.
- Provide relevant development experiences to those who can move into key roles.
- Engage the leadership in supporting the development of high-potential leaders.
- Build a database that can be used to make better staffing decisions for key jobs.
- Improve employee commitment and retention.
- Meet the career development expectations of existing employees.
- Counter the increasing difficulty and costs of recruiting employees externally.

When faced with the loss or impending loss of individuals in critical roles, we ask:

- Should we hire from within or look for an external candidate?
- Do we have anyone internally who is qualified?
- Whether we hire internally or externally; does anyone really know the specifics of what that person was doing?
- What impact will this change have on service delivery and on our relationships with our members, other customers, and partners?
- What do we tell our stakeholders?

A succession plan ensures that qualified and motivated candidates are able to take over when the Executive Director or other key people leave. It also demonstrates to stakeholders such as customers, employees, and partners that SSC is committed to and able to provide excellent programs and services at all times, including during times of transition.

**Who is responsible for succession planning?**

The SSC Board of Directors Personnel Committee and the Executive Director play pivotal roles in succession planning.
The Board is responsible for succession planning for the Executive Director position. The Board hires the Executive Director to ensure it has a skilled leader at the helm to implement the organization's mission and vision. The Board should dedicate time to reflecting on what they would do if, or when, the Executive Director leaves.

The Executive Director is responsible for ensuring a succession plan is in place for other key positions in the organization. These will likely be developed with help from the administrative team and with input from other employees.

The administrative team’s role involves periodically (at a minimum annually) the succession plan to jointly identify gaps and development needs. Each member of the administrative team who supervises employees is responsible to analyze the positions and incumbents of those positions they directly supervise, using the *Southeast Service Cooperative Position and Incumbent Inventory* and other tools outlined in the process that follows.

**Succession Planning Objectives**

To ensure success of our succession planning effort, we will address these main objectives:

- Identify significant business challenges in the next one to five years;
- Identify critical positions that are needed to support business continuity;
- Identify the competencies individuals need to be successful in positions and to meet our business challenges;
- Develop internal talent to cultivate potential candidates in future position openings.
- Review potential position vacancies and capture the knowledge that individuals possess before departing SSC.

**Key Business Challenges.** The SSC administrative team has identified the following key strategic needs for the next one to five years:

1. Diversify SSC’s revenue.
2. Evaluate SSC’s professional development product line to make it profitable and elevate its profile.
3. Strengthen SSC’s service to local government.
4. Integrate SSC’s marketing and communication plan across all stakeholders.
5. Address SSC’s Baldrige OFIs from the 2016 PEN feedback report.

These key strategic needs must be reviewed and updated regularly by the administrative team and shared with the SSC Board for input and affirmation. In one year cycles, SSC conducts an environmental scan in the form of context mapping, developing big questions, and forming bold steps to succinctly prioritize the direction of the organization. The results of SSC’s strategic planning gives context to succession planning activities, helps us to define the people specific challenges it is facing, and helps us determine how to begin addressing workforce development.
**Critical (Key) Positions.** The following positions are required to support business continuity:

1. Executive Director
2. Director of Operations
3. Director of Planning
4. Development and Innovation Specialist
5. Health & Benefits Consultant
6. Bookkeeper

Due to SSC’s relatively small size, all positions are important to business development and service delivery. Thus, this succession plan includes planning for all workforce positions (employees and key consultants).

**Competencies required.** Important competencies for success on the job are outlined in each position’s job description. In addition, the administrative team will use the **Workforce Position Analysis** to identify from a standardized list those core competencies and technical competencies required for each job.

**Internal Talent Development.** SSC’s **Performance Objectives and Development** Plan (PODP) process provides an opportunity for employee and supervisor to formally review three times per year the employee’s progress toward meeting personal professional goals and specific objectives relating to their jobs. During this process they review the employee’s current job description to determine whether revisions are needed, to discuss changes in level of responsibility, and to monitor the employee’s SSC career path. Career path changes may involve **lattice pathways** – i.e., opportunities to cross train or learn new responsibilities organizational roles at a similar level to the current position in an effort to broaden the employee’s flexibility, adaptability, and ability to contribute to the organization’s success. An example is an employee who carries out certain financial accounting responsibilities such as accounts receivable processing may learn a new responsibility such as accounts payable. Career changes may be **ladder pathways** – i.e., promotion to higher level decision making responsibilities. An example is that a coordinator of a service may be promoted to manager, requiring higher level and more independent responsibilities in budgeting, program design, marketing, and evaluation.

**Prepare for Potential Vacancies.** The administrative team uses the **Southeast Service Cooperative Position and Incumbent Inventory** as a planning tool to prepare for potential vacancies. To help us capture incumbent knowledge before departure, SSC documents key processes carried out by each position and stores this information on a shared server.
**Succession Planning Process**

**SSC’s process.** The SSC administrative team is responsible for succession planning of all staff positions and supports the Board in Executive Director succession planning. SSC’s succession planning is competency based – that is, we identify the specific competencies required for a position and compare this with current and needed staff competencies, then address each individual’s competency development.

After an initial comprehensive review of all positions, staff, and alignment of organizational strategic planning with workforce planning, the administrative team conducts review and update of planning documentation in February or March each year. The admin team will revisit the succession plan data throughout the year as key workforce changes occur (new and departing employees, development of new knowledge and skills, etc.) and positions are changed, added, or removed.

