

**National Executive Board - Federation Presidents
Joint Meeting on Strategic Planning
Reno, NV - July 8, 2015
Afternoon**

INTERVIEW SEGMENT

Sabatier: How long have you worked at NARFE Headquarters?

Thissen: Since April 2011. Prior to that, I was regional vice president for Region V since 2002. Prior to that, Missouri Federation president, vice president, district officer and chapter president. I've grown up in what we consider the NARFE model today.

Sabatier: With regard to the Future of NARFE, or FON, Committee. Who formed that group, and what directive were they given?

Thissen: They were appointed by (former NARFE President) Joe Beaudoin. Their guidance was to form a vision for the next 10, 20, 30 years.

Sabatier: Were you involved?

Thissen: I was not involved in the committee. I did submit one paper to them. The subject of it was reduction of National Officers and revising the RVP structure, and that's eventually where the resolution came to reduce the National Officers from four to two.

Sabatier: What was the positive outcome of what that group did?

Thissen: They looked at all of our previous studies. One that I remember first was in 2002. NARFE hired the Drohan Company in 2001 and it worked for about two years with the NEB. Proposed a set of bylaws. After that, almost every new president who came in had a strategic planning (study), but they put it on a shelf.

Sabatier: Why was there no action?

Thissen: Partly because of feedback and the fear that we couldn't get this done, couldn't get that done. The draft bylaws from Drohan were put out to federation presidents. Emails started flying all over. The Board decided to pull it back, and it went no further.

Sabatier: What could have been improved upon in how the FON results were shared to leaders and members?

Thissen: The distribution of it. Everything about the distribution of it was wrong.

The FON report was done. They asked for feedback, but there was no openness where people could talk to the FON members.

The FON report was released to the NEB about 9 a.m. on a Tuesday morning. The NEB said we will look at this and vote on it. Then the report was released to the NARFE membership on the Web.

There was no way for the Board to digest what was in there or have any review of it. Many of the RVPs felt they had been coerced into accepting this package.

Then the titling of it and the marketing of it was a failure. We were not explicit in defining it as a vision document, rather than an implementation document. People around the country became very defensive. Then we started on the federation convention route. Many of us were picked clean. The biggest problem is it was not properly defined as a vision document rather than an action document.

Sabatier: It was an outstanding piece of work. It was the first part of your strategic planning process. It really got hijacked. All the good work got hijacked. How it was released meant it never really got to have a fair vetting. Be proud of what it was; don't be proud of how it was integrated into the organization. It was a lot of earnest, intelligent work. Your board said we are not going to throw it by the wayside.

Thissen: In reality, the FON report is a compilation and update of all the previous studies that were done.

Sabatier: Many members are concerned that change will be bad. Why are you convinced that change is the right path to take right now?

Thissen: Eighty-five percent of the delegates to the NARFE Convention in Orlando said they wanted a strategic planning committee to be set up with FON to be the basis. I've said to many, they voted in a generic way for change. They said, "Yes, we have to look at the future of NARFE and how NARFE is operated." But it's like a new water or a new power plant — you'd love to have it, but don't put it in my backyard.

That's kind of where we are at now. The Strategic Planning Committee looked at the FON Report. Many of the people said, yes, we want to look at change, but don't really change. They voted very overwhelmingly to reduce the National Officers from four to two. That didn't affect anything below Headquarters. That's what we have to work through today. That is the reason I set this meeting up today – with all of us today. We have to figure out where we can agree on, what we can do to make NARFE viable for the next 93 years, while at the same time not impacting negatively our current members and to get the new people we want to join.

In my magazine articles, I've said we need change, but we don't want to do anything that affects our current members. This is very hard.

Sabatier: What happens to the plan? The (Strategic Planning Team) will be done by November with a draft plan that is very detailed.

Thissen: My vision is that the Strategic Planning Committee takes the feedback from here and from (the email messages sent to stratplan@narfe.org). They give recommendations to the (Strategic Planning) Team. As a part of that, they will be provided to the federation presidents. Eventually, the NEB will have to buy off on any recommendations that come out of this, and so, obviously, the federation presidents will get a review. Nothing is final until the fat lady sings, you all get a review. The members have the final say, but I don't want to take anything to the National Convention that I don't think we've vetted through the entire process to where we think it's not going to pass. ... It's going to be vetted and vetted and vetted to make sure we have the support. If we don't do that, all of our efforts will be

for naught. I don't want to do that to the Strategic Planning Team; I don't want to do that to NARFE. I don't have a dog in this fight. I am trying to stay above the fray.

Sabatier: He has not been involved in this. Dick really is trying to stay a little aloof and outside the process.

When you look back at the history of NARFE, where did you see that NARFE really had to do something difficult and they stepped up to the plate?

Thissen: In 2010, as you remember, we had real financial problems. If you remember, the audit in 2011 essentially said NARFE would close up if we didn't change our act. In 2011, we all knew we needed a dues increase. The bylaws committee put forth a resolution for a dues increase and some other things, all rolled into the resolution. In NARFE, we like to pass simple resolutions. So several of us got together (I was in a room with some Maryland delegates) and put the final words to the document. We wandered around the entire convention floor (to get support). Dave Adams got Region IV to buy in. I got up and made a resolution to retract the entire bylaws committee report and replace with two lines – to raise the dues. Because we had done all of the background work, the dues increase flew through without objection. It got a 78 percent vote. The impact was that it helped us to get out of the red. That was the start of making sure NARFE had enough money. The members of NARFE may disagree on certain items, but ...we can work together to make things happen.

Sabatier: This Strategic Planning Committee is a standing committee. It will be repopulated after the next convention. The strategic planning will never stop.

Thissen: It has to be for two years because all of the committees expire in two years.

Sabatier: Sometimes I hear, "We just have to grow membership." It's not just a marketing issue. Can you talk about membership and some of the things that may have hindered it in recent years?

Thissen: Prior to 2011, we didn't do a lot of real marketing. We depended on the OPM mailing for our entire membership recruiting, and we also did not have a program to follow up on the non-renewed members. Some states did a good job with this. Maryland did an excellent job. Now we are doing it – this month, of 1,910 non-renewals, we reinstated almost 1,600. Part of it is, we just didn't have a systematic program to work all of the areas.

Sabatier: Asks about non-mandatory chapter membership, NARFE and E-NARFE.

Thissen: In every study we have ever had, including the Drohan and FON studies and all of the studies that the NEB did in their strategic planning efforts, mandatory chapter membership has come up as an impediment to member recruitment. We reached our pinnacle (in membership) at about the same time we made chapter membership mandatory and national would collect the dues. Eventually, the vote was taken to make chapter membership mandatory. Americans don't like to be told what to do. One of the things we told them they had to do is join a chapter. The second piece is the chapter no longer kept in close contact with their members. When they were collecting the dues, they had to, at least once a year, talk to their members. So it really had a two-pronged effect.

