

Governance at Whitevale Golf Club

Governance is the system by which organizations such as Whitevale Golf Club are directed and managed. It determines how the Club's objectives are set and achieved, identifies the rules and procedures for making organizational decisions, and identifies how organizational performance is measured.

Whitevale governance is similar to what occurs at other privately owned and operated golf clubs. As such, there are a number of papers and reference materials that can be examined to understand best practices in the golf industry. Much of the following comes from these sources.

Equity Members

Each equity member of Whitevale Golf Club owns a transferable membership in and is a voting member of the Club. In accordance with the laws of the Province of Ontario and the Club's By-law No. 1, equity members elect a Board of Directors which is empowered to govern the affairs of the Club on their behalf.

Board of Directors

From a high-level perspective, the Board of Directors is meant to serve in a strategic role with its main function being to safeguard assets and evaluate and develop long-term strategic plans. The role of management is to operate the Club within the parameters the Board establishes.

Board members are elected to govern the affairs of the Club subject to rules that are identified in By-law No. 1. Except for Officers, individual Board members have no inherent authority, and can only act as a Board of Directors when taking part in an official Board meeting. Even though Board members are often active in committee meetings or efforts to assist the general manager and his or her staff, when Board members are not in an official Board meeting, they are serving as volunteers and not as governors.

The Board of Directors enacts policies that define the broad parameters (rules) that the members and staff are expected to follow. These policies are documented on the Whitevale website.

Officers

Whitevale Golf Club has four officers: the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. By-law No. 1 and the Ontario Not for Profit Corporations Act, by which the Club is regulated, identify specific responsibilities for each of these officers. As an example, the President is the Chair of the Board and is responsible for maintaining the integrity of the governance structure and related processes. He or she is the chief representative of the members and the spokesperson for the Board. The President is an ex officio member of all committees and can serve both in a coordinating role among the Board committees and in a leadership role in keeping them focused on their respective scopes of responsibility. By-law No. 1 also defines responsibilities for the other three officers.

General Manager

The General Manager has operational authority to employ and allocate the resources of the Club to serve the members within the approved budgets and the boundaries that are set by the Board in the Club Policies. All Whitevale staff take their direction from the General

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Manager, in some cases through a department head such as the Greens Superintendent or Head Golf Professional. Except in unusual circumstances and with prior Board approval, no member of the staff or outside contractor may report to a Board member.

Committees

The Whitevale Governance Model includes two types of committees: Standing Committees and Operations Committees.

Standing Committees are described in Article 8 of By-law No. 1, and have specific roles. They are currently the Nominating Committee (recommends slate of directors), the Finance Committee (supervises finances) and the Discipline Committee (investigates member disciplinary incidents). In addition to their defined roles, these committees may make recommendations to the Board for actions it should take.

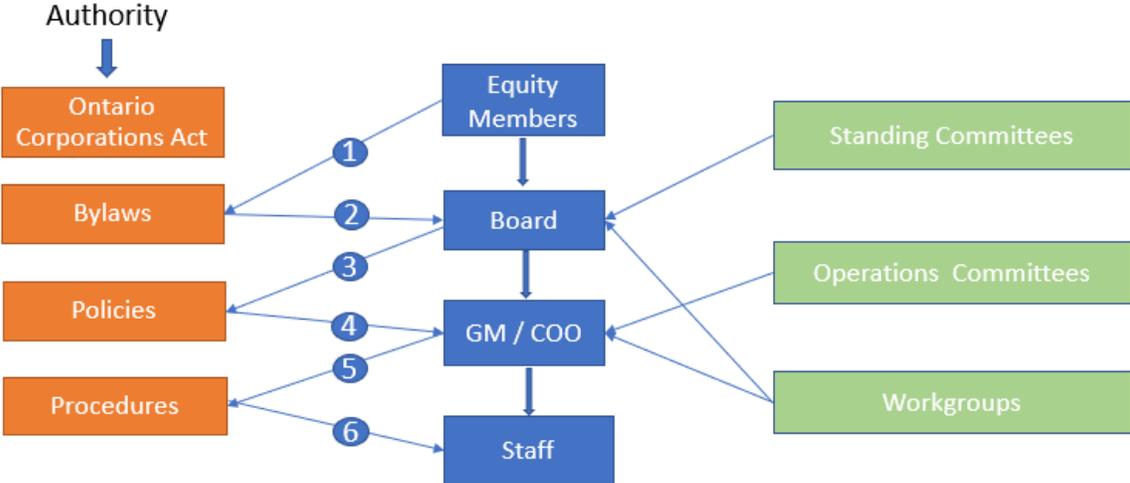
Operations Committees are established to assist the General Manager and staff by providing representation of the broad membership and offering critical member input. Operations Committees also share in the workload by helping with initiatives, activities, and events. Operations Committees serve in an advisory capacity and have no inherent authority.

In 2023 the Operations Committees were: the Golf/Greens Committee, the Membership Committee, the Long Range Planning Committee, the Member Experience Committee, the Handicap Committee and the Technology Committee. As they are not defined in By-law No. 1, the Board may create new Operations Committees or change the names, roles and composition of Operations Committees at any time.

Workgroups

In addition to committees, the Board may establish workgroups to address specific topics. Workgroups have a limited lifespan and are dissolved once their work product has been produced.

The relationships of these groups are shown below:



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The governance authority is listed down the left side of the diagram. From top to bottom, the authority for each level is taken from the level above it, beginning with the laws of the Province of Ontario.

1. Whitevale Golf Club is a not-for-profit corporation, and the equity members approve its bylaws.
2. The bylaws describe the structure and authorities of the Board of Directors and the Standing Committees.
3. The Board enacts policies that define the broad parameters (rules) that the members and staff are expected to follow.
4. The General Manager operates the Club within the parameters defined by the Board. The Operations Committees and Workgroups provide member feedback and assistance.
5. The General Manager develops operational procedures in accordance with the bylaws and policies.
6. The staff work under the supervision of the General Manager using the operational procedures.