Board Committees

- A committee is a group of volunteers appointed to perform a specific task within a given area. There are two basic types:
- Standing Committees: These groups generally are required by the bylaws, meet on a continual basis, and have recurring responsibilities.
- Ad Hoc Committees: These groups are short term and sometimes called task forces.

Why Committees?

- Relieve the board meeting of routine matters.
- Maximize the opportunities for board members to contribute.
- Broaden the base of ownership of the Affiliate's work and increase support for implementing the board's actions.

Why Committees?

- Improve the quality of policy formulation and problem-solving because a small group can focus carefully and give consideration to data, issues, and alternatives.
- Provide a good training ground for future leaders of NAMI.
- Provide for better communication and information sharing between the board, staff and community.

Why Committees?

- Provide for a better opportunity for board members to know the details of the organization and the various levels of staff.
- Allow board members to become advocates for their specific area before the board and within the Affiliate and community.

Small Groups Make Better Decisions

- Small groups 5 to 9 persons make significantly more intelligent decisions than to large groups.
- Sharing experiences, skills, and perceptions leads to better decision making than does individual work.
- A committee should be large enough so that the absence of a member can be tolerated and yet a diversity of opinions and ideas can happen.

A Committee Should Be Small Enough...

- So that the absence of a member does not go unnoticed.
- So that everyone can feel free to express ideas and make aggressive efforts at solving problems.
- So that everyone has a chance to participate and reach a consensus without unduly extending the meeting time.

What do committees do?



- Clarify purposes.
- Set goals.
- Agree on methods of achieving purposes.
- Review reports and make studies.
- Recommend priorities to the board.

What do committees do?



- Recommend policies to the board.
- Interpret policies.
- Adopt standards of operations.
- Counsel the staff
- Request budget appropriations for special needs.

What do committees do?



- Review staff proposals on Affiliate operations.
- Recommend equipment, facilities, or other needs.
- Adopt special projects.
- Assist in monitoring of programs.

Committee Commissions

- A committee commission is a written document issued to a specific group of volunteers which designates that group's:
- Authority
- Responsibility
- Duties

It also includes a time schedule. It must be specific.

Committee Commissions



- While the appointing authority (board chair or the board as a group) will have some specifics in mind, committee members should be involved in finalizing their commission.

Committee Commissions



Bylaws generally define commissions of standing committees. Bylaws are best when written broadly so there is flexibility to respond to changing needs.

Chart of Work

- The chart of work is an annual planning tool that forces early identification of important issues and reduces the chance forgetting items and responding to crises.
- Developing an annual chart of work at a committee's first meeting is the best step to insure a productive year.
- The staff liaison should prepare a preliminary chart of work for consideration. Additional items can be identified by committee members, prioritized, and scheduled for the next 12 months.

Committee Chairs

- Each chair is appointed by the Board Chair.
 - The main job of the chair is to help people make decisions.
- The chair needs the ability to keep the committee moving without dictating the committee members' thinking.
- He/she must use the knowledge and experience of all members and secure their full participation.
- Discussion must be encouraged, disagreement mediated, digression avoided, and deliberations focused on the right track.

Characteristics of an Effective Board

- Has appropriate <u>leadership</u>, with confidence in that leadership. Has members open to the influence of others.
- Has a clear and shared understanding of its goals and a commitment to them. Has high, but achievable, production expectations. These Association goals are compatible with individual Board members' goals.
- Is structured and organized so it can accomplish its goals. Has decision-making <u>procedures</u> and <u>problem solving</u> techniques.

Characteristics of an Effective Board

- Has a sufficient number of working members with the abilities to do the tasks.
 Gives evidence of concern for the welfare and growth of its members; pays attention to group processes; has open, frank, and honest communications and deals openly with conflict.
- Operates on a definite time schedule.
- <u>Evaluates</u> results and processes periodically.