The process for Executive Director succession is primarily the responsibility of the SSC Board of Directors Personnel Committee and is outlined in a separate section of this plan.

**Documents and processes used in SSC Succession Planning.** The following documents are used to align SSC’s strategic business needs with workforce development:

2. Southeast Service Cooperative Position and Incumbent Inventory.
3. Workforce Position Analysis - Competency Assessment Profile
4. Position Competencies/Potential Candidates Matrix
5. Knowledge Identification and Transfer Chart
6. Performance Objectives and Development Plan (PODP)
7. Employee Career Path Plan
**Step 1: Link Strategic and Workforce Planning Decisions.** This step involves using our strategic planning process and linking it with workforce analysis:

- Identify SSC’s long-term vision and direction – key strategic needs
- Analyze future requirements for products and services – strategic planning process
- Review SSC’s workforce leadership strengths grid (based on **Strengths Based Leadership**) to identify specific gaps and consider how we might capitalize on identified strengths as an organization and as individuals.
- Connect succession planning to our organizational core values.
- Identifying critical positions – (**SSC Position Inventory Chart**) – This chart is completed by the administrative team, with each supervisor entering data for the positions s/he supervises. When all positions have been inventoried, the administrative team will jointly review the data and search for gaps in operations and service needs.

**Step 2: Identify key positions**

These positions are “mission-critical” to SSC and need to be filled as quickly as possible to ensure SSC continues to function effectively. They may be hard to replace due to specialized skills or level of experience. The Position and Incumbent Inventories are used to analyze key positions and individuals in the organization as well as all other positions and individuals.

**Step 3: Assess leadership potential**

SSC will assess all staff members to identify those who have the skills and knowledge or the potential along with the desire to be promoted to existing and new positions. The assessment includes both formal and informal activities, such as a performance review, co-worker references and 360 assessments, and informal conversations with the individuals under consideration.

SSC uses the **Workforce Position Analysis** to build job profiles for each position. This analysis identifies core competencies and key technical competencies required for each position. In addition, the **Incumbent Inventory Chart** and the **Position Competencies/Potential Candidate Matrix** are maintained to identify employees who are potential candidates for a given position and to identify development needs that must be addressed for these individuals. Comparing this data supports our efforts to:

- Identify core competencies and technical competency requirements
- Determine current supply and anticipated demand
- Determine talents needed for the long term
- Identify “real” continuity issues
- Develop a business plan based on long-term talent needs, not on position replacement.

The SSC Strategic Plan, the Workforce Incumbent Inventory Chart, and the PODP process support this analysis and helps the administrative team to address these questions:

- Which individuals are slated to or likely to leave (through retirement, recruitment by competing employers, project completion, etc.) and when?
- Which new positions will be required to support the strategic plan?
• Which positions have become or will become obsolete (for example, those related to a program that has been terminated)?
• What skills and knowledge need to be developed (for example, to support a new program)?

**Step 4: Develop and retain our talent pool**

There are two aspects to this step:

• Developing internal potential candidates
• Recruiting external talent

**Developing internal potential candidates.** Each SSC employee, including the Executive Director, completes an annual Performance Objectives and Development Plan (PODP), including one or two personal professional growth goals and high priority objectives that the employee and supervisor have identified to be accomplished in the next 12 to 15 months. During the mid-year and end-of-year progress meetings, the employee and supervisor reflect together about the employee’s progress toward meeting personal professional goals. They discuss the employee’s career path and maintain an Employee Career Path Plan.

The career path plan should be developed by the employee and supervisor together. The plan is a dynamic tool that is updated as the individual’s and the organization’s needs change. It should be an action plan that fits the individual’s specific needs, abilities, talents, learning styles, and interests. The mix of activities included in the action plan should be linked to timelines and specific outcomes. The employee and supervisor will consider various methods in which the employee can develop knowledge and skills. Following is a list of possible development/learning strategies, and the employee and supervisor may think of others:

  - Planned job assignments
  - Formal education
  - Specialized training
  - Work related conferences
  - On the job training/cross training
  - Participating on project teams or committees
  - Membership affiliation in job related associations
  - Coaching and mentoring
  - Job shadowing - gives the employee a real sense of the responsibilities and helps SSC to determine whether the individual really is suited for the new position.
  - Action learning projects
  - Communities of practice
  - Assessment and feedback

**Recruiting external talent.** Even though there may be viable internal candidates, if a position is new, SSC may need to open the position to external applicants. There may be other reasons that SSC wishes to invite external applications, such as a desire to increase diversity, or organizational hardship in moving a person from one critical position to another. In recruiting outside talent, SSC will promote its workplace flexibility, generous benefit program, competitive compensation, and opportunity for professional development and career growth.
Step 5: Capture, transfer knowledge
SSC must prepare for such events as employees departing SSC or moving to another position. The knowledge required for the position must be readily transferrable to another employee so that services and operations experience as little interruption or disruption as possible.

Capturing knowledge. SSC staff document processes for major responsibilities. This documentation is updated whenever the process changes and is stored on the staff server. A member of the SSC administrative team will create a system for standardized documentation, storage and cataloging of processes that can be accessed by appropriate staff. The Position Inventory Chart will be used to list specific knowledge topics, which are linked to documented processes.

