



THE ROLE OF A BRANT-BRANTFORD CRIME STOPPERS BOARD MEMBER

WHO IS A BOARD MEMBER?

A Board Member is a representative of the Community of the highest caliber and character who, once a member assists with the management of the Corporation without remuneration.

WHAT DOES THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS DO?

The Board of Directors serves as the legal authority for the Corporation and as such, acts in a position of trust. Members are elected to plan the organization's present and future direction, as well as manage and direct its affairs and provide continuity for those affairs. Accepting the role means assuming collective responsibility for its assets, liabilities, income and expenses, carrying out its policies and for evaluating those policies from time to time. Most importantly, the Board of Directors ensures there are sufficient funds to carry out its functions.

WHY DO WE NEED TO KNOW THE ROLE?

Many Board Members serve for months before they really understand what they are supposed to do. This confusion can waste valuable time for both the new Board Members and for existing members who must carry an extra load until the new member is familiar with their role. It is even possible that the new member could unknowingly make a public faux pas that could have been avoided.

HISTORY OF CRIME STOPPERS

The shooting of Michael Carmen, a young University of New Mexico student working at a gas station in Albuquerque, New Mexico, ultimately triggered the creation of Crime Stoppers.

In July 1976, two men robbed the gas station and for no apparent reason, fired a shotgun blast from less than 10 feet into Michael's abdomen. Michael tried to tell detectives who shot him, but didn't have the strength and he died four hours later, unable to make a dying declaration.

Greg MacAleese, one of the detectives working on the case was frustrated, when after six weeks of trying to piece together enough evidence to solve the murder; he was no closer to a solution than the night Michael was killed.

Out of desperation, he approached the General Manager of KOAT-TV in Albuquerque, and asked permission to re-enact the crime for one of his newscasts. Greg felt that there was an eye-witness somewhere in the population of 350,000 people. He hoped that a re-enactment might trigger the memory of someone who might have seen part of the crime committed, but not understood what he or she was witnessing.

On September 8, 1976, the first crime re-enactment was broadcast on the 10 o'clock news. The next morning a young man called. He remembered walking home from a party the night of the murder and heard a loud bang, like the noise of a large firecracker. Shortly after the blast, a car heading away from the gas station passed him at high speed. He couldn't recognize the two men in the vehicle, but thought that the car might belong to a nearby apartment resident.

The caller's information was the missing link. The getaway vehicle was traced back to one of the gunmen. Once the caller's tip was received it took just 72 hours to solve Michael Carmen's murder. Six other armed robberies were also solved as the result of the investigation.

Greg MacAleese felt that information from the public was the key to solving many crimes, but that citizens were reluctant to provide this information for two reasons: fear and apathy.

Crime Stoppers was designed to overcome these two barriers. For those afraid of retaliation from criminals, the system allows callers to Crime Stoppers to remain completely anonymous. For those who were apathetic, the system provides cash rewards for information leading to the solution of crimes.

From that initial broadcast, a simple but effective program has evolved that combines three powerful elements: the public, the media and the police.