

# **Lamoille Area Board of REALTORS® Policy Manual**

*The Policy Manual is intended to supplement the Bylaws and clearly delineate the roles of the members and staff within the infrastructure of the organization.*

*The Manual sets forth policies pertaining to the Association and its members and will be reviewed, and updated if necessary, each year by the Board of Directors and/or Executive Committee.*

## **I. ASSOCIATION PURPOSE/MISSION STATEMENT**

The purpose of the Lamoille Area Board of REALTORS® is to enable and encourage members to conduct their business professionally and progressively and to provide the highest level of service to the public, while promoting the REALTOR® Code of Ethics.

## **II. JOB DESCRIPTION/DUTIES**

### **A. BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

To achieve the goals set forth in the Manual the Board of Directors and/or Executive Committee will:

1. Concentrate its efforts in policy-making decisions, both long and short term, while supporting staff in their mission to administratively reach the goals set forth by volunteer leadership.
2. Develop the Strategic Plan and monitor its adherence to the vision and mission of the Association. Monitor the activities of the committees, task forces, and special interest groups through the Board of Directors and/or Executive Committee, to see that they are consistent with the plan.
3. Make certain that the member-staff relationship is properly maintained by adherence to the policies that define their respective roles.
4. Govern with excellence and fairness by monitoring all practices of both staff and leadership to insure that accepted policies are followed and that there is respect for the clarified roles of each.
5. Understand that the membership holds the leadership accountable for competency of governance and accomplishment of the goals of the organization. To that end, the leadership will always make decisions predicated on what is best for the entire organization.
6. Insure continuity of leadership by planning for a smooth transition from one administration to the next. To that end, the last meeting of the year will include incoming Directors when possible.
7. Initiate policy to avoid problems rather than waiting for a problem to arise which must be solved.
8. Stimulate the involvement of the membership by following the established policies, thus creating an atmosphere of soundness, efficiency, and fairness to all. In such an environment, leaders and future leaders will understand from the start what they may do and what they may expect.
9. The Board of Directors and/or Executive Committee set the general policies and goals of the organization.
10. If any officer or director of the Executive Board feels it necessary to resign from the board due to personal or professional reasons, they must put it in writing to the President and allow 30 days notice to find a replacement. The only exception to the 30 day notice will be in extreme circumstances beyond their control.

## **B. DIRECTOR**

Directors are elected to serve three-year terms on the Board of Directors. A director should consider early in his/her term whether he/she is interested in continuing in leadership positions with the Board including serving as President. It is important to communicate that interest (or lack of interest) to the Leadership Development Committee/Nominating Committee.

### Responsibilities

- To attend all meetings of the LABOR Board of Directors (12 per year )
- To attend all LABOR General Membership meetings. (6 per year )
- To participate in the Strategic Planning Process.
- To be familiar with the Bylaws, Strategic Plan and other governing documents of LABOR.
- To participate in debate on issues and support the decisions of the Board regardless of personal opinion.
- To actively encourage participation of members in Board programs and activities.
- To help identify potential new leadership.
- To express viewpoints and share opinions, representing all members
- To remember that discretion protects credibility, and discourages rumors, gossip, and criticism.

## **C. PRESIDENT**

The President is the chief presiding officer of the Association, representing the entire membership and the best interest of the organization, and shall provide competent leadership in achieving the goals set forth by the Board of Directors and/or Executive Committee. In addition to the responsibilities noted above for directors:

### Responsibilities

- Sets the agenda for and chairs all meetings of the LABOR Board of Directors and the General Membership meetings
- Is authorized to appoint all committees, subject to approval by the Board of Directors, and is designated as an ex-officio member of all committees.
- Represents the Association as official spokesperson, acting in the name of the organization. In such capacity, the President will speak for the Association and not as an individual Realtor.
- Stays informed on Association projects, industry-related developments, and state and national events.
- Represents the Association at VAR and NAR meetings within budgetary constraints.
- Is visible to membership and actively encourages participation of members in Board programs and activities

- Regularly meets with the AE to discuss issues relevant to the organization and keeps the AE informed on all activities and decisions affecting the Association, of which the AE may not be aware.

