Policies Committee Meeting Summary

September 22, 2021

Present: Jody Suhrbier, Mary Sue Wilson, Mary Barrett, Jennifer Pearson

Absent: John Skinder, Mickey Lahmann

Next meeting is January 26, 2022, at 5:30 pm.

Policies discussed/reviewed:

*Jody circulated policies for review in advance. Mary Barrett provided email in advance of meeting suggesting areas of focus for a number of policies up for review. Committee members discussed the policies in the following order.*

1. Bylaws

*Previously amended 9/17/20 (see top of page 1 of bylaws).*

*Discussed Article 2, Section 6 – officers elected in September, begin serving in October. This year we are planning to vote for officer slate in October. Discussed whether to recommend changing bylaws to align with this year’s practice, or to take steps to follow bylaws next year – elect officers in September. Committee agreed to leave bylaws as is, and meet timelines in 2022.*

*Agreed to eliminate Art III, Section 2, renumber Section 3 as 2. Reason: Nominating committee in bylaws is described as having two functions, recruiting and nominating board members and officers. In practice in recent years, the Recruitment/Board Development Committee recruits new board members and the Executive Committee seeks board members to serve as officers. The agreed-upon change is to capture current practice and eliminate a committee described in the bylaws that has not been active or used in recent years.*

*No other comments or edits to the bylaws.*

1. Officer Job Descriptions

President description, under specific responsibility # 10, strike reference to serving as chair of nominating committee to align with edit to bylaws described above.

No changes recommended to vice-president description.

No substantive changes recommended to secretary or treasurer descriptions after some discussion about several of the duties for both officers, whether the quarterly reviews with treasurer is happening (Jody thinks yes), and what is intended under responsibilities 3 and 5 of secretary. After discussion, no changes made. Officers encouraged to develop plan with Jody to ensure compliance with these provisions. Reference to “be custodian of the seal” under secretary duty c should be deleted if there is no seal.

Discussion that the Executive Director is not a board member, so not within today’s scope. Suggestion that at next policy committee meeting, the committee look at description of this position.

Board member description – replace the verb “assure” – in three sentences with different verb, either “assess” or “monitor.” Change based on agreement among committee that “assure” is not good word choice as no board member can assure these items are addressed.

Mary identified two substantive duties identified for all board members that might be removed as these duties by past practice have been performed by the President or the executive committee, and not the full board. These are (1) the 5th bullet under organization (propose slate of officers) and (2) the 6th bullet under same section (approve Performance Review of ED annually). Given that Mickey and John were not able to attend this meeting, adjustment to these items will be considered at a future meeting.

1. Scope of Services

Committee agreed to expand description of services beyond mediation in first sentence to also include conciliation, facilitation and training.

1. Records Retention

Committee agreed that three paragraphs (employment documents, electronic records, training records) should be edited to reflect current technology used for e-storage. Language like “electronic records also kept on the organization’s cloud-based secure server.” In the next review of the policy, the committee recommends considering whether to modify further to specify whether e-copies might replace hard copies for certain types of records.

Also, under Employment Documents section 3, committee agreed to change “current employee documents” to “current personnel files.”

1. Hiring Protocols (NEW)

The committee discussed the origin and purpose of this new process protocol. The committee generally approved the content.

Discussion of two topics: (1) should there be an express exception in unusual circumstances. Committee agreed that the policy should include a provision that states “Executive director may deviate from this policy with executive committee approval.” (2) under # 11 addressing reference checks, the committee agreed to strengthen the mandate to check former employer references by changing “effort should be made” to “a prior employer shall be contacted.”

Minor edit: under # 18, “one” shall be replaced with “On”

1. Conflict of Interest

No edits suggested to this policy.