



## RPAC TRUSTEES POLICIES & PROCEDURES

### QUALIFICATIONS TO SERVE AS A RPAC TRUSTEE

**Required Criteria to Serve:** Membership in the RPAC Trustees will be chosen and eligibility determined as follows:

1. Membership in good standing with the Greater Chattanooga REALTORS®.
2. At least two (2) years of service within the last five (5) years on one (1) or more of the following local, state, and/or national association level committees:
  - a. Governmental Affairs Committee
  - b. RPAC Committee
  - c. RPAC Trustees
  - d. Board of Directors (may not serve as both a Board of Director and RPAC Trustee at the same time)
  - e. Executive Committee
  - f. Political Coordinator
3. Must be a registered voter of Hamilton County, Tennessee.
4. Must commit to the applicable term of service and the attendance policy, indicate a willingness to remain a member of the RPAC Trustees throughout the term of service, and agree to abide by the Policies and Procedures as they may be amended from time to time.
5. Training: Best Practices for Choosing REALTORS® training will be conducted each year and will be open to all members who are interested in serving as Greater Chattanooga REALTORS® RPAC Trustees. Training will be required prior to participating in candidate interviews and will be renewed every two (2) years.
6. Conflict of Interest: RPAC Trustees will be required to sign a Conflict-of-Interest Agreement prior to each election cycle of interviews. If, during the then-current election cycle, a RPAC Trustee has endorsed or financially supported any candidate in the race for which the RPAC Trustees are conducting interviews or has actively participated in the then-current campaign of any such candidate, such member may not interview or evaluate any candidate in that race. Additionally, if in advance of the interviews a RPAC Trustee has strong feelings for or against any candidate in the race for which the RPAC Trustees are conducting interviews, that member should disqualify him/herself from interviewing or evaluating any candidate in that race. The RPAC Trustees Chair and/or the Governmental Affairs Director (hereinafter referred to as "GAD") has the authority to request that a member disqualify him/herself for a real or perceived conflict of interest. Members who serve as an elected official in a similar capacity to those being interviewed will be determined to have an automatic conflict of interest. If the Conflict of Interest is not acknowledged by the member at the time of the interview process and is found to have existed after the fact, that member shall be subject to immediate dismissal from the RPAC Trustees and may be prevented

from serving as a RPAC Trustees in the future. Any such Conflict-of-Interest violation would be presented to the Board of Directors for final adjudication.

7. Confidentiality: RPAC Trustees will be required to sign a Confidentiality Agreement prior to each election cycle of interviews. RPAC Trustees are required to hold in confidence during and following expiration of his/her term all discussions, deliberations or conclusions regarding the candidate interviews or evaluations. If Confidentiality is broken by the member at any time, that member shall be subject to immediate dismissal from the RPAC Trustees and may be prevented from serving as a RPAC Trustees in the future. Any such Confidentiality violation would be presented to the Board of Directors for final adjudication.
8. Objectivity: The Greater Chattanooga REALTORS® candidate interview and evaluation process is a non-partisan process and should focus on each candidate's views on subjects of interest to the real estate industry. As such, it is extremely important to put aside party affiliations during the interview and evaluation process and to focus on issues affecting homeownership, the real estate industry, and private property rights.
9. Political knowledge and acumen.

**Other Qualifications Considered:** The following criteria may be considered but is not required to be a RPAC Trustees:

1. History of RPAC Investments
2. Volunteer experience on a political campaign
3. Service as an elected official
4. Other substantial political knowledge and/or involvement

### **RPAC TRUSTEE APPLICATION PROCESS**

Members of the Greater Chattanooga REALTORS® wishing to serve on the RPAC Trustees Committee may submit the attached application during the designated Committee sign-up period or at any time a call for applications is made by the Greater Chattanooga REALTORS®.

The GAD will review all applications and submit all qualifying applications to the Executive Committee for final approval.