Sabatier: What does E-NARFE have to do with the other chapters?

Thissen: E-NARFE was created because of the bylaws and because of the requirement that you have to belong to a chapter. The decision was made to create it within the Virginia Federation. Then Virginia released it. Paul Carew (former vice president) ran on creation of an E-NARFE chapter. After it moved out of the Virginia Federation, it slowly grew for the first five or six months. Then it migrated to where we are – over 28,000 today.

The members who went to E-NARFE have told us they couldn't attend chapter meetings, but liked the fact that they could get the magazine and support advocacy. There have been many members within NARFE who weren't interested in attending chapter meetings, or there might have been some local disputes. E-NARFE is a way for me not to belong to a chapter. I'll just go into E-NARFE. Quite frankly, a benefit of doing that is that E-NARFE has chapter dues of zero.

Sabatier: If the bylaws resolution is crafted and it says non-mandatory chapter membership, will E-NARFE still be available?

Thissen: In my mind, it would depend on the members of the E-Chapter. There are some who are really dedicated to the E-Chapter. They may want to keep it alive. But I don't think the decision has been made on mandatory chapter membership. I don't see it's an automatic that (E-NARFE) Chapter 2363 goes away. But in many ways, there would be no overwhelming need for it.

Sabatier: Let's talk about financial issues. What is the financial state today?

Thissen: In the last three years, we've added to net assets. We put a break on the employee compensation and benefits rise. In NARFE, the greatest expense is employees. We continue to bring the percent of what our employees and benefits cost us down; that percentage has been gradually dropping. At one point, it was over 60 percent. We've taken it down to 53 percent.

Sabatier: With regard to the allocation of resources, can you talk about the us vs. them mentality that is under the surface?

Thissen: I am trying very hard – and this meeting is an example and the way we set up the strategic planning process with stratplan.org and posting minutes on the website – I want to make sure we put together what is best for NARFE in the future. There is a reason for that. The Headquarters cannot force anything to be done; the federation presidents and the NEB can't force anything to be done. If membership doesn't buy into what we come up with, nothing will happen. Ninety-nine percent of the votes are in the chapters; they are not with us.

Sabatier: With regard to universal dues, the committee has recommended that dues would be set by the board.

Thissen: Until the board of directors – the president and the treasurer and the leaders of the organization – have the ability to actually make the hard-core decisions, you have to wait two years (until another national convention). You take office in November, and if something comes up in January and something needs to be changed, you either take a referendum or wait another year and nine months (until another national convention).

An executive director will cost us around \$200,000 – and that is just their salary, you have to consider a vehicle for him/her, possibly a vehicle for a spouse, insurance, a special 401(k), a golden parachute. Many people say, “Dick, you are just blowing in the wind.” I am an advisor to the NARFE Premier Federal Credit Union. It is a very involved process. If you hired an executive director under the current bylaws and they didn’t have ability to control the situation, you could not hold their feet to the fire.

Sabatier: Actually, it might be tough to recruit someone.

Thissen: I would not hire the person who would take the job under our current bylaws.

Sabatier: Let’s talk about governance. If you look at the issues, they are in three areas: membership, finance and governance. Where did those 12 issues come from? Were they voted on last year?

Thissen: As we began the strategic planning process, the (Strategic Planning) Team had met and identified some things they could do. During the NEB meeting, certain things were added. These were the items that we passed on to Jon. The (Strategic Planning) Committee also had the ability to add things. I think what they finally realized is, these were pretty daunting in themselves.

Sabatier: Out of 35 FON recommendations, there were five core areas. Out of the five core areas, they chose two or three areas and are leaving the rest to deal with in two more years. With regard to governance, you spoke about the executive director. As things are getting talked about, how would you and Jon fit in?

Thissen: That has not been determined yet, but Jon and I have had conversations. The original discussion was we would have a board of directors and no resident officers. Jon and I have come to the conclusion that even after we hire an executive director, we believe at least one resident officer is required, and probably two. You need a president who is the face of NARFE, who goes up on the Hill, appears on ABC 7. And you really need the treasurer to ensure that our money, NARFE’s money, is properly taken care of and handled properly. You can look at the history of NARFE – we have had money slip through our fingers like it was water. At one time, NARFE had \$14 million in total assets. It’s gone. Jon and I have talked long and hard about whether we really need to have resident officers. I know that wasn’t the original feeling of the Future of NARFE Committee. But as we’ve looked at things, he and I have both come to the same conclusion. We think two is the right number. We don’t think you can go to none.

PANEL Q&A SEGMENT

Thissen, Boel, Fitzelle and Dowie on the dais.

Roundtree, Maryland: What communication strategies have the NEB had for communicating these changes and the outcome? What is the number that has been determined you need to have for membership in the draft strategic plan.

Thissen: You've seen the beginning of it. Everything we've done, we've tried to publicize it in the magazine and on the Web. You have to know what it is happening. Then you provide feedback to us. We want that feedback. That is the reason for this. You have never seen a meeting like this. We are opening the whole process up to all of you. The (Strategic Planning) Committee has to take into consideration all that has come up here. We have to see what the market will accept. The market may not accept a,b,c,d; but they might accept e or a modified d.

Sabatier: Someone else said, "We aren't seeing too much." Sometimes we go through six hours and we are circling back. Last time, we had 22 pages of notes drilled down to a two-page summary. I am not going to release 22 pages of notes and whip everyone up. Sometimes it is hours. It's not confrontational. They are being diligent and working through it. I'm not going to put 22 pages of notes of all the things that we are struggling with. You want to be authentic and put everything out there, but that does a disservice to the process.

Roundtree, Maryland: There is a lack of transparency.

Thissen: If people don't read the magazine, go to the website and read the *NARFE Insider*, I don't know what we can do.

Roundtree, Maryland: (Refers to his question on how many members the plan says it wants to recruit.)

Sabatier: A strategic plan and a marketing plan are different. You want as many members as you can get. A strategic plan doesn't have a level of: We are going to do this and get 20 members. It's a very different kind of plan.

Boel: The (Strategic Planning) Committee has not brought recommendations to the (Strategic Planning) Team yet. At that time, the strategies will be made, and the strategies will have plans to implement them. Then there will be internal goals and objectives for the Membership Department. We are not waiting for this (and refers to previous presentation of activities being undertaken to recruit members).

Roundtree, Maryland: What approach are you taking for the impact and the risk that will be involved? Every decision has a risk tied to the decision.

