

# Social Policy and the Agency Board Member: What Do We Need to Know?

## **Board Voice Conference Workshop Dialogue**

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# The NPS Landscape in British Columbia

- Turmoil of late 1990s; followed by significant restraint and restructuring in the early 2000s
- Sector after sector scrutinized; on different footing
- Purchase-of-service model: fewer grants, increased competition, management/performance orientation
- NPS characterized then and now by diversity, fragmentation
- Little dialogue between NPS and government, but this started to change during the mid-2000s
- Arrival of GNPI, Board Voice, and many other organizations
- 2010s bring more restructuring and restraint...combined with the intergenerational roll-over and technological change
- New BC government initiative on social entrepreneurship, promoting social innovation & volunteerism...

## Recent Developments to Consider

- GFC and general tightening up in the economy
- Oct 31<sup>st</sup>: 2011 Triplett BC Gaming Grant Review
- Nov 24<sup>th</sup>: 4<sup>th</sup> GNPI Summit on “Shared Challenges: Shared Solutions”
- Nov 25<sup>th</sup>: Non-Profit Partnership Summit on “Collective Impact through Social Innovation”
- Financing models – charity, welfare state, citizenship, models – and impact of the NPM and the new public governance environment (Phillips, Laforest & Graham 2010)
  - Where does NPS, volunteerism, and social innovation fit in?
  - What does the overall terrain for financing look like?
  - What are pressures, needs, capacities sector by sector?

# What Are the Implications?

- NPS board members typically focus on supporting and monitoring the services *their* organization delivers.
- The NPS landscape in BC is changing rapidly...where are the forums to have policy discussions?
- The Board Voice mandate implies a broader, outward-looking set of responsibilities and for board members to engage on a broader field of play.
- *With this in mind...*
  - How should agency boards organize to meet this challenge?
  - What can be done to address the evolving fragmentation and innovation in the NPS and social policy sectors?
  - Should a social policy framework be developed to guide the strategies of Board Voice and other NPS organizations in BC?
  - What might be its elements? Who should develop it?