

# Elder Issues Partnership Operating Guidelines

Amended December 7, 2009

## Purpose of the Organization

The Elder Issues Partnership is a partnership of Maine organizations concerned with advocating, educating, and communicating the needs of older Maine citizens.

## Meeting Agendas

Meeting agendas are proposed by the Secretariat based on full group discussion and advice of the Steering Committee. Meeting agendas are circulated in advance of meetings via e-mail. Meetings are typically two hours long and are held on the second Monday of each month in the Augusta area.

## Meeting Guidelines

- Seek and stay on common ground
- Each organization to be heard
- Majority of dues paying members decide
- We all help group efficiency
  - Recognized before speaking
  - Prepared
  - Do what say
- Facilitator works for the group

## Public Website

([www.ElderIssues.org](http://www.ElderIssues.org))

A public website is maintained by the Secretariat that includes the following:

- Purpose statement
- List of members (organizations who have participated in the past year)
- Statement of recent accomplishments
- Contact information

## Members-Only Website

([www.GoodGroupDecisions.com/ElderIssues](http://www.GoodGroupDecisions.com/ElderIssues))

A members-only (password protected) website is maintained by the Secretariat that includes the following:

- Purpose statement
- Dates of upcoming meetings
- Minutes of all past meetings
- List of members with contact information
- Operating Guidelines
- Contact information

Only Dues-Paying members have access to the Members-Only website

## List Serve

A List Serve is maintained by the Secretariat such that any member may send an e-mail to the entire group. To be on the List Serve requires permission of the Secretariat and permission is generally granted to any individual except state employees.

## Membership and Dues

Participation in Meetings and in the List Serve is open to all individuals and organizations (except state employees) at no cost. We welcome your participation.

Organizations and individuals that pay dues (either have paid or state intention to pay) are entitled to vote at meetings and via e-mail. These organizations and individuals are known as Dues Paying Members.

Dues-paying members also receive all meeting notes and have access to the Members-Only website.

Our Members List is larger than Dues Paying Members because it contains names of all organizations (although not individuals) that have participated over the past year regardless of paying dues.

Dues amounts (required to be a dues-paying member)

- \$50 Individuals
- \$100 Organizations with annual budgets less than \$100,000
- \$400 Organizations with annual budgets over \$100,000

If an organization or individual joins part way through the fiscal year, the dues amount may be pro-rated at the discretion of the Steering Committee.

## Steering Committee

A small Steering Committee is elected annually to do the following:

- Act on behalf of the group in between meetings of members
  - Advise the Secretariat on meeting agendas, membership issues and other matters in between meetings of members
- Financial management
  - Stewardship and accounting
  - Prepare and approve the annual budget with input from dues paying members
  - Dues collection
- Supervise/manage the secretariat
  - Approve and monitor agreements

## Meeting Notes Protocol

- Draft notes of each meeting are circulated to those dues-paying members who were in attendance for editing and approval
- Once approved, meeting notes are posted at the Members-Only website and circulated to all dues-paying members

## Advocacy Protocol (applies to letters and written testimony)

The Partnership occasionally writes letter to policy makers or offers testimony to advocate for specific policies and/or programs. These are the steps we follow:

1. Letter/Testimony concept approved by majority of Dues Paying Members
  - a. The issue is presented, including the main message of the proposed letter and who it would go to.
  - b. The Dues Paying Membership approves proceeding with a letter/testimony or not.
    - i. Majority vote at a meeting (majority of dues paying members present regardless of how many are present) or by e-mail (majority of dues paying members who respond regardless of how many respond)
2. A Committee or Individual drafts the letter/testimony
  - a. Send draft to the Secretariat: [ElderIssues@GoodGroupDecisions.com](mailto:ElderIssues@GoodGroupDecisions.com)

3. The letter/testimony gets circulated to the List Serve for Opt Out
  - a. The letter/testimony contains names of ALL Member Organizations (those who participated in the last year)
  - b. A 3-day deadline is established – organizations wanting to Opt Out must respond in that time otherwise their name will be on the letter/testimony as it goes forward
4. If approved, a final version of the letter/testimony is prepared by the Secretariat
  - a. Contains appropriate edits
  - b. Lists All Members except those who opted out
  - c. Dated and addressed
  - d. No matter the number of opt-outs
5. Final letter/testimony gets sent to the membership via List Serve
6. Final letter/testimony gets printed and hand-delivered to recipients by a member of the Partnership