Dowie: You realize that you have a risk now by not doing anything. I am a businessman. I listen to what you say. It is conceivable that another organization might form (in competition with NARFE) and get between 30,000 and 50,000 members in five months. There is a risk of doing nothing when the frustration of certain members is high.

Roundtree: Refers to the risk of non-mandatory chapter membership on chapters.

Dowie: In spite of mandatory chapter membership, we are closing chapters at an accelerating rate. The reality is, life changed. Sometimes you are putting a risk on changing mandatory chapter membership, when it really isn't a risk.

Fitzelle: You need to respond to the risks you do know. You know the biggest risk is not to do anything. You have to respond to what is presenting the risk now. A strategic plan has milestones. A plan that is proactive will address the new risks as they come along.

Janci, Region III RVP: Addressed to Thissen, question on universal dues.

Thissen: This is really hard for me. As many of you know, I was the proponent of universal dues in two straight conventions. It got 62.4 percent one year and 63.8 percent of the vote another year. I love universal dues. I'm concerned about universal dues today because the fastest growing chapter in NARFE (E-NARFE Chapter 2363) would be those exact people who would have the greatest dues increase by the implementation of universal dues. The fact is, they have zero chapter dues today. Wherever we set the bar at – \$42, \$48 – their dues increase would be whatever would be over \$40. I contemplated a \$40 universal dues. But then I know we cannot afford that. We cannot pay chapter dues and 10 percent funds from that. I love universal dues. We wouldn't have had to have Chapter 2363 if you had universal dues. But our cash cow right now is E-NARFE. It absolutely is E-NARFE. Remember, and you on the NEB will know this, we agreed when a new person joins NARFE, they pay \$40. One-third goes to the chapter and 10 percent goes to the federation. When someone joins E-NARFE, we don't pay out the one-third. When someone joins a traditional chapter, we get \$22.67. When someone joins E-NARFE, we get \$36. They are our cash cow. And so I have to worry about that. You see that I am not a part of the strategic planning process. I have to worry about all of NARFE. I cannot get embroiled in these little fights. I have to make sure we preserve NARFE. I am torn on universal dues. I would love universal dues, but I have to be very careful not to take our cash cow away.

Weise, Ohio: In the future, is it possible with all of these recommendations that two of the levels we have in NARFE, our chapters and federations, could disappear?

Dowie: As we had our discussions, we are doing nothing to be a detriment to the chapters. We have no desire or faint thought of getting rid of the chapters. With regard to federations, it's only an evolution of what they have now. Federations evolve to state representatives, CDLs. It's just talking about evolution, not eliminating them.

Weise, Ohio: If you don't have mandatory chapter membership, why would chapters continue?

Dowie: Because some people like to belong to chapters. It is advocacy on a national level, advocacy on a local level, Some are more action oriented. Others are social. If they just enjoy seeing some of the people and like to get together for coffee and lunch, why wouldn't they go on forever?

Ek, Region V RVP: I have listened to a lot of information today; I have listened to a lot of rhetoric. As usual, I have no idea exactly what are talking about. You are talking about strategic planning, Lou and Ed. Just exactly what are we talking about? Are we talking about

a board of directors? Are we talking about changing the organization? Are we talking about the president or treasurer? Just exactly what are we trying to put on the table?

Dowie: Of 35 FON recommendations, eight were given to the (Strategic Planning) Committee. The Committee talked about some of those recommendations: A board of directors that is more agile, accountable and efficient. As part of that discussion, we want to have them not be regionalized, and we want them to have more authority to act. One of the other questions was what is the ideal number. The Committee is saying some odd number between five and nine – probably seven. Then it would give it back to the NEB to decide whether they want five or seven.

Ek, Region V RVP: Under the current bylaws, the NEB is the only one who can change the number of people on the National Executive Board. I have a piece of paper that says the Committee initially discussed that regional representation was not essential because regional issues are seldom discussed by the NEB. When I first went on the NEB, we did discuss regional issues. We didn't stop discussing regional issues until FON. (If there is no regional representation) you could have five or seven members on the board all from one state – I know you said you and Richard are from one state.

A second thing (referring to the paper, it says Jon Dowie offered clarity on the overall structure – saying the CEO would be the president elected by the board of directors and would stay on the board and would be a resident officer. That is not what I heard today. Are you talking about having a member election of a president and a treasurer, then having another CEO who also would be in Headquarters?

Dowie: As it stands right now, a resolution of the NEB states that the board remains at 10 until 2016, then goes back down to five. The FON recommended that the state reps elect the members of the board of directors; and the board of directors, among themselves, would elect the president and treasurer and could appoint two other people. The executive director does the administrative stuff – runs the organization from an administrative point of view, has a budget and keeps the ship running, no matter what. The executive director would be appointed by the board of directors. Your CEO is the president. Every corporation I have been involved in, the board of directors is not elected regionally. It doesn't stop a shareholder from calling one of the directors. Do I realize there are regional differences? Yes and no. There are federation differences. We have two federations that have fewer chapters than you need to start a new federation. Two federations only have four chapters.

Thissen: Again, no recommendations have been made. Right now, NARFE is the way it is today. There have been no recommendations made by the Committee yet. As soon as some recommendations are made, we will get it out to you. That is why we have this today. You have to let Jon know your thoughts, so he can take it back to the committee.

Robinson, Georgia: Makes comment about dues-setting.

On November 15, 2012, a motion was made (NEB) that NARFE establish a worldwide E-NARFE chapter. Voting strength would be transferred to each federation president. It never happened. The NEB has an identity problem. I have very little faith in the NEB and the things that you do behind closed doors.

Thissen: In 2010, we passed a national dues rate of \$40. At the board meeting immediately following the convention, we passed a new-member fee of \$45, which includes first-year chapter dues. While the convention passed \$40 dues, the NEB had to pass a first-year dues for chapter. That makes it easier to recruit. We don't have to figure out what ZIP code does this person belong to. We have had a first-year dues rate since before I went on the board.

Robinson, Georgia: That caused a big firestorm in my federation.

Thissen: With every dues increase we have ever done, that is a discussion that the NEB always has. We know that we are going to have 10-15 percent extra attrition the year after a dues increase. That is why I have said we will not have a dues increase while I am still around. In the long run, it helps you balance the books. But, yes, a dues increase hurts us tremendously. That is why we are working very hard to get nondues revenue.

Robinson, Georgia: The second part of my comment was about E-NARFE.

