

# Future of NARFE – Most Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

## 1) What is being proposed for vote at the 2014 National Convention?

Members will be asked to vote on a general resolution endorsing the vision/ concept for NARFE's future as outlined in the Future of NARFE (FON) Committee report, and its use as a base document for short-, mid- and long-term strategic planning. This general resolution will require a majority vote by the delegates at the National Convention.

The National Executive Board (NEB) will offer four resolutions to amend the bylaws that, if adopted, would:

- Reduce the number of National Officers from four to two, retaining only a National President and National Treasurer and abolishing the National Vice President and National Secretary positions;
- Make membership in chapters optional, rather than mandatory as it has been since 1988;
- Open membership in the Association to everyone, not just those entitled to an annuity from the federal government; and
- Provide a youth membership of \$10 for individuals under the age of 26.

These bylaws resolutions will require a two-thirds vote by the delegates at the National Convention.

## 2) What is the proposed timeline for recommended changes?

While the NEB has endorsed the future of NARFE concept as outlined in the FON Committee recommendations, there are basically four timeline stages:

- 1) The NEB already has reduced the number of regions from 10 to five, agreed upon the immediate commencement of a comprehensive branding study and ongoing strategic planning, and the development of an enhanced NARFE mission statement to include championing good government and public service. Headquarters will develop these studies for presentation to the NEB.
- 2) The bylaw amendments and resolutions outlined above (see Question 1) will be brought to the 2014 National Convention.
- 3) Should the amendment to reduce the number of National Officers from four to two pass, the NEB has authorized the recovered funds to be used to hire additional, professional marketing and legislative staff and to conduct a search for a professional Executive Director to manage NARFE

Headquarters. In the interim, the duties of the two former National Officers will be absorbed by the National President, the National Treasurer and the Headquarters staff. Both the National President and the National Treasurer will remain resident until a successful Executive Director search is complete and adequate transition has transpired.

- 4) All other recommendations will be considered as part of the strategic planning process, with any changes that require bylaw modifications being brought to, and voted upon, at the 2016 National Convention and beyond. Any final recommended changes will be in full accordance with the pertinent laws by which NARFE must abide.

## 3) Given the scope of changes recommended over time, how is transition envisioned?

Again, strategic planning will play a major role in determining an implementation plan for any additional recommendations. Time will be allowed for scrutiny, budget modeling, fine-tuning as needed and input from NARFE leaders. Prudent and seamless transition is the goal. It is only after this process that a plan can be developed, presented to the NEB for approval and, where necessary, bylaw changes presented to the NARFE membership for vote.

## 4) Why are resident National Officers being eliminated?

Filling National Officer positions from within the ranks of membership causes a number of dilemmas:

- Although there are most certainly skilled candidates, with exemplary managerial and supervisory résumés as federal employees, within our ranks, few among us have the background and expertise necessary to run a national not-for-profit, 250,000-member organization. Where our federal employment and general skill set may make for many ideal policy setters on a NARFE Board of Directors, the daily running of the not-for-profit business can be best conducted by a well-vetted association professional Executive Director – reporting directly to a policy-setting Board of Directors.
- Biennial elections of National Officers create a revolving door of Association leadership, with each new officer arriving with a new agenda and fac-

ing a substantial learning curve. Long-term strategic planning becomes difficult, if not impossible. Critical continuity of business management is lost.

- There is a substantial cost to the current resident officer model.

A nonresident, policy-setting Board of Directors ensures the important voice of our membership, while allowing its policies to be implemented by an experienced professional. This is a successful model for many associations.

#### **5) Why did the NEB agree to eliminate or reduce the number of Regional Vice Presidents (RVPs) and revise the scope of their duties?**

The current structure of NARFE (four National Officers and 10 RVPs) was established when NARFE was well on its way to having nearly half a million members. Now, with half that number of members and many fewer chapters, NARFE has become “top heavy.” Modern communications and technology reduce the need for travel by RVPs, allowing a single RVP to successfully represent a larger physical area.

Additionally, funds saved can be reallocated to critical areas, such as marketing and more focused legislative advocacy.

#### **6) Why does NARFE need an Executive Director and what will be his/her main roles/responsibilities?**

- The Association needs to be run efficiently and effectively, with continuity, a business plan, ongoing assessment, and timely and constructive changes as the “business” requires. The Executive Director will be the key person in the Association to help guarantee continuity and success.
- He/she will serve as the Chief Operating Officer of the organization and will have general supervision of all NARFE Headquarters staff.
- The Executive Director will develop and implement an ongoing strategic planning process with guidance by the Board of Directors.
- The Executive Director will develop and manage the annual budget.
- The Executive Director will have full hiring authority for all NARFE Headquarters staff.
- The Executive Director will be hired by the Board and will be accountable to the Board, serving at its direction, and implementing the policies established by the Board of Directors.

#### **7) What does nonmandatory chapter membership mean for local chapters?**

Local chapters would remain an important part of the NARFE structure as long as they continue to provide benefit to, and are supported by, their membership. Existing chapters would continue, as an option for all members, virtually unaffected. New chapters may be opened via application, and local membership dues would continue to be collected by Headquarters. An easing of bylaw and administrative requirements would allow greater flexibility for chapters to operate for the benefit of their membership.

#### **8) Does funding for local chapters change under a nonmandatory chapter structure?**

No. Should the resolution pass making chapter membership optional, local chapters may retain the funds currently in their accounts. Chapters will continue to receive the one-third, new-member fee, as currently structured, for any new member who opts to join a local chapter.

#### **9) What happens to eNARFE if the nonmandatory chapter membership resolution is passed?**

Without the requirement for members to belong to a chapter, ZIP-code based or otherwise, electronic chapters would no longer exist, and current members would simply be members of NARFE. ALL members would have the option to join a local chapter, should they choose.

#### **10) Where will the money come from to pay for an Executive Director, increased advocacy, a branding study and other new initiatives?**

Savings generated from the reduction of elected regional board members from 10 to five, reducing the current National Officers from four to two, nonresident status for those two officers once the Executive Director and new Board of Directors are in place, and a longer-term plan to reduce federation-level funding will cover these expenses. Fundraising, membership and expanded corporate sponsorship will complete the funding profile.

#### **11) Over the longer term, how will federations be impacted?**

Strategic planning will consider the recommendation to phase out the federation structure, with the exception of the Panama and Philippine Federations, in favor of state-level activities focused on advocacy with resources dedicated to this effort.