Methods to transfer knowledge. The Knowledge Identification and Transfer Chart is used to identify specific topics of knowledge that would need to be transferred from the process owner to another individual in the event the process owner leaves SSC. The chart lists several strategies that can be used in transferring knowledge.

Step 6: Measure, monitor, and evaluate success
This final step in the succession planning process is to monitor and evaluate the strategies implemented to close identified and prioritized talent gap(s). Evaluation of our process will address the following questions:

1. Are succession candidates performing well in their new roles?
2. What is the impact of learning and development efforts?
3. Is our “talent pool” diverse and reflective of the labor market?

Succession planning efforts will be measured on an annual basis by the administrative team. Effectiveness will be monitored using data about the relationships between inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes, and impact of the process based on SSC’s goals and objectives. Additional measures will focus on the framework functional strengths and weaknesses, and assessing gaps in developing succession candidates.

Metrics:

1. How well are individuals progressing through their development assignments?
2. Progress toward development goals and career development plans.
3. Percent of candidates in a rotational position with a formal action plan.
4. Percent of candidates in cross-functional assignments.
5. Number of successful promotions into key leadership positions.
6. Percent of open positions filled.
7. Percent of turnover.
8. Diversity demographics of “talent pool”.
9. Percent of talent pool candidates that are “ready now”.

Qualitative data will be collected and analyzed and may include the following strategies:

1. Listening to leader feedback on success of internal talent and internal hires
2. Analyzing satisfaction surveys from customers, employees, and stakeholders
3. Assessing response to changing requirements and needs.
Executive Director Succession Planning

Succession planning for the Executive Director position may involve two different scenarios, both of which are addressed in this guide:

- **Emergency Succession Planning** – A process SSC will use in the event the Executive Director departs suddenly – either permanently or for an extended period of time (i.e., longer than three months).

- **Departure-Defined Succession Planning** – A process SSC will use for a future planned retirement or permanent departure of the Executive Director.

**Considerations in Replacing the Executive Director.** The Executive Director succession planning committee includes the Personnel Committee and additional Board members who are appointed in an effort to balance membership component representation in this responsibility. The Board will enlist assistance from key administrative staff as appropriate throughout this process. The Board and Executive Director are responsible for drawing up a plan of action and effectively communicating it to the rest of the staff. They should ensure that employees have opportunities to ask questions about the selection process, and questions should receive timely response and discussion when appropriate. The Board must also communicate its plan of action for replacing the Executive Director in a timely manner with SSC members.

This process requires collaboration between Board members, the incumbent Executive Director (ED), and key staff members. Success depends on defined responsibilities among Board, the ED and staff. Following is a general outline of responsibilities:

**Board Members**

- Secure the organization’s future by clarifying direction and ensuring strong leadership. A succession plan promotes the availability of a strong ED when needed.
- Understand the complexity and responsibilities of the ED role. Select, support and evaluate the ED on a regular basis.
- Leverage Board contacts and expertise, especially during periods of leadership transition.
- Play a lead role in working with the ED to develop and approve succession plans for various scenarios.
- Appoint a Board committee to address transitional issues in the unexpected departure of the ED.

**Executive Director**

- Provide a process for regularly reviewing and stretching the Board’s effectiveness.
- Ensure legacy and succession occur. Draft an emergency succession plan and submit to the Board for approval.
- Implement process to develop key staff members and promote a culture that encourages professional development.
- Work with the Board Chair to schedule Board meetings dedicated to the succession-planning process.
• Evaluate the Board’s role in the organization, promote and encourage the executive succession-planning process.
• Implement, upon Board approval, and communicate the succession plan with affected staff.

Key Staff
• Support successful transition of new ED and provide program and organizational information as requested.
• Continue to provide services to clients in absence of ED and during transition.
• Ensure they are aware of the defined internal and external communication plan so they can address public inquiries.

Depending on length of notice the Board receives of the Executive Director’s departure, the Board may want to appoint an interim Executive Director until a successor is selected. If a staff member is asked to temporarily assume the Executive Director responsibilities in addition to his or her job, there should be an adjustment in that employee’s compensation to reflect the additional responsibilities and work load.

The Board may also consider establishing an arrangement of co-management by two or three employees who share the Executive Director responsibilities. In order for this approach to be effective, it requires a clear understanding of the various aspects of the Executive Director’s position so that tasks may be given to those with ability to take them on. It also requires ongoing communication and coordination between the employees who are part of the co-management team.

Emergency Succession Planning and Implementation. The emergency succession planning process is implemented in the event the Executive Director suddenly departs either permanently or for an extended period of time (i.e., longer than three months). Appendix A Emergency Executive Director Succession Planning Template in provides a step-by-step planning guide to complete the process.

The following timeline may be used as an adjustable guide to help the SSC Board of Directors prepare for the emergency succession planning process. It should be used to complement and drive the completion of the emergency succession planning template.

Week 1:
1. Current Executive Director (if able), Board Chair and selected staff meet to discuss succession planning process and assign roles and responsibilities.
2. Identify the key spokesperson for the organization until the interim executive or new Executive Director is hired.