### **PURPOSE OF CANDIDATE INTERVIEWS**

1. To provide an opportunity for Greater Chattanooga REALTORS® to become better acquainted with candidates running for elected office and their stance on issues that affect the real estate industry.
2. To educate the candidates on some of the issues and views, as determined by the Greater Chattanooga REALTORS® RPAC Trustees, which are important to the Association concerning homeownership, the real estate industry, and private property rights.
3. To determine whether a candidate is worthy of support and to make recommendations for support to the Tennessee REALTORS®.

## **COMPOSITION OF RPAC TRUSTEES AND CANDIDATE INTERVIEW PANELS**

The RPAC Trustees will consist of the following members and terms:

- One (1) member representing each of the Hamilton County Commission Districts serving for a staggered period of two (2) years each.
- Six (6) members At-Large representing the entire membership of the Greater Chattanooga REALTORS® serving for a staggered period of two (2) years each.
- Two (2) Chairs appointed by the Greater Chattanooga REALTORS® President who serve in the following positions for a period of one (1) year each:
  - Governmental Affairs Chair
  - RPAC Committee Chair

Once the RPAC Trustees Committee has been formed, the Committee will be charged with choosing the RPAC Trustee Vice-Chair from those who serve as a representative of the Hamilton County Commission Districts and/or At-Large members. The RPAC Trustee Vice-Chair will serve for one (1) year and then serve as RPAC Trustee Chair the following year. If a Vice-Chair is unable to serve the following year as Chair, then the Committee will be charged with choosing both the RPAC Trustee Chair and Vice-Chair from those who serve as a representative of the Hamilton County Commission Districts and/or At-Large members.

The GAD of Greater Chattanooga REALTORS® will serve as the staff liaison but will not be considered a member nor have a vote in RPAC Trustees decision.

If a Trustee transfers from one District to another during the year they are serving, they shall continue to serve until December 31st of the current year.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY AND MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

The members of the RPAC Trustees shall accept the responsibility for attendance at all meetings as a condition of service.

Absences of two (2) meetings during the Greater Chattanooga REALTORS® calendar year will be cause for dismissal from the RPAC Trustees. Meetings for the purpose of absences will include regular RPAC Trustees meetings, special meetings, and/or candidate interviews.

A quorum is required for the conduct of any RPAC Trustees regular or special meeting. A quorum is defined as a number equal to a simple majority of the total number of members. Lacking a quorum, the meeting may be:

1. Dismissed with no action taken.
2. Delayed awaiting additional participants.
3. Reschedule. Or
4. If necessary to hold the meeting immediately, the RPAC Trustees may meet acknowledging that any vote taken will be considered an unofficial recommendation.

The GAD will record attendance at the beginning of all meetings and minutes of the proceedings.

## **CANDIDATES ELIGIBLE FOR SUPPORT**

Only candidates who complete the interview process should be considered for candidate support and RPAC funds except as otherwise indicated by the Trustees.

RPAC Trustees makes every attempt to interview all viable candidates in every race that affects the real estate business or otherwise is meaningful to the Greater Chattanooga REALTORS® membership. Races the RPAC Trustees will interview for are as follows:

- City of Chattanooga
  - Mayor
  - City Council
- Hamilton County
  - Mayor
  - County Commission
  - Trustee
  - Sheriff
  - Assessor
  - School Board
  - District Attorney

Any Greater Chattanooga REALTORS® member running for office must comply with the interview process to be considered for support and RPAC funds. Such support and funds will not be granted automatically but will be determined based upon the same criteria applied to non-member candidates.

## **CANDIDATE INTERVIEW PROCESS**

Following the withdrawal deadline provided by the Tennessee Secretary of State, all candidates in races to which the RPAC Trustees have agreed to interview will be contacted by the GAD to schedule an interview.

Upon agreeing to interview, the GAD will send all candidates an email explaining the interview and candidate support process.

