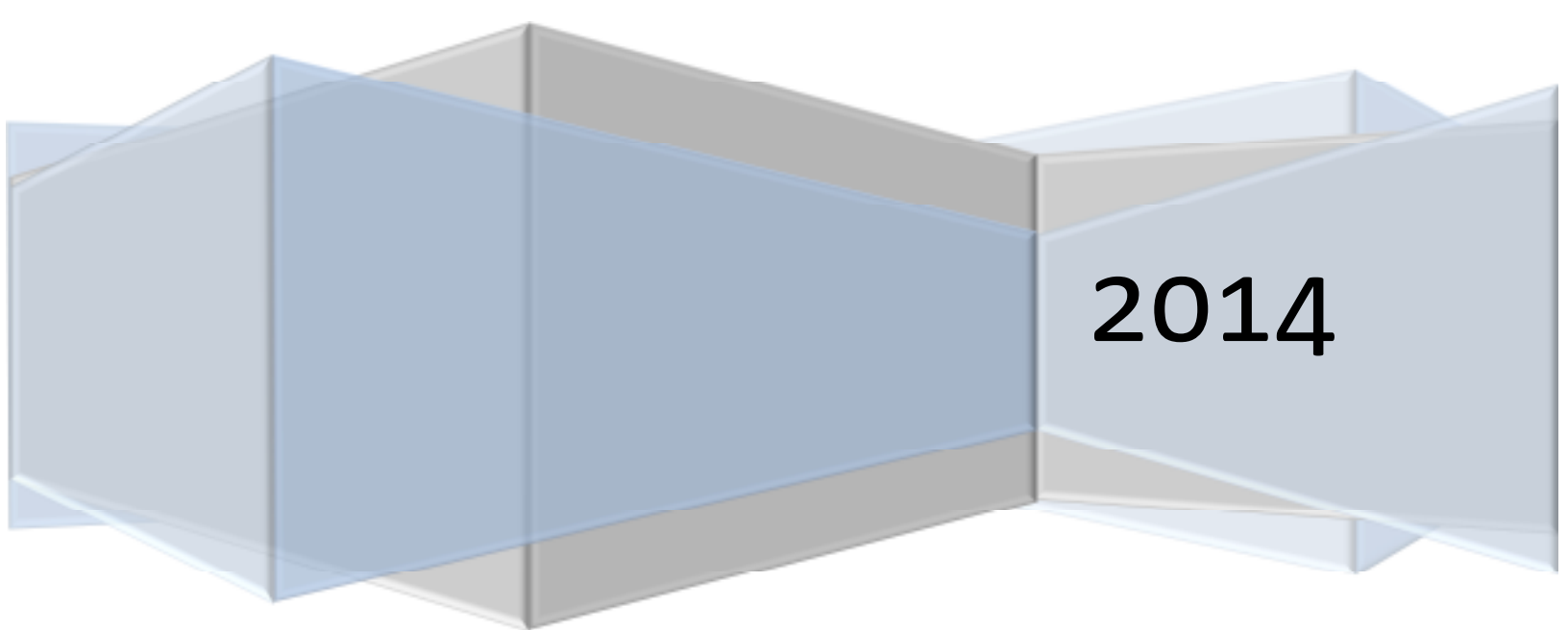


GCAR RPAC TRUSTEES

Policies & Procedures



2014

**A RESOLUTION
BY
THE PRESIDENT
AND
THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE
GREATER CHATTANOOGA ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®
ESTABLISHING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR
THE GCAR RPAC TRUSTEES
RELATED TO THE
DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS
AND
ENDORSEMENT OF CANDIDATES**

PREAMBLE

The REALTORS® Political Action Committee is organized and operated for the purpose of providing financial assistance regarding the nomination or election of one or more individuals who are candidates for elective office, within the defined jurisdictional boundaries established by the Tennessee Association of REALTORS®, and to collect and make expenditures of political contributions for the purpose of furthering the candidacy of such individuals for nomination or election to such office and otherwise supporting the legislative agenda of GCAR, and to do any and all things necessary to accomplish such purposes, in compliance with applicable statutes.

