

## **REGION VIII REPORT OF NARFE STANDING COMMITTEES**

This is an informal report of the Standing Committee meetings held on January 22/23, 2018 at NARFE Headquarters selected for all Standing Committees to meet (except the Ad Hoc Ballot Oversight Committee), to develop a work plan and assign actions to each of the Committee Members

The formation of Standing Committees was announced in the October 2017 NARFE Magazine, with an opportunity for members to volunteer to serve on these committees. The Standing Committees are: Advocacy Advisory Committee; Bylaws and Resolutions Committee; Communications Advisory Committee; Finance Advisory Committee; Marketing and Membership Resource Advisory Committee Strategic Planning Advisory Committee; and an Ad Hoc Ballot Oversight Committee.

These Standing Committees are new to NARFE but common to many other non-profit corporations. The National Executive Board approved establishment of these Standing Committees. These Standing Committees are integral to the implementation of the Objectives identified in the Strategic Plan of October 2017. From the Strategic Plan, an Operating Plan was developed by the Executive Director and approved by the National Executive Board. The Operating Plan is an internal document to be used to track progress in accomplishing the objectives of the Strategic Plan.

Overall NARFE membership has shown a slight improvement. In 2015 there were 9,922 new members; in 2016 – 10,126 new members and in 2017 – 13,060 new members. Traditionally, the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter is best for recruiting, followed by the Spring and Fall mailings. With the influx of new members from the Webinars, 1<sup>st</sup> year retention is improving, over those who just join NARFE. Deceased members are declining to less than 3%, with 2,000 deaths last year.

NARFE Headquarters has been reorganized into four major departments: Advocacy; Communications; Marketing & Member Resources; and Finance & Administration. The organization chart is posted on the National Website. Under the Marketing & Member Resources Department are the Deputy Directors for Federal Benefits Institute; Recruitment/Retention, Business Development, Events, Public Relations, and Chapter/Federation Development.

The last two hours of the second day all Chairs, Committee Members, Staff Advisors, and NEB Representatives gathered for a summary of what was accomplished by each committee. There were very short informal reports given, but I have noted some of the information provided in each summary.

The National President reported that our membership statistics have improved. From the close of December 2017 membership has increased from 203,320 to 208,825. January has seen 1,268 new members; 1,273 reinstated members; but only 608 deaths, which averages about 22/day.

### Advocacy Advisory Committee

Perce Johnson (VA), Chair, reported that the committee reviewed 14 Resolutions – 7 Resolutions; 6 Bylaws/Standing Rule Resolutions and 1 which they considered out of order. Their recommendations and rationale were forwarded to the Bylaws/Resolutions Committee. They updated the Advocacy Program (formerly known as Legislative Agenda), which will be included in publications. They are looking to simplify the CDL program by including, answers to the questions: Why have CDLs? What are the duties of CDLs, and What are the Best Practices for CDLs? It was noted that the current format for CDL Guidance is overwhelming and may cause some members to be unwilling to take on the task. Committee Members are: Jeff Anliker, Sharon Reese, Bernard “Gene” Niewoehner, John Szphyhulsky; Staff Advisor: Jessica Klement; and NEB Representative Edward Konys.

### Communications Advisory Committee

Nancy Crosby (WA), Chair, reported that the existing Magazine, and the Insider, will be reviewed with a focus on various ages, digital implementation, and doing more with social media. An AFE, new to NARFE volunteered to serve on this committee (using annual leave) and reported that he was not aware of the infrastructure at NARFE, and that serving on the committee was a learning experience. Committee Members are: Lorna Howerton, John Bultsma, Maria Ritzman, Robert Ruskamp, Will Kullman; Staff Advisor: Susan Boswell and NEB Representative Evelyn Kirby.

### Finance Advisory Committee

Jon Dowie, National Secretary/Treasurer reported they reviewed 3 resolutions, provided rationale, and gave them to the Bylaws/Resolutions Committee. His bottom line is that we need more members and more revenue. He explained the need for Fundraisers and thanked everyone for their generous support. Topics they covered included How to Support National Members? “What to do with 20 Federations who require an additional \$1,000 per year, and in odd years also ask for an additional \$500 to allow the federation President attend the Legislative Conference; and “How to get AFE’s involved?” One of the members reported that he appreciated the transparency but was concerned about how to raise revenues while controlling costs. Committee Members are: Richard Karakantas, James Gillispie, Karen Thygeson, James Downey; Staff Advisors: Barbara Sido and Tayo Coker, and NEB Representative Jon Dowie.