#### **D. PRESIDENT-ELECT**

The position of President-elect is the final step in the succession to President. The President-elect is actually elected to the position of President for the subsequent year. At this time the President-elect should be very familiar with the governing documents, strategic plan and business plans of the Board. He/she should also have a working knowledge of how to run effective meetings. In addition to the responsibilities noted above for directors:

##### Responsibilities:

- To attend VAR Board of Directors meetings at the request of the President.
- To chair meetings in the absence of the President.
- To attend the NAR Leadership Summit in August in Chicago. (approximately 2 days- LABOR pays for travel)
- Act as liaison with the New Member Committee in welcoming new members to LABOR

#### **E. IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT**

In addition to the responsibilities noted above for directors:

- To attend VAR Board of Directors meetings at the request of the President.
- Chair and take responsibility for the Open House Committee and administration of the Open House List

#### **F. TREASURER**

The position of Treasurer of LABOR is a step in the succession to President of the Board. As a practical matter the Treasurer has the general responsibility to assure that the financial policies are followed. In addition to the responsibilities noted above for directors:

##### Responsibilities

- To work closely with the AE to help insure the accurate accounting of all funds.
- To review with the AE the monthly financial statements for presentation to the Board of Directors and/or Executive Committee.
- To work with the AE, and the Budget and Finance Committee, in the preparation of the annual budget.
- To act as liaison with the accounting firm in preparation of all tax forms.
- May be called on to sign certain legal and banking documents as needed.
- To prepare him/herself to become the President-elect.

## **G. SECRETARY**

The position of Secretary of LABOR is a step in the succession to President of the Board. In addition to the responsibilities noted above for directors:

### Responsibilities

- Records the minutes for all Executive Board Meetings and General Membership Meetings and submits them to the AE for filing and submission to the Board.
- To prepare him/herself to become the Treasurer and serves on the Budget & Finance Committee.

## **H. ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE**

The AE reports to the Board of Directors and/or Executive Committee, and sees that the policies and goals set by the Board of Directors and/or Executive Committee are carried out to completion by taking necessary action. The AE has the fiduciary responsibility to never allow, or cause to be performed, any act which is unlawful, insufficient to meet commonly accepted business and professional ethics or in violation of funding sources requirements or regulatory bodies or contrary to explicit constraints on executive authority. Should the AE see a situation in which a committee or individual is violating the responsibility given by the Board of Directors and /or Executive Committee, it will be reported to the Directors for their action. The Directors have the fiduciary responsibility to correct the problem and make certain that all policies are strictly followed.

### Responsibilities

- Collects dues and subscriptions and terminates delinquent memberships and subscriptions.
- Provides security for all files, legal and historical documents and membership and mailing lists.
- Monitors expenditures to assure operation within the annual budget.
- Ensures that the Board of Directors and Officers are fully informed of association conditions and of all important factors influencing them, including the financial condition of LABOR
- Keeps the President informed on problems and situations as they arise.
- Prepares agendas and other information as necessary or requested by the President.
- Attends to and ensures compliance with all Board certification requirements of NAR and VAR
- Plans, coordinates, promotes and attends all official LABOR meetings
- Plans, formulates, and recommends for the approval of the board of directors policies and programs that will further association objectives
- Executes all decisions of the board except when directors specifically make other assignments
- Develops specific administrative policies, procedures and program to implement the general policies of the board.
- Establishes a sound organization structure for the LABOR office
- Plans the general administration of the association operation; the AE must be aware of the progress of all association projects.
- Directs and coordinates all approved programs, projects and major activities

- Provides the necessary liaison and staff support to the board to enable the board, officers and committees to properly perform their functions
- Responsible for all Board correspondence and filing/retention of correspondence
- Executes contracts and commitments as authorized by the Board
- Promotes interest and active participation in association activities to membership and reports association activities to the Public Relations committee for promotion to local media
- Maintains effective relationships with other organizations, both public and private, and ensures that association and membership positions are enhanced in accordance with the policies and objectives of the organization.,
- Ensures that all funds, physical assets and other association property are appropriately safeguarded and administered.
- Operates within the approved budget
- Develops education programs to advance the professional, skills of the membership, operating within the budget and program objectives that the board approves.
- Plans, organizes and directs membership promotion and retention programs, and evaluates results and recommends policies, procedures, and actions to achieve membership goals.
- Plans and executes all communications to membership, including newsletters, general mailings, news releases, and so forth.
- Maintains membership data base management in compliance with NAR and VAR policies.
- Processes all new member applications for approval by the Board
- Establishes administrative policies and procedures for office operations
- Ensures the legal integrity of the association by insuring all federal, state, NAR and VAR filings and registrations are up-to-date and accurate
- Assists, serves and cooperates with association president, officers and directors
- Maintains a strong working relationship with other local and state associations
- Participates in state and national activities and programs within the limits of the association's budget
- Maintains and updates the LABOR website.