Weeks 2 – 3:
1. Define internal and external communication plan.
2. Review and update job description and identify the top three to five strategic objectives that fall under the Executive Director’s core responsibilities.
3. Select interim Executive Director (or co-Directors) and recommend additional temporary compensation.
4. Define the interim’s responsibilities, authority and decision making limitations.
5. Identify required board support and supervision process of the interim.
6. Determine backup appointees.
7. Establish development plan for backup appointees.

**Weeks 4 – 5:**
1. Board Personnel Committee completes and submits emergency succession planning document to complete board for approval.
2. Outline process to recruit and select permanent new executive.
3. Appoint executive search task force committee.
4. Develop transition plan for new executive.

Note: The planning process can be expedited depending on the organization’s immediate needs and meeting frequency.

**Departure-Defined Succession Planning and Implementation.** In order to prepare for a successful departure-defined succession-planning process, the following questions should be considered by the Board of Directors, Executive Director, and staff:

1. Is the organization ready for a change in leadership style, if required, to ensure sustainability, capacity effectiveness and achievement of the strategic plan?

2. How committed and supportive is the Board to a successor? Is the Board open to new ideas from the successor and are they willing to explore new alternatives?

3. Has the departing Executive Director fully addressed personal and professional barriers in a manner that allows them to embrace the departure and fully support the transition?

4. Has the successor been prepared to assume the executive role or has the successor been more of an administrative support for the outgoing Executive Director? Has the successor developed credibility and trust with key stakeholders, including members and staff?

To help create a shared understanding of the process among all those involved (and alleviate potential anxiety), the following adjustable timeline may assist with preparing and implementing the departure-defined planning process for the Executive Director (ED) position. It should be used to complement and drive the completion of the departure-defined succession-planning template (Appendix B).

The departing executive’s final two leadership tasks are ‘leadership of letting go’ and ‘leadership of preparing the way’.

— Emily Redington and Donn Vickers, Following the Leader: A guide for planning founding director transitions
Note: The sequence of steps is more important than the estimated time frames, which depend on the length of time before the departure and length of the search process.

**Week 1:**
1. Current ED meets with Board Chair to discuss the intent for a future departure and a tentative or agreed date.
2. Current ED self-reflects about preparation for departure (Step 1 in the process).

**Week 2:**
1. Current ED and Board Personnel Committee meet to discuss departure-defined succession planning process, review the succession planning steps, and assign roles and responsibilities. Complete step 2 of the process, including:
   b. Identify the top three to five strategic objectives that fall under the executive’s core responsibilities.
   c. Identify leadership styles desired and leadership traits not desired for new executive.

**Weeks 3 - 4:**
1. Convene the succession planning committee and define roles and responsibilities, including departing ED.
2. Identify the key spokesperson for the organization until the new ED is hired.
3. Define internal and external communication plan to be used during the recruiting, hiring and transition process.
4. Develop a timeline for the ED search strategy.

**Months 2 - 8**
1. Conduct executive search for the successor.
2. Provide regular updates to the Board, Advisory Committees, and staff about the search and selection process.
3. Identify successor and officially hire.
4. Agree on parameters of the departing ED’s emeritus role. Board chair works with departing ED to make sure they mutually agree upon and understand the emeritus role.
5. Integrate the succession plan with SSC’s strategic planning process.

**Months 9 through Start Date** - Promote successful transition of the new ED.

**Upon New ED’s start:**
1. Board Personnel Committee drafts and Board initiates the successor development and 90-day transition plans.
2. Successor is officially placed in ED role and works with the Board to implement the 90-day transition period.
Appendix A: Emergency Succession Planning for Executive Director (ED) Position

The purpose of this emergency succession plan is to ensure continuous coverage of executive duties critical to the ongoing operations and organization’s sustainability in the event of an emergency departure of the Executive Director (ED). This plan addresses issues related to both permanent (ED will not return) and temporary (ED will return after unplanned absence such as illness, etc.) replacement. Issues specific to temporary absence are noted in the plan.

1. **Analyze ED job responsibilities and needed qualifications.** The job description and the position analysis outlines responsibilities and key competencies needed for this position as well as education and experience.
   a. Review and if needed, update the ED job description to ensure ED responsibilities and hiring requirements promote the organization’s sustainability.
   b. Review and if needed, revise the ED Position Analysis document. Consider the chart of leadership competencies listed in Appendix C. Ask the staff about what competencies and qualities in a leader are important to them.
   c. Identify the top three to five objectives and/or challenges outlined in the strategic plan that fall under the executive’s core responsibilities:
      1)  
      2)  
      3)  
      4)  
      5)  
   d. Based on these objectives and/or challenges, does the ED job description need further revision? Yes No
   e. Required primary (P) and secondary (S) leadership styles – Refer to the descriptions of the following six leadership styles listed in Appendix D:
      Visionary           Democratic
      Coaching            Pacesetting
      Affiliative         Commanding
   f. Leadership traits **not** desired (e.g., poor relationship building, poor board management, etc.). Ask the staff about this in addition to competencies and qualities of a good leader.
      1)  
      2)  
      3)  
      4)  
      5)  
2. **Define interim ED key responsibilities.** The interim ED is a staff or Board member who is appointed by the board to fulfill executive duties until the position is filled or until the ED returns, if the vacancy is temporary.
   
   a. **Outline key interim responsibilities.** Examples of key activities are outlined. Edit, update or add responsibilities as needed.
      
