**Session: Advisory Boards**

**Date: 11/10/23**

**Leader: Bob Gradeck**

**Note taker: Cole Campbell**

**Attendees: Randia Ahmed, Tommy Pearce, Jason Schulist, Kate Eikel, Nicole Williams, Maya Salcido White, Danya Littlefield**

* Topics of discussion
  + Aligning expectations with board members
  + Our structure used to be volunteer-based, and now it is to have three different committees. I don’t expect our advisory board to do much.
    - One is the people who want to structure data, another who work with data in their jobs but who want to volunteer in the community, and the last is mainly people who can do HR tasks.
    - The goal is to get buy-in from different types of organizations and to get an equity lens for our data.
  + We have two advisory structures. I want people who are engaged- the most engaged people now are not very knowledgeable like funders.
  + We have an advisory board, but it’s basically honorary, and we’re not using them to full capacity. So I want to hear how everyone else uses their advisory board.
* Our two goals are to represent Oakland by at least having those different voices present without making everyone feel like they have oversight responsibilities on the research.
* During the pandemic, I realized we don’t have a lot of insights into the lived experiences of our community members and emerging issues. Business savvy and community representation are two pillars that would really help.
* You have to nurture your governance structure, which takes a lot of time.
* I think we need advisory board members that are more invested long-term.
  + Maybe one of the permanent board members could facilitate that.
  + You may want to create feedback loops that aren’t boards.
  + Partners can do a lot of that vision-setting.
* A lot of partners just freeze when you ask them about overly technical questions. Instead, we ask more abstract questions about what a thriving neighborhood and well-being looks like to them. It’s then our job to figure out how to measure that.
* Our meetings are full of trauma and conflict, so team-building or calming exercises would be great.
* Off-boarding- it’s good to be direct because some people may not be able to engage and are looking for an exit opportunity. You can ask who they think should replace them.
* Takeaways/further exploration
  + Systems and structures to set expectations
  + Practices to get community input as issues change at such a fast pace in our community. It’s better to have the community involved in what they want to be funded.
  + Still stuck on the challenge that the people I want to be in the room are so busy.
    - Response: advisory board doesn’t have to all meet at once.