The following policies and procedures have been developed to assist those involved in the candidate interview, endorsement, and disbursement processes. Elections are a vital element in the governance and legislative processes. Therefore, a successful candidate interview/endorsement process can help ensure that those candidates who are elected will benefit from knowing the various REALTOR® positions, and preferably, support them. This will enhance the association's ability to meet its legislative goals. The timing of the process is of the utmost importance. In order for an endorsed candidate to achieve the maximum benefit from a campaign contribution, it should be transmitted as early as possible within a current election cycle.

Article I. PURPOSE

The underlying purpose of this Resolution is to establish parameters and rules concerning the size, composition, and membership requirements, operating rules, and related activities of the RPAC Trustees of the Greater Chattanooga Association of REALTORS®, (GCAR) and delineate the procedural process to effectively carry out their assigned mission.

Article II. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Resolution will replace and supersede any existing policy statements concerning the subject of RPAC Trustees currently in force, and will become effective immediately upon approval by the GCAR Board of Directors.

Article III. MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION

- A. The GCAR RPAC Trustees will consist of five (5) voting members, which will include one person chosen as Chairperson of the Trustees, selected by the GCAR President from among its membership.
 - 1. Two members of the Trustees shall serve for a period of three (3) years.
 - 2. Two other members of the Trustees shall serve for a period of two (2) years.
 - 3. One other member of the Trustees shall serve for a period of one (1) year.
 - 4. The Governmental Affairs Director of GCAR (GAD) will perform as the staff liaison to the RPAC Trustees and all Interview Committees, but will not be considered a member nor have a vote in RPAC Trustees deliberations

Article IV. MEMBERSHIP QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Membership in the RPAC Trustees will be chosen by the GCAR President and the Chair of the RPAC Trustees and eligibility will be determined by:

- A. Membership in good standing in the Greater Chattanooga Association of REALTORS®.

- B. A quantifiable appreciation of the importance of RPAC demonstrated by the following achievements, *in hierarchal order*:
 - 1. Investment in RPAC of at least \$1,000 (Sterling R) within the current year or the immediately prior one year period.

 - 2. Investment in RPAC of at least \$750 within the current year.

 - 3. Investment in RPAC of at least \$500 within the current year.

Or,

- 4. Membership of at least 3 years with the GCAR Governmental Affairs Committee, or Governmental Affairs Committee Chairman level service.

 - 5. Leadership of at least 1 RPAC fundraising event within the prior 3 year period.

 - 6. Participation in the local, state, or regional political process, as a candidate, office holder, political staff member, lobbyist or other professional advocate for the real estate industry, during which the individual has verifiably demonstrated active and effective advocacy for REALTOR® interests, issues and positions.
- C. The President of GCAR will be a non-voting, Ex-Officio member of the RPAC Trustees in compliance with GCAR bylaws.

Article V. MEETING SCHEDULE AND ATTENDANCE

- A. All meetings of the RPAC Trustees will be called meetings by the Chair of the Trustees, who will be assisted by the GAD in determining and tracking appropriate scheduling obligations.

- B. The dates of called meetings will conform to the following protocol:
 - a. Meetings that concern discussions of candidate endorsements and disbursements shall be held to conform to the interview deadlines specified within **Article VII., III. A. 1 .2 .3. & 4.**

 - b. Meetings that concern discussions of non-candidate (special event) disbursements must be a maximum of 45 days, and a minimum of 15 days prior to the occurrence of the event which the funding is purposed.

 - c. Unexcused absences from two meetings during the course of the GCAR calendar year will be cause for dismissal from membership in the RPAC Trustees.

 - d. All meetings will begin with a roll call, and the GAD will record attendance and minutes of the proceedings.

Article VI. QUORUM

A quorum is required for the conduct of any meeting. A quorum is defined as a number equal to a simple majority of the total number of members. Lacking a quorum, the meeting will be dismissed.