Thissen: In 2012, we did say we created the worldwide E-NARFE chapter, that the 10 percent went to the federation containing the ZIP code where the member resides and that we wanted to give the votes to the federations. At the 2013 federation presidents meeting, Paul Carew had to stand up and do a "mea culpa" because we couldn't figure out how to give the votes to the federations. We couldn't have done it in the bylaws. Chapter 2363 could have done it, but the president of 2363 refused to do it. He said I am not going to do that. I don't believe in it. I'm not going to do it. We could not do that. We don't have any authority to do it. There is no method for us to take the votes away from a chapter. The bylaws say you get one vote for every 50 members. We looked at every possibility to move those votes, but we could not figure out how to do it. So it did not happen.

Clarke, District of Columbia: We had a report on the aggressive way we are getting affiliates. If we see the results we have had to this point, why are we sitting here worrying about finances? We paid a pittance of registration for this meeting. Let's give them a full year to work with sponsors. Maybe they can sustain us and keep our dues where they are. Let's get onto things that are significant, like the numbers we have that give us clout when our representatives go up on the Hill.

Adelman, Region VII RVP: I am sure there are people who love NARFE the way it is. I am sure that some people think that NARFE is such a long-standing organization it is probably immune from technological and other changes. If we don't do anything in the next two to four years, Dick, what would NARFE look like in 10 years?

Sabatier: Directs question to all of the panelists.

Boel: We have a membership problem. You heard a lot about what we are doing to make sure our revenue increases. But dues has to be a part of our revenue. We have had a precipitous decline in membership over the last 30 years. If we do nothing, we will become less relevant. If that decline keeps happening, NARFE gets less interesting to sponsors. We need to stabilize the membership. As our membership continues to decline, we won't have clout anymore. This is my personal opinion.

I have looked at all of the research; I continue to do research. We do testing all of the time, to potential new members and lapsed members. Having mandatory chapter membership is

hurting recruiting, and it is hurting our retention. There is no reason that we should ever do away with chapters. It's happening, unfortunately, without us doing anything because chapters are closing. If we don't do anything, in any number of years, I don't think we will exist.

Fitzelle. I will give you an analogy. We start a college fraternity. This is our fraternity. Every year, they didn't look for additional people to join, and after a few years the fraternity ceases to exist. Not doing that (eliminating mandatory chapter membership), you are ignoring what is being presented to you about the coming generation. Eventually, you are going to turn into an irrelevant organization that is too small to get the attention of anyone.

Dowie: NARFE is healthy but fragile. A breakoff of some federations or chapters and competing against us could be a real scenario. Over and over again, I've seen it in business. I would describe us as fragile. If we don't change, there could be dire circumstances within the next five years.

Thissen: As Jon said, we are healthy financially. In December 2010, we had 350,000 members. Today, we have 230,000 total. In a normal organization, we would be in financial jeopardy because we were there in 2010. I cannot tell you the exact day or the exact year that the magic runs out. Jon used to ask me, how can you go from 350,000 members losing money to 230,000 making money? We have looked at every way to get non-dues revenue. We've got one more method with Jennifer now. That is going to help us move a little further – it is going to get us some time. We're like the Social Security trust fund; one day, the Social Security trust fund is going to be empty. If we do nothing, we take the risk that that day is coming. What is the change that we have to have? We don't know what you and the members will accept. Maybe the trouble is that maybe the members and some of you haven't accepted the fact that we have to change. I thought we had passed it when (the strategic planning resolution) passed by 85 percent. If that is the case, you need to tell us today or tomorrow, because we need that.

Ross, Region IX RVP: I've served on the board for 15 years. I can honestly say I am more encouraged today than in 2000. We have had a very enlightening overview of the strategic planning process. I want to remind you what Dick has said numerous times: Nothing has yet been decided. Until such time as I see a strategic plan in writing, it will be difficult for me or my federation to cast a vote on anything.

I believe I heard Ed say the responsibility will shift to the Team to draft the plan for the view of the federation presidents and the NEB. It may be today and tomorrow are too soon to decide what we all agree upon – or even about one of the 12. I was at the same NEB meeting as Jon and Dick. My recollection was that we had taken the original 35 FON recommendations down to eight, and four were added. We passed them down to the Strategic Planning Committee. We may not see all of those in writing; the Team hasn't finished their job yet.

The question was brought up by a federation president, what kind of deliverables will he take back to his federation. I am going to rely heavily on the scribe. It simply will be that a healthy, open discussion was held by all the federation presidents to try to come to consensus.

Pierson, Mississippi: Two things:

First, my federation wanted me to come back with an answer on whether federations and chapters were still going to get their (10 percent funds) – that is what we depend on. We are a small state; we have a very small amount of money. What we do have we use in our chapters, to send our chapters to conventions, for legislation. There is no partying going on in Mississippi. Everyone knows there has to be change.

Second, the bylaws. Will this meet with the District of Columbia statute if I put in a resolution that to be eligible, an individual need only to be a federal employee – take out “civil service”. That would include the military.

Thissen: In answer to your question, would it meet the articles of incorporation? Yes. However, I would also point out to you the military has several organizations of their own that deal directly with their benefits and those types of things. We don't have the expertise in those areas. You send me \$40, and they are in. But, quite frankly, we would not have the expertise to help them in some instances. We've had those resolutions in the past. As you know, the FON Committee recommended opening up membership, but our lawyer said to look at it carefully.

McGrath, Maryland: We are looking at similar things in Maryland. We are very concerned with the funding for the federation. Jon said it would be a gradual transition. I think the funding is important, like Mary said. Maryland funds a tremendous legislative operation, federal and state level. We have invested a lot of money at the state level. This year, we may, for the first time, be ready to get some extensive breaks for federal and state employees on their tax payments in retirement. We wouldn't want to lose those funds overnight and not get those benefits after all this hard work. Very little of our money doesn't go into the NARFE core mission, which is legislation, or membership. We have been directing more money to membership – getting into agencies. We are getting into the VA, Social Security, places where the doors had been locked to us. While we may not be recruiting all that much, we are getting the brand out there.

On Jon's comment about another organization being formed, I see that as very possible. I feel strongly enough about our core mission that if we, as NARFE, cannot successfully do our core mission properly, I wouldn't have a problem helping Jon or anyone else form another organization.

Dowie: I never said I was going to form another organization. I just said the possibility was out there. It's possible, but I don't plan on doing it. One of the things that I do think strongly about: I'm not an annuitant; my wife is a retired federal employee (I didn't even get called for an interview). I don't believe I should be the president of NARFE. The president and CEO should be a previous federal employee. I realize right now I could (run for president), but I won't.