### Marketing and Membership Committee

Jerry Hall (CA) Chair, reported on what the Committee discussed, especially the Membership Application and Renewal Letter. More communication is needed between all levels of NARFE to share what is happening at NARFE so the membership will better understand and support change. The aim of this committee will be to grow membership and get the NARFE name out in public. To provide continuing updates on the progress of this committee, there will be monthly

reports from each member as well as quarterly conference calls. Committee Members are: Rhonda Mooney, Kerri Gibbs, Lynn Harper, Dorman Otte; Staff Advisor is Bridget Boel and NEB Representative is Helen Zajac.

#### Strategic Planning and Innovation Committee

Bruce Coleman IA, Chair, reported that they are following One Member, One Vote (OMOV), Optional Chapter Membership (OCM) and the Executive Director from the FON, through SPG-1, and SPG-2. There were four important objectives listed in the Strategic Plan: Governance; Marketing; Advocacy; and Communications. There will be another Strategic Plan in 2020 in Scottsdale. They will be reviewing the 2019 Budget to ensure that we have polished best practices, due diligence and how well prepared we are for OCM and OMOV. They will monitor, benchmark and report on member values and where we are with Advocacy and Federal Benefits.

He also stated that we need to start preparing for NARFE's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2021. Committee Members are: Mark Bernstein, Marc Harris, Henry Brattlie, Ann Sulkovsky; Staff Advisor: Barb Sido and NEB Representative is Rich Wilson.

#### Bylaws/Resolution Committee

Robert Allen (NC), Chair, ensured that his committee can do the job of reviewing 50 Bylaws/Resolutions. He stated that each Committee's recommendation was very helpful to this Committee. Lots of work is yet to be done, and the Committee will work through next year. They held two go-to-meetings prior to meeting face-to-face. There is more Bylaw work to be done post conference. Bylaws affect everyone – and this Committee is the Sheriff. Committee Members are: Robert Van Hintum, Kathryn Hensley, and Tim Gartner. There is no Staff Advisor, nor NEB Representative.

Barb Sido, Executive Director, concluded the meeting with stating that Advocacy Programs will be practical. Changes this year may not be totally based on resolutions. Resolutions Report will be provided in the April Edition of the NARFE Magazine. Standing Committees have been added and these Committees add flexibility, as necessary.

President Thissen added his thanks to the members of the standing committees for providing a common thread to open communication between HQ and the Field.

National Secretary/Treasurer Jon Dowie thanked everyone for their participation, energy and effort.

## **MARKETING AND MEMBERSHIP RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

More information provided for this Committee, as I represented the NEB.

The charge of this committee is to advise and support the Director of Marketing in the development and implementation of policies, programs and services for membership recruitment, reinstatement and renewal, business development, public relations and the Federal Benefits Institute consistent with the current strategic and operations plans.

### **Committee Responsibilities**

- Offer member perspective on Marketing initiatives
- Offer input on new products, programs, and services
- Provide input on brand development as well as brand policies and guidance for the NARFE field
- Offer input on NARFE public and community relations agenda and on policy and guidance for the NARFE field
- Provide input on recruitment and retention website pages and the tools, tips and templates provided there for the NARFE field
- Provide input on NARFE Federal Benefits Institute presence on the website
- Act as a champion for committee outcomes

For the Marketing and Membership Resource Advisory Committee it was decided to provide insight on the best method to communicate program changes to the field. It is anticipated that members, who know the background of why changes were made, and provided with supporting research data would allow them to better understand necessary changes. Encompassed in this process will be the need to review forms, such as the Renewal Forms and New Member Applications. In addition, several Manuals and Guides will be reviewed. Major overhauls are likely rather than simple updates, incorporating best practices gleaned from the larger association world and designed to present new material in a simplified more user-friendly fashion.

Helen Zajac  
Region VIII Vice President