Article VII. CANDIDATES, INTERVIEWS, ENDORSEMENTS AND FUNDING

I. CANDIDATE ELIGIBILITY

- A. Candidates shall gain eligibility for interview upon attaining the following qualifications:

1. Submission of all legal and proper documentation to the appropriate governmental election authority certifying their candidacy.
 2. Invitation to interview extended by the GCAR RPAC Trustees Committee.
 3. A formal request made by the candidate or the candidate's authorized representatives stating the desire for interview.
- B. Interviews of candidates for elected office within Hamilton County, Tennessee will be overseen by GCAR RPAC Trustees and coordinated by the GAD.
- C. Interviews of candidates for elected office within each and all of the municipalities within Hamilton County, (and if requested, Sequatchie County) Tennessee will be overseen by GCAR RPAC Trustees and coordinated by the GAD.
- D. Interviews of candidates for elected office within the three-county area (Dade, Walker, Catoosa) of North Georgia will be overseen by Georgia State GARPAC Trustees and are solely within their responsibility and jurisdiction.
- E. The Chair of the RPAC Trustees is empowered to waive the requirement for interview if any of the following circumstances are present:
1. The candidate is an incumbent elected official who has previously demonstrated a commitment to the support and defense of REALTOR® issues.
 2. The candidate is an incumbent elected official who has previously received RPAC funding and/or endorsement.
 3. Unforeseen and exigent circumstances prevent a candidate from making an appearance before the interviewing team, and the RPAC Trustees waive the requirement by majority vote.

II. INTERVIEW TEAMS AND COORDINATION

A. Conditions for Those Involved in the Interview Process:

1. As a condition of membership on an interviewing team and/or the RPAC Trustees, each trustee shall agree as follows:
 - a. He/she shall not endorse any candidate in any race other than an RPAC officially endorsed candidate unless: He/she makes it clear that each endorsement is in his or her capacity as a private individual and not as a REALTOR®, officer, director or member of a member association, or as a member of the committee.
2. Any member who is on a candidate's or the candidate's opponent's campaign steering or finance committee shall not be a member of the candidate interviewing team for that contest.

3. Any interview team member unable to attend ALL interviews for a particular position shall not vote.
4. Any trustee of the RPAC Trustees or any member of any interview team, once an endorsement decision is made, cannot publicly oppose that decision as a REALTOR® or on behalf of a REALTOR® organization. If they do, their actions may be considered cause for removal from RPAC and a prohibition from serving on future interview teams. Due process would be available before such removal or prohibition occurred. Trustees of RPAC shall sign an agreement at the time of their appointment and members of an interview team shall initial the candidate interview report/request for funds form that they will abide by this policy. Following due process, it is the responsibility of the Chair of the RPAC Trustees to enforce the policy.

B. U.S. Senate, U.S. House, Tennessee Governor and All Other Statewide Races:

1. GCAR shall not make endorsements, nor consider disbursement of RPAC funding for election races involving any Tennessee Statewide offices.

C. All Local Office Races: Hamilton County; Chattanooga and all other Hamilton County municipalities:

1. General Composition of Interview Teams
 - a. Selection Criteria:
 - i. It is **highly recommended** that participants shall be selected from RPAC investors of at least \$500 in the current year.
 - ii. Team members should represent a broad political spectrum.
 - iii. The team must consist of a minimum of three (3) or a maximum of five (5) interviewers.
 - iv. Participants must be registered voters in Tennessee.
 - b. Membership Categories:
 - i. RPAC Trustees and/or RPAC Fundraising Chair(s).
 - ii. Governmental Affairs Committee member(s).
 - iii. Commercial REALTOR® members are eligible to serve on candidate interview teams provided they reside within the candidate's district and meet all the criteria listed in **II. C.1.a. and b.** of these policies and procedures.
 - iv. Staff members are not eligible to serve as voting members on an interview team, but the GAD will participate in an advisory capacity.
 - c. Realizing the need to participate and have expertise in judicial races, staff who are members of the Tennessee State Bar

Association and members of RPAC may participate as a voting member in judicial candidate interviews, if such offices are considered for contribution or endorsement.