Buffaloe, North Carolina: Like the last two speakers, I too am interested in your thoughts on the future of federations. Is there thought of a transition, etc. For my 19-member board, this is the most important issue for them. We have 10 elected members, nine appointed members. We are about 5,000 members. We went from 52 to 44 chapters, but haven't closed one since then. We have CDLs; we put the structure together. I know the pros and cons. There are 13 congressional districts. Those 13 people live and breathe politics. But they are not the same people, nor do they have the same interests, as my six district

officers. I have heard no mention of service. We have a dedicated service officer. That person goes out all over the state to train the chapter service officers. Sure we have great people in Headquarters, but the people don't get the training from that. We also are very concerned about Alzheimer's donations if we don't have federation conventions. We get the bulk of Alzheimer's donations at convention. We also have a six-member committee whose sole purpose is recruitment and retention. That group has gotten us into VA hospitals, etc. They've sent in 300-400 contact cards. CDLs aren't going to push that. We have a NARFE-PAC coordinator who works at the convention, does newspaper articles, goes to chapter meetings. We put out a newspaper. We have an editor. We have 5,000 members, but only 300 get it by email.

My question is: Can you share with us, the 54 of us, the future of the federations? What do you see as the transition, what kind of time period, what is the resolution going to look like? If it's too early, it's too early, but that is what we want to find out.

Dowie: Of course we are going to listen to the federations, we are going to transition. With regard to the 10 percent money, we don't have a plan right now. It is not unconceivable to me that we would go from 10 percent to 8 percent or 6 percent. I wouldn't see going below 5 percent. I don't see anyone coming out and saying it's gone. We don't want to do anything to a chapter. It's conceivable to me (my chapter) could continue on if non-mandatory chapter membership passes. It's more of a social nature. We don't have federal buildings or federal employees in the confines of St. Augustine (FL, where Dowie's chapter is located).

We have no agenda for specific cuts to the federations. We want to make the transition to more legislative and advocacy. Dick and I have talked about probably always having a NARFE-PAC and Alzheimer's person.

Zajac, California: I'm currently a district vice president with nine chapters. The district agreed that unified dues should be one of the items that we agree should be implemented. If we had unified dues, mandatory chapter membership goes away. There is the concern about the E-Chapter members; they would have to pay some amount of chapter dues under unified dues.

Dowie: (Comments on the efforts of some members to mitigate dues payment.) We have life members who are 120 years old. Some people have on their calendars 15 months; they know that is when we drop them. If we were to go with unified dues, we will lose some of our E-NARFE chapter members.

Carlson-Gotts, Utah: I've only been in NARFE seven years. I've seen the evolution in the state of Utah. We lost two chapters this year; there is a real lack of interest in coming to meetings. We are looking at some of these key points.

Break for LUNCH

Thissen: Lou Ann and I have talked. We think that you would rather continue with your questions. Would you like to go down the issues point by point?

Sabatier: If we do that, there is no vote taking. ...Pros and cons.

With regard to a question I had during the break about what to tell members at home: We had a discussion. That is it. Federations are not going away tomorrow. 10 percent funds are not going away. You want someone to tell you, so you can agree or disagree. We are probably six months away before we look at something concrete. Even though you are seeing notes, it is just throwing (the discussion) out. We are trying not to put something definitive out there.

Let the process work. Nobody is pulling a fast one. We are only a third of the way started. It's fluid –what have you decided? Nothing. What we have decided is, we are going to be diligent in what the board asked us to do. Don't assume it's a fait accompli. Those details are to be worked out. All you can say right now is, we had a really rigorous discussion. Bear with us to let the process work.

We will talk about Item 1: "What is the most efficient structure of the Board of Directors (synonymous with NEB)"

Hensley, NC: I really think the National Executive Board is like the Federation Executive Board and Chapter Executive Committees.

Moore, Nebraska: In strategic planning, this item is not in order. We don't know what the strategy is. This comes after.

Baker, New Mexico: Our group has already discussed this. I believe the board of directors should be elected regionally; I would suggest five rather than seven. If appointed, I think they should be nonvoting. Staggered and limited terms would be a very good idea.

Gibbs, Idaho: Our group discussed this. We prefer at least seven board members or NEB members. We are not sure what their particular job would be. Now, regional vice presidents come to chapters and assist us. I think if we go to five, that board will be spread pretty thin. I would prefer a minimum of seven.

Adams, Michigan: Are we talking about a board of directors or NEB? The question is "What is the most efficient structure of the board of directors?" If that is the case, if it has been agree upon, there should be somewhere spelled out what would be the difference.

McGrath, Maryland: Questions what are the requirements for associations under District of Columbia law.

Dowie: You have to have two officers.

Ross, Region IX RVP: To me, it simply is that while we are in transition, we structure it in such a way that we continue to give effective service to the grass-roots. I'm not using board of directors yet. We are not ready for a board of directors yet. We have in place a

National Executive Board. As you heard Jessie say many times, she is not effective on Capitol Hill unless the individuals on the chapter level are active. She hates to bring something to Capitol Hill and have a member of Congress say they've not heard of it.

Fitzelle: This is exactly the same discussion we've had in the Strategic Planning Committee. I am just saying that to remind you that is what the Committee is all about.

McDonald, Rhode Island, and member of SPC: One word is missing – "effective." Even if you are aiming to be more efficient in your structure, there has to be a trade-off on what you are gaining in being more efficient. If you are more efficient, but less effective....

Thissen: Based on Lanny's comment: If you don't give us the feedback here, put it in a message to stratplan@narfe.org. I'd like to know your feelings. Do you want RVPs or a Board of Directors? RVPs will come around and visit you; a board of directors will meet once, twice, three times a year and do the business of NARFE. You don't go out and visit. If you can't give us the input today, you need to tell us how you feel about that. That is a very basic issue. There is a difference between a board of directors and RVPs.

Dowie: There is a price tag of \$300,000.

Buffaloe, North Carolina: My federation board believes it should be made up of regional vice presidents. We believe without being elected by the members, a board of directors will lose that connection. We are fine with the concept of calling them a board of directors, but we do not believe they should be able to appoint other board members.

Wilson, Washington: At the 2014 Convention, three of the federations in Region IX had a resolution to keep the NEB at 10 RVPs. We failed to get it passed (only got 62 percent of vote). I'm of the opinion that we should have regional vice presidents rather than a disconnected board of directors.

Pierson, Mississippi: My federation also would like to keep the regional vice presidents. They would like to see seven elected rather than appointed, not five.

Moore, Nebraska: The Nebraska Federation would like to keep regional vice presidents. They won't hold our hands; they will help us.