      1) Serve, with integrity and strength, as the organization’s primary leader, representative and spokesperson to the greater community.
      2) Support the Board of Directors, including preparing executive reports and attending board committee meetings.
      3) Lead the management team.
      4) Participate in the recruitment and selection for directly supervised staff.
      5) Manage initiatives related to organizational capacity, sustainability and strategic plan.
         a) Maintain accountability for current year operating budget and financial performance.
         b) Establish, maintain and cultivate relations with members, partners, other organizational associations.
         c) Oversee the execution of organizational strategic plan.
      
      6) 
      7) 

   b. **Outline authority and restrictions of appointed interim executive.** The person appointed as interim ED will have full authority for decision making and independent action outlined above, except for the following which must be approved by the board:
      
      1) All financial decisions over the amount set in Board policy for the ED.
      2) Termination of staff.
      3) Issues that may negatively impact the organization’s reputation in community.
      4) 
      5) 

   c. **Compensation for the interim ED.** Interim ED will receive a temporary salary increase to the entry level salary of the ED position or up to (%) above their current salary, whichever is greater.

3. **Define internal and external communication plan.** Communication is a key function of a healthy organization and is integral to the success of a transition. Conversations between staff and board members can significantly impact, negatively or positively, the interim ED’s and transition success. It also helps alleviate concerns about the organization’s direction and sustainability. Members have a vested interest in SSC’s ability to continue to serve them and should be kept informed about the transition process.
   
   a. **Internal.** Immediately upon departure, the Board should communicate the following internal information:
      
      1) Effective departure date (or pending departure date);
2) Implementation of the approved succession plan and process to address transition and replacement issues;

3) Temporary leadership structure and any changes in key contact points—including appointment of key spokesperson during the transition period.

4) 

5) 

Key Internal Communications Spokesperson: (Name, position, email, phone)

b. External communication with stakeholders, including but not limited to members, partners, other associations, contractors, and the community at large should be a coordinated process. A detailed and current key stakeholder contact list is maintained in SSC’s contact database.

Key Interim/Transition Spokesperson: (Name, position, email, phone)

4. Process to appoint interim executive. In the event of an unplanned departure or long-term absence of the ED, the Board of Directors authorizes the Personnel Committee to implement the terms of this emergency succession plan. As quickly as possible the Board Chair will meet with the Personnel Committee to confirm the procedures outlined in this document and/or to make any modifications the Personnel Committee deems appropriate.

The appointed interim ED will assume responsibilities outlined above in step 2. Should the interim assignment be longer than three months or if extenuating circumstances exist, it may be necessary to identify a secondary backup for the interim ED position. This will allow the focus to be on fulfilling the interim responsibilities. The Personnel Committee (or designated approver) may also consider the option of splitting ED duties among the designated appointees.

a. Interim executive appointee (Name and position)

b. Primary backup interim executive appointee: (Name and position)

c. Secondary backup interim executive appointee (Name and position)

5. Cross-training plan for interim appointees. The ED will develop and execute a plan for training the potential appointees in each priority function. The ED and administrative team members are responsible for implementing the training plan and ensuring that it is completed.

6. Board oversight and support of interim ED. Establish an information system that enables the Board Chair to gain access to all critical information pertaining to the organization in an event of an emergency. The Board’s Personnel Committee will have responsibility for monitoring and supporting the work of the interim ED. Regular meetings should be established with designated Board representative(s) and the interim ED to discuss key
issues and support needed by the acting ED. These meetings will occur weekly or more often as needed.

7. **Process to select permanent new ED.** An outside search will be conducted unless the Board has approved an internal successor prior to the ED’s departure. The Succession Planning Committee includes the Personnel Committee and additional Board members who are appointed in an effort to balance membership component representation in this responsibility. The Board will enlist assistance from key administrative staff as appropriate throughout the search and selection process. The interim ED should not be included on the search task force if considered by the Personnel Committee to be a potential candidate.

   (NOTE: If Board members are assuming additional roles due to their expertise such as coach, recruiter, etc., they need to define when they are operating in board role versus “expert resource” role.) Appointed search task force members:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone</th>
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</table>

8. **Process to transition and assimilate new ED.** Within the first week of the ED’s employment, the Board Chair and/or designated coach will begin working with the new ED to develop and implement an initial 90‐day plan to ensure the new ED has the resources and information for a successful transition.

9. **Approval of Emergency Succession Plan.** This succession plan will be approved by the Personnel Committee and presented to the full Board of Directors for review and approval.

Signatures and copies kept of this document by:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board Chair Name</th>
<th>Signature</th>
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<tr>
<th>Executive Director Name</th>
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Appointees and Backup Appointees:

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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Appendix B: Departure-Defined Executive Director Succession Planning

The purpose of this departure-defined succession plan is to ensure continuous coverage of executive duties, critical to the ongoing operations and organization’s sustainability, when a long-term executive is planning a future retirement or departure date. The objective for this process is to share the expertise of the departing executive with the successor while simultaneously preparing the organization, and departing executive, to fully support the successor.

1. Current Executive Director (ED): Address the personal and professional barriers for the departing executive. The departing ED should review and consider the following self-reflection questions. A recommended resource for this reflection is the book, The Encore Career Handbook: How to Make a Living and a Difference in the Second Half of Life by Marci Alboher.

