

Proposal to Establish the Role of Chief Information Officer (CIO)

Submitted for Board Review and Approval

1. Executive Summary

This proposal recommends the creation of a Chief Information Officer (CIO) officer role to provide strategic and operational oversight over the organization's business-critical technology infrastructure. The CIO will be responsible for stabilizing core systems, transitioning away from solely volunteer-dependent maintenance, and enabling the organization to scale sustainably.

The role's success is contingent upon support from the Board of Directors, including access to administrative systems and approval of funding necessary for contractor engagement or external services.

2. Background and Problem Statement

The current technical environment is fragmented and unstable. Many critical business systems are self-hosted and have fallen behind on maintenance due to volunteer limitations and an absence of structured ownership. Repeated delays in project implementation—including a recent attempt by the COO to roll out a badging solution to allow vendors to enter the premises independently to reduce volunteer strain—have demonstrated that our current system support model is no longer sustainable.

Volunteers have historically maintained many of these systems but have operated under the ethos of "volunteers work on what they want, when they want." This model, while once sufficient, is no longer aligned with the operational needs of a member-funded organization with the vision to maximize membership and enrollment.

3. Strategic Gap

As the organization matures, it requires a shift from ad hoc technical stewardship to a governance-driven IT role with accountability for uptime, vendor coordination, and systems modernization. The lack of accessible documentation, inconsistent response times, and reliance on single individuals for mission-critical systems poses a significant operational risk.

4. Proposal Summary

Create a board-sanctioned officer position of Chief Information Officer (CIO) with the following scope:

Primary Responsibilities

- Oversee all business-critical systems (e.g., membership, access control, billing, communications)
- Prioritize and manage technical requests from committees and operations
- Conduct vendor coordination and external contracting (with board approval)
- Document and transition technical ownership in a sustainable, auditable way

Initial Transitional Period

To ensure a successful and cooperative handoff from the CTO, the following transitional measures will be established:

- A 90 day phased onboarding process in which systems currently under CTO maintenance will be inventoried, documented, and evaluated for handoff
- A joint transition planning session with the CIO, CTO, COO, and one board member within 90 days of role approval
- Shared access arrangements (read-only or joint admin) where necessary to mitigate disruption during the transition period

5. Contingencies for Implementation

A. Financial Support

The CIO's ability to stabilize and modernize the environment is contingent upon board-approved funding for:

- Contracting external technical support or managed service providers (MSPs)
- Licensing, hosting, or cloud migration costs for retiring unsustainable self-hosted systems

A preliminary budget or service proposal will be submitted by the CIO within 90 days of role activation.

B. Administrative Access

The CIO must be granted administrative access to business-critical systems. Where shared access is required during transition, all current maintainers—including the CTO—are expected to participate in a timely and cooperative handoff process.

Board backing is essential in ensuring that access is not obstructed and that the CIO's scope is respected by all stakeholders.

6. Governance and Accountability

- The CIO will report directly to the Board of Directors
- A formal job description ([link](#)) defines responsibilities, term, time commitment, and evaluation criteria
- Success will be measured based on:
 - Uptime and reliability of critical systems
 - Responsiveness to operational needs
 - Reduction of technical debt and volunteer burden
 - Implementation of vendor or support strategies
 - Quality of documentation and system transparency

7. Motion for Approval

We propose the Board vote to:

1. Establish the officer position of Chief Information Officer (CIO) as defined in the linked job description
2. Authorize a transitional 90 day onboarding period, during which the CIO will work with the CTO and other stakeholders to document and assess existing systems
3. Commit to providing administrative access and funding support as necessary to fulfill the CIO's mandate
4. Affirm that success of this role is contingent upon timely participation from current officers and continued support from the Board