Blythe, Kansas: I obviously want to see the NEB stay with the 10 regional vice presidents. I can only speak about the Regional VP of Region V— Kansas relies on the input of our RVP Carol Ek. (I am an active federal employee; I also have a farm) I cannot spend 100 percent of my spare time being sure I contact all of the 38 presidents on the issues that have to be dealt with for NARFE to be able to work on our legislative advocacy. I count on Carol to push some of that information down when it is absolutely imperative that Kansas members try to make their voices heard. I would hate to have our RVPs go down to five and know that someone would have to cover a 12-15-state region. We have 3,800 members in Kansas. They are used to a Regional VP. Dick Thissen used to be Regional VP for Region V. He knows the information he provided at all of our federation conventions. I would hate to see that go away.

Dwyer, Nevada: I see no reason for a board of directors if you have a National Executive Board.

Freeland, Oklahoma: I do think that not having regional representation would mean you would lose the support of the grass-roots level. I would fear the most that we would have a board of directors from one central location.

Zajac, Region VIII RVP: If we do establish a board, and if it has outside people, they should be former members of Congress or committee staff.

Clarke, District of Columbia: I think with a smaller membership now, we should consider seven and have them better funded. I don't really know what a board of directors is. I prefer seven RVPs and the two national officers.

Sasson, West Virginia: I think the answer to Item1 depends on what type of membership model we want. If we want to be AARP-like we can go to a board of directors. If we want to keep a bottom-up model, we should stick with the NEB or something resembling what we have today.

Babcock, Alaska: The Red Cross has a board of directors; AARP has a board of directors. We are not in that league. Plus, we are very mission-oriented. We would lose that flow of communication from the grass-roots up; it would dampen and destroy that whole flow of information and ideas. I personally, and I know the members of my federation and some chapter members, feel quite comfortable with how the NEB works now. We prefer 10, but if seven were to happen, we would not oppose.

Thissen: We have heard the RVP side of it. Does anyone talk about the board of directors and functioning as policymakers.

No identification: I kind of like the intimacy of having an RVP. Why can't the RVP be on the board of directors and work in that capacity?

Sabatier: There is some miscommunication here. The Strategic Planning Committee is using the terms Board of Directors and NEB interchangeably.

Moves to Item 2: "Review the authorities provided the BOD. Move toward agile governance."

Is there anything you can do to give them more freedom in how they make decisions?

Coleman, Iowa and SPC member: They would be policy makers. The president would be the face of NARFE on Capitol Hill, not the person who runs the day-to-day operations. The board of directors should probably have the ability to make policy and let the day-to-day operations go through your technicians.

Ek, Region V RVP: I would like to have someone, maybe from the committee, explain just exactly what kind of policies they are talking about. There are a lot of policies that the NEB has the authority to make, unless we are getting into bylaws. I am not certain what the question is referring to.

Thissen: That particular point is to allow the board to have more authority and not have to wait until the convention in two years to have something major be corrected. (Mentions incentive process, dues adjustment) There are other items, from time to time, where, if we had the immediate ability, we could move out quickly. For instance, if the board of directors or the NEB would recognize that mandatory chapter membership is an impediment, it could be fixed. The board of directors/NEB would have a lot more authority over the conduct of the business of NARFE than the "Mother may I?" situation we have now. It's a decision for you and the members to make. Right now, our bylaws are very restrictive on the NEB to run the organization.

Ross, Region IX RVP: You elect us to run the organization, and the bylaws do not allow us to do that. There used to be a part of the bylaws that said, NARFE will publish a monthly magazine called "Retirement Life." That had no business being in the bylaws. So we put in the corner of the magazine in a small font – Retirement Life. We had to do an end around. I fully support a resolution that would support Items 2 and 3 (Board of Directors to set annual national membership dues.)

Adams, Michigan: What has happened in the last two years that makes this necessary? I understand what agility means. There is nothing urgent about any one of those that couldn't wait until convention. If it's that urgent, do it and get it ratified. But just to say you need the authority, that is not good enough. You need to tell us what kind of problems you've been having.

Shackelford, Region X RVP: I was chair of the bylaws committee. Dave, your comment is well taken. I am reminded of what happened at the convention – it took us how many hours to get us through a page and a half. That is just the way the members come to the convention. They will nitpick a comma, a period – whatever. Unless you can get to the point where those portions of the bylaws allow the NEB to make changes on your behalf without having to come forward every two years, I'm afraid nothing is going to happen.

Montoro, New York: I am ok with Items 2 and 3. It's up to the Team to put together a good resolution, otherwise this is not going to make it. What I would really like to see is the rationale behind it. If it isn't done right, it's not going to make it.

Buffaloe, North Carolina: My board was not crazy about 2 and 3, but the consensus is we could live with it if it had good reasons.

Kirby, Region II RVP: It is painfully hard at the NEB level to make what appears to be a good policy decision. If you vote someone to represent you, they are bringing your will to the table. They have all of the information that you need to make policy decisions. I am speaking very strongly in favor of giving more policy authority to the NEB. If you don't like what they are doing, you un-elect them. They are considering the big picture and have the information to make decisions.

Baker, New Mexico: New Mexico is willing to go with a board with some restrictions if they are elected locally. In terms of giving them freedom to decide policy, we can go with that. When it comes to dues, we would like to have a qualifier that the board of directors can set the membership dues as long as it does not exceed a current percentage. If higher, it should go to delegates at a national convention.

Sabatier: Moves on to Item 4: "Transition from federation structure to state advocacy structure."

The important word there is "transition." Think long term.

Brown, Louisiana: I am in favor of the CDL concept for advocacy. I am a strong believer that advocacy is most successful when you have continuity. When the person is known, you get the ear of the legislator, and it is easy to develop this. They get to know you. The CDL can be an individual who can work with these people. He would be the face within that congressional district.

Lemley, Florida: Apparently, I was under a false impression. At the Orlando convention, it was my understanding that a committee would be put together and use the FON Report for a basis or a benchmark from which to work. It was a surprise to me to learn that the NEB picked what the Strategic Planning Committee was to consider.

I am not in favor of Item 4. In Florida, we have 27 congressional districts. We cannot even get legislative officers; we probably will not be able to get CDLs for that reason.

Priolo, Hawaii: I can support a new structure of some sort pushing state advocacy. However, in Hawaii, we have an electronic service center. Members can call in, or send fax or email, and get a response within 24 hours. We also are an island state; we have to pay for airfare for our chapter presidents to join us. We have unique issues and programs. Whatever this looks like, it should allow for continuation of the good things federations are already doing.

Cornelison, Kentucky: I am against a state advocacy structure. We don't have chapters in a lot of congressional districts – we had to close them. I don't see how I am going to get a CDL in those areas. It's impossible. There is nobody there. That's why I am against the state advocacy structure. We have a few congressmen and a couple of well-known senators, and you aren't going to get into their offices anyway.

Manno, Missouri: The Missouri Federation is transitioning to CDLs, but we are against eliminating the federations.