III. ENDORSEMENTS AND CANDIDATE CONTRIBUTION REQUESTS

A. Recommended Timelines for Interviews:

1. In January of election years, the GAD will publish to the Governmental Affairs Committee and the RPAC Trustees a copy of the official election schedule for that year, as announced by the Hamilton County Election Commission.
2. For elections that are scheduled within 90 days or less of the beginning of any calendar year, the schedule will be published by June 30 of the prior year.
3. The RPAC Trustees will meet within 90 days prior to a scheduled primary election to recommend if RPAC disbursements or endorsements will be made during a primary election, and to schedule interview meetings accordingly.
4. The RPAC Trustees will meet on a timely basis following a scheduled primary election to recommend if RPAC disbursements or endorsements will be made during a general election, and to schedule interview meetings accordingly.
5. The RPAC Trustees will appoint a sub-committee to meet, consider, and act upon funding requests related to possible independent expenditures.
6. If one or more of the recommended candidates is defeated in a Primary Election, the GCAR interview teams should meet, at which time Primary results should be reviewed and recommendations made to the RPAC Trustees regarding an endorsement and/or funds disbursement to the winner.
7. All recommendations for funding and endorsements will be presented to the GAD for timely submission of check requests to TAR, and notification of candidates.

B. Interview Location

1. If space is available and facilities are adequate, the interview should be held at the GCAR office.
2. The interview room should be large enough to comfortably hold the interview team, the candidate, and at least one member of the candidate's staff.
3. A separate waiting area should be available outside the interview room.

C. Interview Procedures

1. At the earliest time possible (following a candidacy announcement), candidates should be invited and asked to participate in an interview. Arrangements should be confirmed in writing.
2. With the confirmation letter, provide candidates with a "Candidate Biographical Data Report Form", if available, or should be asked to provide a biography, requesting that either be completed or returned before the interview. Ask for whatever specific information your interview team deems appropriate. Background information on pertinent issues should also be sent to the candidate.
3. Prior to the first appointment, the interview team should meet to review the RPAC Trustees policies, determine who will chair the interview, and who will ask which questions. (Note: All members of the interview team should be encouraged to ask at least one question.)
4. Duly constituted interview teams; the GAD; the candidate, and if the candidate requests, one member of the candidate's staff, should be the sole occupants in the interview room. It is recommended that no other audience be present.
5. 30 minutes per interview will be allotted and additional time (10 minutes) between interviews for initial evaluations.
6. Interviewers will be courteous, not argumentative, during the interview. This is an open dialogue designed to enable candidates and REALTORS® to learn from and about each other.
7. Generally, open-ended questions should be used. However, the same questions should be asked of all candidates running for office. Further, all questions should be industry related or directed toward issues of local Realtor® concerns. The interview questions should not be shared with the candidates prior to the interview. (Note: A recommended questionnaire can be prepared and distributed by the GAD, if requested.)
8. Conclude the interview within the prescribed 30 minutes. Thank the candidate and advise him/her that he/she will be notified of the endorsement as soon as all the candidates have been interviewed and all procedures completed.
9. It is recommended that the interviews not be recorded. However, if they are, it must be done with the candidate's permission prior to the interview. Deliberations of the interview team are to be kept confidential.
10. After all interviews are concluded, the interview team should meet to determine its endorsements, if any. When making candidate endorsement decisions, the interview team shall consider:

- a. Voting record
- b. Advice of staff (GAD)
- c. Knowledge of issues
- d. Position philosophy
- e. Image
- f. Campaign organization strength
- g. Campaign strategy
- h. Interest in receiving endorsement, and if so, interest in funding

F. Early Endorsements And Opportunity Races:

1. Early endorsements of incumbents and "opportunity" races are within the policies and procedures of the RPAC Trustees, provided that the following procedures are met. (Note: "Opportunity" races involve incumbents or challengers who may need special help for re-election or election. This special help may include, but not be limited to, making phone calls, sending out direct mail, posting yard or reader board signs, going door-to-door, hosting events, or contacting absentee voters.)
 - a. Determinations for contributions as recommended by GCAR shall be made by the RPAC Trustees as soon as possible prior to the election.
 - b. When special elections are called in a non-election year (i.e., odd year), the above timeline will be adjusted by consensus agreement.
 - c. GCAR may also submit requests for early endorsements for local and/or opportunity races provided appropriate guidelines are followed.