### **III. ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS**

Attendance at meetings is a major part of the contribution of serving on the LABOR Board. If an Executive Board member has been absent from three (3) Executive Board meetings in a calendar year, the Executive Board shall review the circumstances to determine the member's level of commitment to the Board and their continuation as a member of the Board.

### **IV. COMMITTEES**

#### **A. OVERVIEW**

Committees make recommendations to the Board of Directors and/or Executive Committee for action.

## **B. PURPOSE**

1. Committees are part of the system of accountability in the Association. The chain of accountability is crucial to success.
2. Identify future leaders.
3. Work with the staff to reach goals.

## **C. ROLE OF THE CHAIRMAN**

1. Conducts meeting/prepares agenda with staff.
2. Keeps the meeting to a specific time frame, respecting the schedules of the volunteer members.
3. Keeps to the subject matter outlined on the agenda.
4. Provides clear assignments and materials in advance with staff support.
5. Responsible for an orderly process, including soliciting the participation of all members.
6. Accountable to the President and the Board of Directors.

## **D. ESTABLISHED COMMITTEES**

The established committees of the Association are:

1. Affiliates Committee is responsible for recruiting and maintaining a strong Affiliate membership.
2. Budget and Finance Committee considers and recommends ways and means to properly finance the Association; submits estimated annual budgets; is responsible for the maintenance, care and control of Association property; and has general fiscal oversight of Association operations, investments, and financial policy. Budget and Finance committee shall consist of the treasurer, incoming treasurer, president and incoming president and AE.
3. Buyer's Guide provides recommendations and guidance in producing the Buyer's Guide publication
4. Communications and Public Relations Committee increases awareness of and participation in Association programs, services, and activities, as well as promotes a positive image of Realtors within the community;
5. Community Outreach/New Member develops programs to promote involvement by association members in community projects to raise awareness of REALTORS and to promote camaraderie among members.
6. Education Committee identifies, provides, promotes, and up-dates programs, products, and services that are relevant to either skill development or real estate practice to assist members in improving their professionalism and productivity including continuing education classes/seminars,
7. Government & Political Affairs Committee works with local, state, and national government entities to encourage a climate favorable to the real estate profession, private property ownership, and the free enterprise system, including consideration of proposed regulations affecting real estate interests and other industry-related matters, encouraging sound legislation protecting property rights and individual ownership of real estate.

8. Open House Committee administers and maintains the Open House List on the website. The open house list shall be the responsibility of the past president who will either administer or find a replacement for the open house list on a weekly basis.
9. R.P.A.C. Committee - Performs RPAC fundraising
10. ROTY Nominating Committee shall consist of the incoming President, the previous ROTY awardee, and a member of LABOR not serving on the Board or a committee. Nominations shall be solicited from the general membership. Guidelines set forth by NAR and VAR for candidates will be considered in making the selection.
11. Nominating Committee shall consist of the President, Past President, President Elect and one member of LABOR not serving on the Executive Board or committees. The nominating committee will be responsible for recommending a slate of officers for the following year to fill open positions on the board.

## **V. TRAVEL**

This is a set of guidelines for officers, directors, staff and chairs to follow in determining reasonable expenses while out of town on Association-sponsored business.

### ***Transportation***

**Auto:** Mileage is to be paid at the current rate allowed by IRS. This would include mileage to and from the airport for out-of-state trips and mileage to and from any state functions. The mileage charges should not exceed the corresponding airfare, ground transportation charges, etc. for attendance at any meeting (i.e., like driving to New Orleans instead of flying).