   Professionally:
   a. Why do I want to make this move?
   b. What are the benefits for me in making this move? For the organization? For the community?
   c. What are the downsides for me in making this move? For the organization? For the community?
   d. What can I do to address the downsides so they don’t become barriers to the organization’s future sustainability and success?
   e. How do I see my connection with the organization and successor? What do I need? Is it realistic? How can I get it?
   f. How can I help the new executive be successful? How can I help the board and other key stakeholders?

   Personally:
   a. What do I plan to do when I leave this role at SSC?
   b. How is my identity defined by this role as the ED of SSC?
   c. How do I envision the next phase of my life? What goals do I have in these areas? What barriers might exist that I need to be prepared for?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Relationships</th>
<th>Health Travel</th>
<th>Spiritual Financial Community involvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use of leisure time</td>
<td>Living location</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2. Update job description to ensure ED responsibilities and hiring requirements promote the organization’s sustainability. Consider key objectives, challenges, leadership styles, unwanted traits.
a. Review and if needed, update the ED job description to ensure ED responsibilities and hiring requirements promote the organization’s sustainability.

b. Review and if needed, revise the ED Position Analysis document. Consider the chart of leadership competencies listed in Appendix C. Ask the staff about what competencies and qualities in a leader are important to them.

c. Identify the top three to five objectives and/or challenges outlined in the strategic plan that fall under the executive’s core responsibilities
   1) 
   2) 
   3) 
   4) 
   5) 

d. Based on these objectives and/or challenges, does the ED job description need further revision?  Yes  No

e. Required primary (P) and secondary (S) leadership styles – Refer to the descriptions of the following six leadership styles in Appendix D:

   _____ Visionary   _____ Democratic
   _____ Coaching    _____ Pacesetting
   _____ Affiliative  _____ Commanding

f. Leadership traits not desired (e.g., poor relationship building, poor board management, etc.). Ask the staff about this in addition to competencies and qualities of a good leader.
   1) 
   2) 
   3) 
   4) 
   5) 

3. **Convene the succession-planning committee** to clarify roles and accountability. The committee is comprised of the Personnel Committee and additional Board members who are appointed in an effort to balance membership component representation in this responsibility. The committee will be accountable for developing, seeking commitment, and implementing the departure-defined succession management plan. The committee will facilitate, manage and obtain Board and ED approval of the leadership transition. The committee will oversee the following steps:

   a. **Determine the executive search strategy and conduct the search.** The committee should decide whether to use an executive recruiter or to conduct the search using board members, staff and other resources, a search budget, and determine a process. Appendix E is a suggested search, interview, and selection process, which includes such
tasks as researching compensation, opening the position, screening, interviewing, selecting, and recommending a candidate to the Board.

b. **Create and implement the successor development plan.** Consider using the SSC Performance Objectives and Development Plan (PODP) process used by other employees. An effective plan will link the successor’s development to key initiatives in the strategic plan, build effective relationships with stakeholders, and ensure an understanding of how SSC achieves its operational objectives and remains financially sustainable. A detailed development plan with stated outcomes can help measure the successor’s development.

4. **Define internal and external communication plan.** Identify key spokespersons for internal and external communications. The communication plan should address the period of time beginning with the announcement of the current ED’s departure through several months or more after the successor assumes leadership.

   a. The plan should address communication with stakeholders (board, advisory, staff, members, partnering/affiliating organizations) and the general public and should be a coordinated process.

   b. Communicate detailed information about the departure and transition to key stakeholders, including information such as strategic direction of the organization; why the executive is leaving; why the successor was selected; the successor’s onboarding process; and, how board, staff and other stakeholders are supporting the transition. Provide names of key contacts and contact information.

   c. The communication plan should also outline procedures that promote two-way communication. Creating an environment that allows for input from stakeholders, particularly staff, can help identify transition issues, as well as comment on successes.

   Key Internal Communications Spokesperson: (Name, position, email, phone)

   Key External Communications Spokesperson: (Name, position, email, phone)

5. **Integrate the succession plan with SSC’s strategic planning process.** Discussion among staff, advisory and Board members about the leadership role, the succession plan, and the transition process throughout SSC’s strategic planning and continuous improvement endeavors will support a coordinated and cohesive path from search to full assimilation by the new ED. It will provide the new ED with valuable input for future visioning and planning. Conduct a SWOT analysis prior to hiring and in preparation for a strategic planning session after the new ED starts.
6. **Agree on parameters of the ED’s emeritus role.** The Board should identify strategies and boundaries to facilitate a successful transition. If there is an essential need for the outgoing ED to remain directly involved in the organization, then clearly define his/her role in supporting the successor’s decision/direction.

7. **Promote successful transition of the new ED.** The Board Chair, Personnel Committee, administrative team, and new ED should develop, regularly review, and adjust a 90-day transition plan. The first 90 days in the new ED’s role may bring challenges. The transition plan should include:

   a. The Board’s written goals and expectations of the ED for the first 90 days and 12 months.

   b. Participation in a formal orientation program as well as meetings with Board members, staff, advisory, members, and leadership of key organizations with which SSC associates.

   c. A structured feedback mechanism with pre-identified key stakeholders to assess progress and potential barriers to a successful transition.

   d. Access to development resources for the ED, such as reading materials and training programs relating to organizational leadership and specific training, such as needed licensure(s)/certification(s).

   e. Depending on the complexity of the challenges, a transition coach may be retained to facilitate a successful transition and help manage obstacles.