G. Candidate Endorsements

1. Candidate interview teams are responsible for determining the candidate endorsement recommendations and for conveying the recommendation to the RPAC Trustees for action.
2. Multiple endorsements and contribution requests are generally discouraged. However, there may be specific rationale for making these types of endorsements and requests that must be shared with the RPAC Trustees.
3. Until notification has been given to all interviewed candidates, there shall not be an announcement of endorsement.

F. Candidate Contribution Requests

1. For RPAC funding requests initiated outside of GCAR (by the candidate) signed candidate contribution request forms shall be submitted to the RPAC Trustees by the interview team leader by the GAD or the GCAR President.
2. To ensure the proper handling of paperwork and rapid determination of a contribution, interview teams are strongly urged to have at least one trustee of the RPAC Trustees present at the interviews.
3. If an interview team fails to submit a candidate contribution request form for a given race in accordance with RPAC Trustees pre-election deadlines for the transmittal of forms or does not conduct an interview, then the Governmental Affairs Director shall notify the RPAC Trustees who shall make funding decisions. These decisions may include "non-involvement" in a Primary or General Election contest based upon a conscious decision by GCAR to not participate.
4. RPAC will handle multiple contribution requests for the same contest on a case-by-case basis. Regardless, the appropriate guidelines for the decision process must be followed (e.g. timelines; interviewing of candidates; paperwork, etc.). Additionally, the recommendation for multiple contributions in the same contest must be accompanied by a statement outlining the rationale for the request.
5. The RPAC Trustees will expend funds for a candidate campaign deficit provided that the dollar amount expended is within the governmental regulatory guidelines and provided that the interview team for that particular contest has submitted a properly completed candidate contribution request form. Deficit reduction requests are subject to the RPAC Trustees' approval.

IV. APPROVAL OF CANDIDATE CONTRIBUTION FUNDING REQUESTS

- A. Interview team leaders shall submit candidate funding requests to the Governmental Affairs Director immediately following an endorsement determination.
- B. Requests for local contests will be forwarded by the GAD to the RPAC Trustees, and if the policies and procedures have been properly followed, the requests are granted.
- C. Failure to follow these RPAC Trustees Policies and Procedures on a given contest may result in the Board of Directors ruling that a request for funds involving that contest be denied.

VI. APPROVAL OF FUNDING FOR INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURES (IE'S)

- A. Funding for Independent Expenditures for candidate races, and issue referenda shall be approved by the RPAC Trustees.
- B. Independent Expenditures in local races require the following:
 - 1. The candidate must have been endorsed by RPAC for the position they are seeking.
 - 2. Before making any expenditure of funds, the local association must have consulted with the TAR Governmental Affairs staff to ensure all FEC and other appropriate reporting requirements will be satisfied in a timely manner to avoid a violation of the law.
 - 3. Once all provisions for compliance with reporting requirements are in place and approved by TAR, funding for the IE may be released and expended.

Article VIII. PRESENTATION OF DISBURSEMENTS

- A. Presentation of RPAC disbursements to candidates will be in full accordance with all current directives of the Tennessee Association of REALTORS® as outlined below.
- B. All disbursements approved by the RPAC Trustees, and ratified by the GCAR Board of Directors, and by the TAR RPAC Trustees shall be delivered personally by a member of GCAR. Such disbursements should be delivered within fifteen (15) days of receipt in Chattanooga from TAR.
- C. If, for any reason, a disbursement check cannot be delivered within this time frame, the member responsible for delivery shall notify the Governmental Affairs Director immediately. Within these circumstances, check disbursements may be delivered by the Governmental Affairs Director.
- D. Political coordinators, assigned to the candidate by the Governmental Affairs Committee, will be the primary designee to present RPAC checks to candidates and elected officials. If unavailable, delivery may be made by the GCAR President, the RPAC Chair, or the GCAR Governmental Affairs Chair.

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
THE GREATER CHATTANOOGA ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®

January 23, 2014

DATE APPROVED: _____

PRESIDENT: _____

Vicki Trapp