

# **EMPIRE COMPANY LIMITED**

## **MANDATE OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

By virtue of the Articles of Association of the Company, the management of the Company is vested in the Board of Directors (“Board”), subject to the provisions of applicable statutes and the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Company.

The Board of Directors of the Company shall have responsibility for the stewardship of the Company including the strategic planning process, approval of the strategic plan, the identification of principal risks and implementation of systems to manage these risks (inclusive of food safety and occupational health and safety), succession planning, communications and the integrity of the Company’s internal control and management information systems. The Board discharges certain of its responsibilities through delegation to its committees as more particularly set out in the committee mandates.

The following points outline the key principles or guidelines governing how the Board will operate to carry out its overall stewardship responsibility:

### **Independent Chair**

The Board has adopted a policy of having an independent, non-management Chair.

### **Size of the Board**

The ideal size of the Board will provide a diversity of expertise and opinion, as well as efficient operation and decision making. The Corporate Governance Committee will review the size of the Board annually and make recommendations to the Board when it believes a change would be in the best interests of the Company.

### **Director Retirement Age and Term Limit**

Unless the Board otherwise determines on an annual basis in respect of a particular director or directors, a director shall not be nominated for re-election at the Annual General Meeting of shareholders:

1. following his or her 72<sup>nd</sup> birthday unless the director will not have completed 10 years of service on the Board; or
2. if the director has completed 15 years of service on the Board.

The retirement age and term limit described above shall not apply to the Company’s Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”) or to Sobey family members. Notwithstanding this policy, ongoing review of Board composition remains paramount and the responsibilities of the Board and its Committees are not at all diminished by implementing term limits.

The Board may, on an annual basis, waive the retirement age and term limit of a director if their continued service is in the best interest of the Company. The Board may exercise this discretion for such reasons as it deems appropriate from time to time, including the desire to maintain specific competencies, skills, experience, institutional knowledge, shareholder representation and diversity.

## **Board Composition**

The Nominating Committee shall have responsibility for the nominating function of the Company and shall annually make a recommendation to the Board as to the Board nominees for election at the Company's next Annual General Meeting of Shareholders. This process shall include a determination of the competencies, skills and personal qualities (such as languages and residency) required of directors in light of opportunities and risks facing the Company. The Board will then consider the Nominating Committee's recommendation and make its determination.

## **Board Assessment**

The Board is responsible for assessing and developing its effectiveness.

The Corporate Governance Committee shall implement a process for assessing the effectiveness of the Board as a whole, the committees and the contributions of individual directors. The Board shall assess directors on an ongoing basis, including periodic formal surveys of directors and ongoing assessments by the Chair of the Board ("Chair) and the Chair of the Corporate Governance Committee.

The Board, through the Corporate Governance Committee, shall establish and conduct orientation and education programs for new recruits to the Board, through which the performance expectations for Board members shall be communicated.

The Board shall provide continuing education opportunities for all directors so that they may enhance their skills and abilities as directors and ensure that their knowledge and understanding of the Company's business remains current.

The Corporate Governance Committee shall also be responsible for recommending proposals to the Board concerning the compensation of directors, including the adequacy and form of compensation.

## **Board Contacts with Senior Management**

All of the directors shall have open access to the Company's senior management. It is expected that directors will exercise judgment to ensure that such contact does not distract management from the Company's business operations. Written communications from directors to members of management will be copied to the CEO.

## **Board Meetings**

The Board shall hold regular meetings at least once in each fiscal quarter, with additional meetings held as and when necessary. The Board shall, at every regularly scheduled meeting and at other meetings at its discretion, meet without management present to ensure that the Board functions independently of management. Further, at every Board meeting, an *in camera* meeting of independent directors will take place. The Board shall maintain a policy which permits Board committees and individual directors to engage outside advisors at the cost of the Company, provided that approval is first obtained from the Corporate Governance Committee.

The Board appreciates having certain members of senior management attend each Board meeting to provide information and opinion to assist the directors in their deliberations. Management attendees will be excused for any agenda items which are reserved for discussion among directors only.

## **Board Meeting Agendas and Information**

The Chair and the CEO, in consultation with the Corporate Secretary and members of senior management as appropriate, will develop the agenda for each Board meeting. Agendas will be distributed to the directors before each meeting, and all Board members shall be free to suggest additions to the agenda in advance of the meeting.

Whenever practicable, information and reports pertaining to Board meeting agenda items will be circulated to the directors in advance of the meeting. Reports may be presented during the meeting by members of the Board, management and/or staff, or by invited outside advisors. It is recognized that under some circumstances, due to the confidential nature of matters to be discussed at a meeting, it will not be prudent or appropriate to distribute written materials in advance.

## **Committees**

The Board of Directors delegates certain responsibilities to the standing Committees of the Board to allow an in-depth review of issues. The standing Committees of the Board are the Audit Committee, the Human Resources Committee, the Corporate Governance Committee and the Nominating Committee. Other Committees may be struck as the Board determines is appropriate. All of the members of the Audit and Nominating Committees shall be independent directors. The majority of the members of the Human Resources and Corporate Governance Committees will be independent. Each Committee has a written mandate that is reviewed and approved annually.