Giangerelli, Virginia: I am against this item. Federations provide a heck of a lot more support for chapters and federations than just advocacy with legislators. If we do away with federations, we have to set up a structure to do the same job. We have CDLs and senatorial legislative liaisons as part of the federation, so that exists and it is operating, and we have state activities. That doesn't address everything that federations do.

Bryant, Arizona: If you want to require a CDL attached to the federation, that's ok. If you want to use part of the 10 percent funds for legislative advocacy, that's ok. But don't tell federations what do to with 100 percent of those 10 percent dues funds.

Richards, Region VI RVP: I don't know why the current federation structure can't work with CDLs. We've had that in Texas for a number of years, and it does work. The hardest part is that it is hard to get people (to serve as CDLs). We have 36 representatives in Texas.

Katz, New Jersey: We are just getting into the CDL structure. Our federation legislative committee has staffed CDL positions. There was no problem when we had a constituent living in the district. It would probably work within the federation structure.

Minnear, Tennessee: The Tennessee Federation is in favor of retaining most of the federation structure. Some have been bloated over the years. I have one issue –the election process. This gives a lot of power to state CDLs. In my particular state, nine people will pick the state rep.

Roundtree, Maryland: The CDL concept comes from the structure of letter carriers. It does give a lot of power to the state rep. That is a structure for a union. I'm for keeping federations intact. Because it works for (the union) does not mean it will work for NARFE.

Montoro, New York: As those who attended the NARFE Legislative Conference know, it was standing-room only when we had the CDL seminar. Part of the transition is information. If they did further seminars and education and, maybe at some point, Jessica could give a vision as to what she sees the CDLs in the federations being, that would be part of the transition.

Sabatier: Item 5: "Redirecting federation funds and migrate funding to state and other representatives for congressional advocacy."

Zajac, Region VIII RVP: We have 53 congressional districts in California, and we have had a CDL program for a number of years. It depends on the federation president how well it works. I think that the funding needs to be with the federation so they can support the congressional district liaisons.

Bryant, Arizona: The Arizona Federation has a legislative budget for advocacy, but many times when it comes to the end of the year, the money used might only be 10 percent of a very small amount. Our legislative officers very often do not put in vouchers. So, it may not look like we are doing much. If you say we have to use 10 percent of money for legislative advocacy, it may show up that we didn't use it because we don't have vouchers for it.

Adelman, Region VII RVP: We had a great legislative conference. But not every federation sent an attendee. What's very disappointing is to see some federation treasuries have thousands of dollars – two or three years of expenses banked away – and they couldn't send anyone to the conference. If we remember, our mission is to protect our benefits. If we aren't willing to spend our tens of thousands of dollars to send people to the legislative conference, what are we doing? I'd like to commend the Pennsylvania Federation, which sent someone from almost all of their legislative districts. That should be the standard.

Pierson, Mississippi: We have legislative representatives – our district reps. Many times, they do not submit an expense report. If they do submit one, then we do pay. We don't think we should have our funds redirected.

Giangerelli, Virginia: We develop a budget every year. We allocate funds to every function. In the past, I have to admit, we underfunded the CDLs and state legislative officers. We aren't doing that any longer. We are extending it to the full extent that they will use these funds. This is getting down into what we do too far. This is what the function of the federation is. Why do we have to be told to do that?

Shackelford, Region X RVP: I agree with Rodney 100 percent. But Item 5 needs to be reworded. Does that mean that Jessie will get another staff member to monitor (how federations are spending their money on advocacy)? We have to be careful on how this is worded. Who is going to be in charge of that? I personally believe it should remain with the federation presidents.

Dwyer, Nevada: My legislative vice president runs the CDL program, and there is a line item in our budget for his expenses. And if his expenses run out, we will certainly fund him.

McDonald, Rhode Island, and a member of the SPC: If you are a federation president and you had \$100, and you had to decide to use that on advocacy or to go to a health fair where you had the chance to get 10 new members, what would be the better use of that money? At a federation level, that is what our decision-making process is. How are we going to spend that extra dollar that we have? Are we investing enough money in membership? If the membership trend continues to go down, will we have to transfer advocacy money into membership?

Shal, Pennsylvania: We have been training people in Pennsylvania and Region II to develop what is the true failing in NARFE and that is leadership. We provide training, support the training, then we had a pool of people to call upon (to go to the Legislative Conference). They knew NARFE; they came through the NARFE system. We need a lot more training. We need to focus on leadership training and incorporate that into our core mission. We put a lot of money into (sending people to) the legislative training conference, but we put a heck of a lot more into training over the years. Everyone in NARFE is a volunteer. We have to find ways to support them. We have to find ways to encourage them. Training is one, and recognition is another.

McGrath, Maryland: All I can say for George is ditto for Maryland. Regarding membership vs. legislative, they are not in competition. We have to do both. We have to recruit. Maryland has some of the better numbers on recruiting and retention. And it happens because we have some serious volunteers who do that. A lot of people live close enough to the places at which we recruit that they don't put in for mileage. We have a lot of money in Maryland, and we spend a lot of money. We spent \$20,000 to send people to the conference, and we limited what we reimbursed them for. We cannot sacrifice one for the other. We can't advocate if we don't have members. At the legislative conference, we had 100 percent representation. Every congressman's office was visited. Every senator's office was visited.

McDonald, Rhode Island: One thing I forgot to mention: If we were to approach financial people a year from now, they would have a pretty good idea of the cost of attaining a new client. We should look at that in our own federation. What are you are spending to recruit new people? What is the total cost to get those new members? Can we become more efficient?

Ross, Region IX RVP: Speaks to Item 6: "Establish Congressional District Leaders in each congressional district." Does the word "establish" mandate that this be done? Establish sounds like it is mandated.

Kirby, Region II RVP: Let me make a general comment. The language is exactly what was in the FON report. What you didn't have is the surrounding information. In terms of

Lanny's point, "establish," the point behind that is that's the goal. Would there ever be 535 (CDLs nationwide)? Not in my lifetime. It ought to be the mountain you are going to take. If somebody vacates one, you have a vacancy. It's the goal.

Sabatier: Item 7: "Local chapter membership will become optional."

Boel: The discussion within the Committee to date is, if local chapter membership is no longer mandatory, it would be optional. We would bring new members in as members of NARFE. With the new-member packet, you would be encouraged to check in with your local chapter – told what that chapter is and how you can contact them.

When we go out in our mass mailings, we don't give them the option of both. When you give them an option, your overall response plummets. Indeed, it did plummet. We did two separate tests.

Pierson, Mississippi: How would having a person in your chapter that doesn't pay dues affect that chapter's voting strength when you go to national convention?