The RPAC Trustees, by majority vote, may waive the requirement for candidate 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® issue and does not have opposition.
2. The candidate is an incumbent elected official who has previously received RPAC funding and/or support and does not have opposition.
3. Unforeseen and exigent circumstances prevent a candidate from making an appearance before the RPAC Trustees. The RPAC Trustees may choose to submit a questionnaire to the candidate in lieu of an in-person or virtual interview.

When practical, at least one member present and participating in the candidate interview should be an eligible voter from that election district.

There should be a minimum of five REALTORS present to conduct a candidate interview.

Any interview team member unable to attend ALL interviews for a particular race shall not vote.

If space is available and facilities are adequate, the interview should be held at the Greater Chattanooga REALTORS® office. If the interviews are unable to be held at the Greater Chattanooga REALTORS® office, then accommodations should be made at a local venue convenient to all parties. If an in-person meeting is not possible, then alternative interview methods may be utilized.

Interviews shall not be recorded, and all deliberations of the interview team are to be kept confidential. If information is requested regarding how the RPAC Trustees arrived at their decision, then it will be the responsibility of the GAD to provide the requested information in a manner not to divulge any confidential conversations that took place by the RPAC Trustees.

RPAC Trustees may receive communication from Greater Chattanooga REALTORS® members, candidates, candidate representatives, etc. regarding support of a particular candidate. Any communication received by a RPAC Trustee regarding candidate support should be immediately reported to the GAD to ensure that the objectivity of the RPAC Trustee is being kept.

## **CANDIDATE EVALUATION PROCESS**

After interviewing all candidates in a particular race, the interview panel will meet following the interview to make its recommendations on whether RPAC Trustees should support a candidate and whether RPAC funds should be requested for that candidate's campaign.

Contributions are approved without regard to party affiliation, but are given to those candidates who, by their activities, personal conduct and records of performance, have ably demonstrated their concern for, and interest in, the democratic processes, the preservation of real property rights, the legal, and economic rights and welfare of the community and the integrity of the real estate profession.

The recommendations of the panel will be documented by the GAD. Any notes taken by panel members during the interview and evaluation process must be given to the GAD at the conclusion of the process. The notes will then be shredded by the GAD. The RPAC Trustees shall not divulge any discussions, deliberations or conclusions regarding the candidate interviews or evaluations.

Once all interviews and evaluations have been completed, the GAD will forward the RPAC Trustees recommendation to the Tennessee REALTORS® for review and final approval.

RPAC Trustees believes in the democratic process and actively supports political candidates, regardless of party affiliation, who strongly identify with issues important to the real estate industry,

the free enterprise system, the property buying consumer and seller, and the preservation of private property rights.

The candidate interview process is to be a non-partisan process and should focus on each candidate's views on subjects of interest to the real estate industry. As such, it is extremely important to put aside party affiliations during the interview and evaluation process.

RPAC Trustees provides an opportunity for members to become better acquainted with candidates running for elected office and their stance on issues that affect the real estate industry. This process should also educate candidates on issues and views of the RPAC Trustees, of homeownership, private property rights and other views relevant to the real estate industry.

If a panelist is unable to attend an interview due to an emergency, it is the panelist's responsibility to notify the GAD and find a replacement based on the alternative list supplied by the GAD.

Any member of the RPAC Trustees, once a support 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 Trustees and a prohibition from serving as a RPAC Trustee in the future. Due process would be available for such removal or prohibition that occurred. RPAC Trustees shall sign an agreement at the time of their appointment that they will abide by this policy. Following due process, it is the responsibility of the GAD to enforce the policy.

### **NOTIFICATION OF SUPPORT**

Once the Tennessee REALTORS® have approved the support, it is the GAD's sole responsibility to contact all candidates interviewed to notify them of the RPAC Trustees final decision to ensure that all candidates are properly notified at the same time.

### **CHANGES TO POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Any changes to these policies and procedures must be approved by the Greater Chattanooga REALTORS® Board of Directors.