



Photo Credit: Rocky Charles

# DAWN BELL

**VP Governance & Compliance  
TCU Financial Group**

## *Fun fact:*

In my spare time, you might see me onstage (or, more recently, online) as I'm an amateur actor. I've been taking part in community theatre for over 20 years!

## **Why have you joined GPC?**

I'm new to working in the governance arena and wanted to build a network with other governance professionals and gain access to knowledge and resources in the governance field.

## **What does governance mean to you?**

I like the broad definition of governance: how a group organizes itself to make decisions. It seems so simple and yet often ends up being very complex, sometimes by design but sometimes because of a lack of thought and planning. Also, when I'm thinking of governance I tend to think of organizations with a board structure in place.

## **What do you believe is a key topic right now in the governance industry?**

I can't speak for the governance industry as a whole, but I'm very interested in the evolution of corporate social responsibility and environmental social governance. Working in the cooperative sector and living through this pandemic situation has raised a lot of interesting questions about what organizations are, or should be, doing as part of our small and large scale communities.

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## **Where do you see, or would you like to see the role of governance in the next few years?**

I haven't been in my role long enough to develop any deep thoughts on this yet and I'm not convinced there is a single answer that would fit every situation. If anything, I think there should be a better understanding at every level of every organization of what their governance structure is and how it impacts the work they do.

## **How did you get into governance and your current role?**

In previous professional roles, and in my personal life, I've had the chance to work on and with boards of different types of organizations. I saw things that worked well, and things that didn't; I worked with good directors, and some not so good directors; I have read clear and helpful policies, and others that have left me scratching my head and feeling like I was running in circles!

I have a legal background and am drawn to the concept of a governance structure with well-crafted rules, policies and processes that help a company run smoothly, efficiently and successfully. Of course, we all know that real life isn't always that easy or clear cut, and there are many challenges to reaching that ideal state. I like a good challenge, so when the opportunity came up a few years ago to take on a new role that involved working in governance at my credit union, I jumped at the chance! I haven't regretted it once.

## **What is the most fulfilling part about your role in governance? What do you love most about your job?**

I love my job because it gives me a chance to make a difference. I see my role as a facilitator, helping those tasked with making sure our credit union succeeds – including the board, management, staff and members.

## **What is the best career advice you have received?**

"Don't be afraid to ask questions" and "It's important to understand the 'why'". Helpful advice in both work and personal contexts!