8. **Approval of Departure–Defined Succession Plan.** This succession plan will be approved by the Personnel Committee and presented to the full Board of Directors for review and approval.

Signatures and copies of this document held by:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board Chair Name</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Director Name</td>
<td>Signature</td>
<td>Date</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>Signature</td>
<td>Date</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C: Leadership Competencies

The Board of Directors may wish to consider the following list of leadership competencies when preparing to initiate a search for a new Executive Director:

**Visioning** – Visualizes the organization’s future state (structure, culture, leadership, target markets, etc.) and criteria for long-term, sustained business success.

**Leading and managing change** – Continuously challenges the status quo and leads the necessary changes. Provides information and gathers feedback about changes that allow others to create organizational agility.

**Passion for mission** – Demonstrates and communicates passion for the organization’s core purpose; identifies with the organization’s mission and inspires others about the mission.

**Credibility** – Demonstrates honesty, sincerity, humility and respect for individuals while modeling organizational values. Inspires trust in and from others.

**Achieves results** – Improves and sustains superior business performance, develops and follows through on priorities, delegates appropriately, holds people accountable, makes financially-sound decisions, optimizes resources and initiates efficient work processes.

**Intelligence and judgment** – Demonstrates capacity to analyze, synthesize and integrate information to effectively identify and solve problems. Makes informed decisions, and successfully addresses complex organizational challenges.

**Strategic thinking** – Provides focus and long-term direction for constant stream of organizational and individual action.

**Inspirational leadership** – Develops commitment in others by setting a personal example, demonstrates enthusiasm, empowers workforce and appeals to what motivates them.

**Customer focus** – Responds to the needs and expectations of clients and donors. Uses an understanding of client and donor needs as the basis for organizational action.

**Fundraising** – Provides direction and serves as primary contact for foundations, government and donors.

**Community development** – Develops strong external loyalty to the mission and values of organization, and brings strong community and civic leader relationships to leverage good will and financial support for organization.

**Financial development/acumen** – Ensures innovative fund development strategies are developed, cultivated and implemented that provide the necessary financial resources to sustain and grow the organization. Ensures generally accepted accounting principles are continually adhered to and related to all budget and financial matters. Understands and can manage operations within budget constraints.

**Talent management** – Demonstrates the ability to attract, align, develop and retain the diverse talent pool needed to meet and exceed organizational goals.

**Interpersonal savvy** – Builds appropriate rapport and constructive, effective relations both internally and externally. Relates well to people of diverse backgrounds and exhibits genuinely warm and approachable behavior. Listens attentively to understand the needs, intentions and values of others.
Appendix D: Leadership Styles


Leadership is about the needs of the people and the organization you are leading. Leadership styles should be adapted to the particular demands of the situation, the particular requirements of the people involved, and the particular challenges facing the organization. In the book “Primal Leadership,” Daniel Goleman, who popularized the notion of “Emotional Intelligence,” describes six different styles of leadership. The most effective leaders can move among these styles, adopting the one that meets the needs of the moment. They can all become part of the leader’s repertoire.

Visionary. This style is most appropriate when an organization needs a new direction. Its goal is to move people towards a new set of shared dreams. “Visionary leaders articulate where a group is going, but not how it will get there – setting people free to innovate, experiment, take calculated risks,” write Mr. Goleman and his co-authors.

Coaching. This one-on-one style focuses on developing individuals, showing them how to improve their performance, and helping to connect their goals to the goals of the organization. Coaching works best, Mr. Goleman writes, “with employees who show initiative and want more professional development.” But it can backfire if it’s perceived as “micromanaging” an employee, and undermines his or her self-confidence.

Affiliative. This style emphasizes the importance of team work, and creates harmony in a group by connecting people to each other. Mr. Goleman argues this approach is particularly valuable “when trying to heighten team harmony, increase morale, improve communication or repair broken trust in an organization.” But he warns against using it alone, since its emphasis on group praise can allow poor performance to go uncorrected. “Employees may perceive,” he writes, “that mediocrity is tolerated.”

Democratic. This style draws on people’s knowledge and skills, and creates a group commitment to the resulting goals. It works best when the direction the organization should take is unclear, and the leader needs to tap the collective wisdom of the group. Mr. Goleman warns that this consensus-building approach can be disastrous in times of crisis, when urgent events demand quick decisions.

Pacesetting. In this style, the leader sets high standards for performance. He or she is “obsessive about doing things better and faster, and asks the same of everyone.” But Mr. Goleman warns this style should be used sparingly, because it can undercut morale and make people feel as if they are failing. “Our data shows that, more often than not, pacesetting poisons the climate,” he writes.