## **Committee Meetings**

The schedule and agenda for the meetings of each committee will be determined by the committee chair in consultation with management, staff and committee members. Each committee will report to the Board on the results of each committee meeting. The Chair of the Board shall be a non-voting, non-quorum member of each Committee.

## **Review of Independence of Outside Directors**

The Corporate Governance Committee will review on an annual basis any relationships between directors and the Company which might be construed in any way to compromise the designation of any director as being independent. The objective of such review will be to determine the existence of any relationships, to ensure that the composition of the Board remains such that the majority of the directors are independent and unrelated and that where any relationships exist, the director is acting appropriately.

## **Directors Who Change Their Present Job Responsibility**

The Board shall maintain a policy which requires that a director who makes a change in principal occupation shall offer a resignation to the Board for consideration. The Board will take the opportunity to review, through the Corporate Governance Committee, the continued appropriateness of Board membership under such circumstances.

## **Strategic Planning**

Management is responsible for the development of individual business unit and corporate strategic plans which take into account, among other things, the opportunities and risks of the business, and for the implementation of strategic plans. The Board shall be responsible for setting the long-term goals and objectives for the Company, the adoption of a strategic planning process and the annual approval of the strategic plans developed by management. The Board shall monitor senior management's implementation of the plans and shall assess the achievement of the Company's goals and objectives on an ongoing basis.

## **Managing Risk**

The Board shall have overall responsibility for assessing the principal risks facing the Company, ensuring the implementation of the appropriate strategies and systems to manage such risks, and reviewing any material legal matters relating to the Company as a whole or its investment in any major operating company.

The Audit Committee shall periodically review the enterprise risk management framework for the Company and assess the adequacy and completeness of the process for identifying and assessing the key risks facing the Company. The Audit Committee shall report its findings on such matters to the full Board on a regular basis.

## **Succession Planning**

The Board shall have responsibility for the appointment and evaluation of the performance of executive management, including approving the appointment of senior executives of the Company, reviewing their performance against the objective of maximizing shareholder value, measuring their contribution to that objective, and overseeing compensation policies.

The Human Resources Committee shall have responsibility for recommending proposals to the full Board concerning the compensation of executive management, including incentive programs and awards made pursuant thereto. This committee shall also monitor, review and provide guidance in respect of executive management training, development and succession planning.

## **Communications Policy**

The Board shall have the responsibility for reviewing and approving the Company's policies and practices with respect to the disclosure of financial and other information including insider reporting and trading. This includes the review and approval of the content of the Company's major communications to shareholders and the investing public, encompassing the Annual Report, Management Information Circular, Annual Information Form and any prospectuses which may be issued. The Audit Committee shall review and recommend to the Board the approval of the quarterly and annual financial statements (including the Management Discussion & Analysis) and news releases relating to financial matters. The Board also has responsibility for monitoring all of the Company's external communications. However, the Board believes that it is the function of management to speak for the Company in its communications with the investment community, the media, customers, suppliers, employees, governments and the general public.

The Board shall have the responsibility for reviewing and approving the Company's policies and practices with respect to disclosure of financial and other information, including insider reporting and trading.

The Board shall approve and monitor the disclosure policies designed to assist the Company in meeting its objective of providing timely, consistent and credible dissemination of information, consistent with disclosure requirements under applicable securities law. The Board shall review the Company's policies relating to communication and disclosure on an annual basis.

Generally, communications from shareholders and the investment community will be directed to the Director, Investor Relations, who will coordinate an appropriate response depending on the nature of the communication. It is expected that if communications from stakeholders are made to the Chair or to other individual directors, management will be informed and consulted to determine any appropriate response.

## **Internal Control and Management Information Systems**

The Board has responsibility for the integrity of the Company's internal control and management information systems.

All material matters relating to the Company and its business require the prior approval of the Board. In particular, capital expenditures or commitments in excess of \$15 million for Empire and Sobeys or \$25 million for Sobeys Developments Limited Partnership must be approved by the Board in advance. Management is authorized to act, without Board approval, on all ordinary course matters relating to the Company's business. The Grants of Operating Authority outlines the Board authorization required of the Company and its subsidiaries.

The Audit Committee has responsibility for ensuring internal controls are appropriately designed, implemented and monitored and for ensuring that management and financial reporting is complete and accurate, even though management may be charged with developing and implementing the necessary procedures. The Board reviews and approves the annual financial statements as well as the quarterly financial statements.

## **Governance, Integrity and Corporate Conduct**

The Board oversees the ethical, legal and social conduct of the Company. The Board oversees the development of the Company's corporate governance policies, principles and guidelines. The Board develops and monitors compliance with the Company's Code of Business Conduct and Ethics for directors, officers and employees.

## **Management and Human Resources**

The Board selects, appoints and evaluates the performance of the CEO and establishes the appropriate compensation for the CEO. In consultation with the CEO and the Human Resources Committee, the Board appoints all officers of the Company and determines the terms of employment, training, development and succession of senior management specifically including the overall percentage salary increase for those executives (in addition to the CEO) whose compensation is subject to public disclosure.