



**Meeting Summary**  
**NARFE Strategic Planning Committee Meeting**  
**July 27, 2015**

**Conducted electronically**

**Participants:**

Jon Dowie, National Secretary/Treasurer  
Ted Jensen, Maryland  
Charles Stanphill, Oklahoma  
Charles Brodigan, Oregon  
Dave Southworth, California  
Bridget Boel, Marketing Director

Edward Fitzelle, Facilitator  
Ted Van Hintum, Colorado  
Gaston Gianni, Virginia  
Bruce Coleman, Iowa  
Lou Ann Sabatier, Facilitator

Not Participating: Nancy Hunt, Ohio

**The July Strategic Planning Committee meeting opened with a discussion of the Federation President's Meeting in Reno that was held earlier in the month.**

The purpose of this discussion was to allow the Team and Committee members who were in Reno to report on their experience and to update the other members of the Committee who were not there on the strategic planning sessions, the presentations at the meeting and how the other attendees reacted to the information presented. The transcript of the afternoon session on strategic planning was provided for review to the SP Committee members.

Points that were covered:

- Developing a specific vision of what a BOD will look like and along with a listing of its powers and responsibilities will be helpful to the Committee members and enable them to make specific recommendations to the Strategic Planning Team.
- The pros and cons of a regionally representative BOD are still being discussed with a strong view that continued regionalization will not inhibit future progress.

- Some who were at the Reno session reported that there is a growing acceptance that NARFE will have to change and there were fewer objections to the idea of change than at past meetings. Some of the attendees at the Reno meeting expressed that they were pleased that they are being kept in informed on the strategic planning process. One SP Committee member who was at the Reno meeting tracked and categorized the comments he received on strategic planning during the Reno meeting. The majority were favorable or neutral. Some of the comments were requests for further information and only a small number were negative. Another person who was at Reno was pleased that the idea of a policy making board is gaining acceptance.
- The pros and cons of changing the structure of NARFE were discussed in Reno, and the Committee is aware that evolutionary change would enable federations to be flexible in how they change and how they deal with CDLs. Letting the states determine whether to keep federations, go to a CDL structure, or create a hybrid has been voiced as a way to transition the organization to a new structure. As chapters decline in number the federations' roles will be re-defined and what functions the federations perform will need to be considered. A number of Committee members agreed that any funding of the federations in the future should be carefully controlled by Headquarters to ensure that the money is used for the mission. Instead of an across the board equal allocation, perhaps Headquarters should allocate funds depending on the needs of a state. The leadership of the federations is important to the success of NARFE and continued support for that leadership is an important consideration. At the same time the best use of funds coming from the membership is a paramount concern.

**The Committee decided that they will present recommendations to the Strategic Planning Team for the strategic plan that includes the issues that have been under discussion with the understanding that the outcome may be two or three bylaws recommendations in 2016. These most likely would be more authority given to the BOD, non-mandatory chapter membership and one member one vote.**

**The Committee discussed what specific duties and powers a BOD would have.**

Comments were made by the Committee members covering a number of subjects related to how a BOD will function and the powers it should have.

- **Effectiveness:** The BOD needs to be able make decisions and set policies quickly. Having to wait two years to make policy changes through the current governance structure is not effective and is a risk to the future of NARFE.
- **Nature of governance:** One view expressed several times is that the BOD's members will be regionally elected but their role should be more akin to the role of

U.S. Senators, responsible for finding and implementing the best policies for the organization as a whole, while still representing their region's interests.

- **Dues setting:** The BOD would be able to set dues within certain parameters. For example the BOD could increase dues up to a certain percentage, but an increase above the threshold percentage would have to be approved by the membership.
- **Budgets:** How much responsibility for fiscal management should be given to the BOD? NARFE's future financial health is tied to the membership trend. If membership is increasing then sponsors and advertisers will be attracted to NARFE. If the trend continues as is, NARFE will be less attractive, and having enough revenue to cover costs will become increasingly uncertain. The question was also asked about how much responsibility the BOD should have for managing expenses.
- **An Executive Director:** How much responsibility and authority should be given to an Executive Director (whose functional responsibility would be that of a Chief Operating Officer). How would an Executive Director relate to the National President? The National Secretary/Treasurer? The BOD? A general guideline is that the Executive Director would be recruited for their experience and expertise in managing a not for profit organization and hired by the National President. One vision is that they would be responsible for implementing the policies set by the BOD, work on the day-to-day and strategic tasks established in the strategic plan and report through the National President to the BOD. The National President would continue to be the public face of NARFE and represent the membership on Capitol Hill and through the press while ensuring that the Executive Director operate to expand and strengthen the NARFE organization with revenue programs, organization leadership and sound expense management. The FON Committee was aware of other non-profit organizations with successful governance structures incorporating a BOD, National Officers and an Executive Director. It was suggested that NARFE identify and emulate one of these organizations.
- **Timing and sequencing of changes:** Research will be provided by Sabatier Consulting to the SP Committee that will identify best practices for governance of non-profit organizations with a board of directors and executive director. The sequence of changes will also be considered so that the optimal process is put in place to effect any changes in governance.
- **Chapter membership:** The Committee members are agreed that non-mandatory chapter membership should be the policy for NARFE.
- **One Member One Vote:** There was also a consensus to adopt a policy of one member one vote for the election of BOD members.

**The Committee discussed the best way for the Federations to function in the future.**

The Committee believes that a majority of funds spent by federations should be spent on advocacy and recruiting. It could be a majority or some percentage goal, set by the Committee. The Team will set the strategy.

Next meeting: August 12 from 11 - 2.