Commanding. This is classic model of “military” style leadership – probably the most often used, but the least often effective. Because it rarely involves praise and frequently employs criticism, it undercuts morale and job satisfaction. Mr. Goleman argues it is only effective in a crisis, when an urgent turnaround is needed. Even the modern military has come to recognize its limited usefulness.
## Appendix E: Executive Director Search, Interview and Selection Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Person(s) Responsible</th>
<th>Timelines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preparation and Opening the Position</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Review and update the job description.</td>
<td>Board Chair</td>
<td>Person(s) Responsible</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Personnel Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review and recommend the search and transition process.</td>
<td>Board Chair</td>
<td>Search Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommend whether to conduct search by Board or contract for search consultant - Board action recommended. If considering a consultant:</td>
<td>Board Chair</td>
<td>Admin Team Rep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFP for Search Consulting -- prepare RFP, request proposals to include the firm/consultant’s background, general process, references, cost. Summarize and present to Personnel Committee.</td>
<td>Board Chair</td>
<td>ED</td>
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</table>

**NOTE:** If the Board contracts a consultant, several of the following duties are carried out by the consultant either independently or with SSC officials. If not, the duties are carried out by other responsible parties as checked in the columns.

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<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Person(s) Responsible</th>
<th>Timelines</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contract with Consultant – Responsibilities and level of decision making authority of consultant responsibilities of Board officials and staff, timelines, compensation terms, other contract terms. Each of the following tasks are outlined in the contract.</td>
<td>Board Chair</td>
<td>Personnel Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish a search budget</td>
<td>Board Chair</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appoint key internal spokesperson</td>
<td>Board Chair</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appoint key external spokesperson</td>
<td>Board Chair</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review the job description, position analysis, appoint internal and external key spokespersons, determine level and type of involvement by current ED, if any.</td>
<td>Board Chair</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board input on process: Review the job description, position analysis, brainstorm top objectives and key qualities and competencies</td>
<td>Board Chair</td>
<td>x</td>
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Southeast Service Cooperative –Succession Planning Process, February 2017
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person(s) Responsible</th>
<th>Timelines</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appoint the Search (Succession Planning) Committee</strong> - comprised of the Personnel Committee and additional Board members who are appointed to balance membership component representation.</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Input from Stakeholders - competencies and qualities desired, concerns, ideas. Identify from whom we will ask for input (SAC, LGAC, others?). Review the job description, position analysis, brainstorm top objectives and key qualities and competencies</strong></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Input from Staff: Competencies and qualities desired, traits not desired, concerns, ideas</strong></td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Establish a range of compensation package - salary and benefits to be offered.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Draft the position announcement and recruitment brochure based on content and direction provided by Personnel Committee - determine method of application (e.g., online, US mail of supporting materials?) and to whom the application is addressed (e.g., Board Chair) - SSC mission, core competencies, values, org structure and brief history, major services/programs, budget, link to Rochester and SE MN information, how to apply.</strong></td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Distribute the position opening: staff, member CEOs, other MSC CEOs, AppliTrack, AESA, identify other distribution channels</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Application deadline -- all applications must be received at SSC per instructions in the position opening</strong></td>
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**Screening, Interview and Selection Process**

<p>| <strong>Doodle poll the Search Committee members and place &quot;holds&quot; on blocks of dates/times for a) pre-interview planning, b) first interviews, and c) final interviews.</strong> | x | | x |
| <strong>Draft interview questions and interview score procedures. The Search Committee will consider and adopt.</strong> | x | x | x |</p>
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<th>Task</th>
<th>Person(s) Responsible</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Draft applicant screening/evaluation chart based on position analysis and input from stakeholders on key competencies and qualities desired.</td>
<td>Board Chair</td>
<td>Consultant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribute copies of applications received to Search Committee. Search Committee conducts individual review and evaluation, including instructions for preliminary individual rating.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft interview protocols and review with Search Committee.</td>
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<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet to discuss applicant pool and make initial selection of applicants to interview.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Make initial reference checks - follow SSC policy re applicant checks. Provide info to Search Committee.</td>
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<tr>
<td>After reference checks, make final determination of top 3 to 6 candidates to be considered.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contact selected candidates to discuss the position and schedule an interview.</td>
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<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview top candidates.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Select top 1 to 3 candidates.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conduct in-depth reference interviews by phone.</td>
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<tr>
<td>If 2 or more top candidates are being considered, call to discuss continued mutual interest, schedule second interviews.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct second interviews with the top candidates, including an opportunity for the candidates to meet with the staff, the SAC and LGAC, and the whole Board. Search Committee will discuss terms of contract with candidates.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Input on final candidates from SAC, LGAC, Staff - review as a group and form recommendation</td>
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<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Person(s) Responsible</td>
<td>Timelines</td>
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<tr>
<td>Make candidate recommendation to Board. The Board has a special meeting to consider the recommendation and to decide on the selection of the person and empowers the Board Chair to make the offer and negotiate the contract.</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Make offer to top candidate and negotiate the contract on behalf of the SSC Board. (Phone call, formal letter, etc)</td>
<td>X, X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Board confirms the contract.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Execute contract</td>
<td>X, X</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start date for new Executive Director</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix F: References

The following resources were used in developing this process:


Executive Transitions, CompassPoint Non-Profit Services, *When an E.D. leaves: Setting up an executive transition committee*, downloaded 2/19/2016 from www.compasspoint.org

Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City – Denver – Oklahoma City – Omaha, *Nonprofit Executive Succession – Planning Toolkit*

HR Council, *Succession Planning*, downloaded 2/19/2016 from http://hr council.ca/hr-toolkit/planning-succession.cfm

HR Council, *Getting the Right People: Hiring an Executive Director*, Downloaded 2/19/2016 from http://hr council.ca/hr-toolkit/right-people-hiring.cfm#_secA3