Thissen: Under the current bylaws – the current structure – you are provided votes on the members who pay your chapter dues. If the Strategic Planning Committee recommends that, then it's incumbent to look at the impact on chapter voting strength. Obviously, it is going to affect that one way or another. I would say that is still an open question,

Wilson, Washington: What is the committee's intention for new members? They just don't have to join?

Boel: As it has been discussed – and nothing has been finalized – a new member would become a member of NARFE. Not of E-NARFE, not of any local chapter. Once they became a member, they would be given an opportunity to join a chapter.

Wilson, Washington: A one-two concept.

Adams, Michigan: (Back-and-forth ensues with Boel on effect of chapter membership on recruitment/retention).

Konys, Region IV RVP: But a new member would be assigned to a CDL team. (Item 8: "NARFE members are automatically members of Congressional District team.")

Kirby, Region II RVP: That has nothing to do with whether you are in a chapter or not in a chapter. You are in a Congressional District team based on where you live. If you are organizing for advocacy, there is an expectation you would be active in advocacy.

Shackelford, Region X RVP: I have had people tell me, "Oh yeah, I know about NARFE. I went to a chapter meeting, and it wasn't for me."

Katz, New Jersey: We have a lot of members in New Jersey. What is to stop them from gaming the system – to drop out and then come back as members of Chapter 2363?

Boel: They are doing it all the time.

Giangerelli, Virginia: One of the things that you have to remember is that the chapters are the ones who really fight to reinstate members. We wait until we get the notice that someone has gotten the second notice from National. Then we go after them with a letter and a phone call. If nothing happens, about three months later, we go after them again. National is not going to do that. It goes back to federations. It's all related.

Boel: I want to clarify the process with renewals. Everyone gets three mail renewal notices. If they have an email address, they will get three email notices. Then they get a last issue cover wrap on the magazine that says, "Caution, this is your last issue," and gives them three easy ways to renew. We do not for a moment suggest they go into E-NARFE. While we are doing this, many chapters and federations are sending notices. Eight months after their membership expires, it seems reasonable to offer them another option. At that point, we scoop them up, and we give them an alternative: Would you like to join E-NARFE? They say yes in droves. Whether they said yes in droves because they didn't want to go to chapter meetings or simply were cheap, they came back. I don't want you to think that there is any preference for E-NARFE in the Membership Department. The Membership Department is what I call chapter agnostic. We are just trying to get as many members as we can.

Thisen: One of you mentioned that they would game the system, drop out and come back in. If chapter membership is optional, they won't have to game the system. Their renewal notice would tell them chapter membership is optional. This isn't decided yet. We are talking about "what if."

Thisen: Asked about whether they wanted to stay beyond the 5 p.m. closing time. Agreed to stay another half hour.

Kirby, Region II RVP: The members themselves are telling us (their opinions on chapter membership). Ninety percent of them will never show up at your meeting. They will never participate. They joined to get a fantastic magazine, to get fantastic advocacy. Your members have already told you, "No thank you, I do not want to be engaged in your chapters." Probably more like 95 percent have told you, "No thank you, I don't want to be a part of your chapter." And you probably have only 1-2 percent actually taking on leadership roles. I think we need to remember what our members have already told us.

Clarke, District of Columbia: These people (who don't join chapters) would no longer have a vote in the decision-making of NARFE.

Thisen: Under the current bylaws, that is right, if we go to this scenario. There needs to be some discussion of that. There may be a migration of people who no longer pay chapter dues. In some cases, it might be the 95 percent number. You have to look at all the risks of the decisions you make. If they decide to recommend that, look at the risks associated with recommending that. It could mean the only three people who are left are the president, secretary and treasurer.

Clarke, District of Columbia: Whoever was worried about having their power diluted – the non-voting people would give us the decision-making power to run NARFE. Those people don't want to be involved in this kind of exercise.

Unidentified speaker: I signed up with dues withholding; my dues are \$41 a year. Our membership chairman says Texas has been very successful in implementing dues withholding – the federation will pay each member in Texas who goes into dues withholding \$20 back. That has brought a lot of new members in.

Thissen: If you want to know how to get people into dues withholding, contact Region VI.

Moore, Nebraska: I have two concerns here. I go along with chapter membership will become optional; I don't have a problem with that. I do have a problem with E-NARFE coming to a convention with more votes than my chapter does.

Sabatier: Item 8: "NARFE members are automatically members of Congressional District team."

McGrath, Maryland: We have an E-Division of 2,200 people. When we went up on the Hill, we took two or three E-NARFE members with us. We also have several people who have federation jobs who are E-NARFE chapter members. Our bylaws do not prohibit that.

Gibbs, Idaho: I joined NARFE because of our legislative ability. I would hope that all members would consider themselves a part of our congressional district team.

Sabatier: Item 9 has been dropped. Item 10 has been tabled. Item 11: "Value of one member one vote."

Montoro, New York: If we go to local chapter dues optional, we may have to change the way we vote, so this "value of one member one vote" might come into play at some point. If it turns out that we go to (optional chapter membership), this would be something we would have to address. You would have a lot of members who, according to our bylaws, would not have a vote.

Ek, Region V RVP. One member one vote is probably a very good idea, but wouldn't that be very costly to the organization?

Dowie: We can do it electronically or in the magazine. The whole cost would be \$35,000.

Clarke, District of Columbia: I don't think you can get them to vote unless you adopt the Australian system – penalize them \$1 for not voting.

Sasson, West Virginia: It's hard to argue with philosophically, but how is that going to work at a convention? How do you proxy one member, one vote?

Dowie: You could send the magazine with a candidate statement and ballot. Or you could send them to the website to vote.

Ross, Region IX RVP: If we want this to pass, I think we need to talk up the value it would have. I assume this means only issues that would go to a ballot. It would not apply to all the floor votes that are taken, by voice vote, serpentine vote.

Dowie: Yes.

Adelman, Region VI RVP: The Arizona Federation instituted one member one vote in 2006, but dropped in 2012. Reasons are numerous. One member one vote can mean direct voting, like we kind of do for president. One member one vote can also mean representative, like we have now. As long as each member has a voice in the vote.

Zajac, Region VIII RVP: What about things that happen on the convention floor? One of our past national presidents ran with very little notice, nominated from the floor. The same thing applies to resolutions.

Thissen: I belong to Federally Employed Women. We vote by email. That is a decision to make – other associations do one member one vote. We do it our way.

Sabatier: Item 12: “Unified association dues.”

Zajac, Region VIII RVP: We should be using unified dues as an opportunity to get new members.

Sabatier: Explains exercise that was to have taken place in this time slot before it was devoted to issue comments. She will send the forms to the RVPs, who will provide them to federation presidents.

MEETING OVER FOR THE DAY