**Air:** Reasonable effort shall be made to obtain the lowest fares possible in and out of the Burlington International Airport to and from the destination. Spouse's airfares will not be reimbursed; however, any discounts which can be obtained will be to the benefit of the member. Should the member use their own personal frequent flyer mileage credits for a flight, they may seek reimbursement of the lowest possible airfare for that destination.

**Ground transportation:** For trips taken in the member's personal auto, all business use will be paid based upon the approved mileage rate. No personal mileage (visiting friends/ family, etc.) in those convention cities should be included. For other travel, all necessary taxi, bus or other costs for attendance of meetings, to/from airports/hotels or reasonable costs for getting to/from restaurants shall be reimbursed. Bus tours (like at NAR meetings), even though arranged by the sponsoring organization, should be considered to be personal expenses and are actually taking time away from the business at hand.

**Lodging:** For national events, it is expected that the member will stay at one of the recommended hotels. The Association shall pay for reasonable hotel costs. It is not anticipated that there would be a need for suites or higher priced rooms and all members shall reserve normal rooms at these hotels. It is also not required of the member to stay at the cheapest recommended hotel, as they are not always the most convenient and could cause other costs to increase (taxi, meals, etc.). The Association should not require that traveling members double up in hotel rooms in order to save money. However, should members choose to do so, the appropriate charges shall be turned in for reimbursement.

**Meals:** The Association shall provide \$65 per day for meals as a guideline with reimbursement made based upon receipts and proper documentation.

**Other Expenses:** Reasonable charges will be allowed for telephone calls to family or the Association, tips (at airports, restaurants, taxis, etc.) or other costs incurred on behalf of the Association or due to being out of town on Association business.

**Receipts:** All expenditures exceeding \$10 (i.e. airfare, hotel, meals, etc.) should be accompanied by appropriate receipts and documentation, which should be broken down by the traveling member in an orderly fashion for clarification purposes and to eliminate any confusion for the reviewing parties.

The annual budget for the Association should be the guiding factor in determining the attendance at local, State, or National functions. The Board of Directors, in conjunction with the current President and the AE, should determine the extent of travel necessary for and beneficial to, the Association each year.

All care should be taken by the traveling members to represent all of our members and the Association in the most cost-effective method possible, within reason.

All requests for reimbursement should be reviewed and approved by two officers, directors or the AE prior to payment (i.e. for the President, the Treasurer and AE should review; for the AE, the President and Treasurer should review, etc.).

## **VI. DUES**

REALTOR dues are billed on September 1, due and payable October 1. All dues not postmarked by November 1 are deemed late and incur a \$50 late fee imposed by VAR and an additional \$25 late fee to LABOR. If full dues plus fines are not received by December 31, all benefits of the Association will cease and the appropriate MLS will be notified by the local board. An additional \$100 fee will be incurred to VAR.

## **VII. Affiliate Membership and Dues**

Affiliate Members shall be real estate owners and other individuals or firms who, while not engaged in the real estate profession as defined in paragraphs (a) or (b) of Section IV of the LABOR Bylaws, have real estate related business interests, and support the objectives of the Board. Each legal entity that becomes an Affiliate Member shall supply LABOR with the name and contact information of a "Designated Representative". Only Designated Representatives shall be permitted access to Labor Communications and Labor's password protected web site. An Affiliate Member may have more than one Designated Representative but Dues shall be paid on a per Designated Representative basis. Unless specifically notified to the contrary, Designated Representatives may attend LABOR meetings and events with membership privileges. Affiliate Members may bring business associates other than Designated Representatives to meetings and events, but the fee for these guests shall be set by LABOR and will be greater than the sponsorship subsidized fee paid by members. Dues for



Affiliate Members will be billed on December 1 and due and payable January 1, to be pro-rated in their first year on a quarterly basis.

**VIII. Late Fees:**

**Buyer's Guide:** Any advertiser who does not pay for their ad by the deadline on the invoice will incur a \$25 late fee for the first month and 1% interest fee per month thereafter that the payment is late.

**XIV. Refunds:**

Unless under extenuating circumstances approved by the Executive Board, there will be no refunds given for classes, meetings or programs for non-attendance or other reasons.