**OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE HANDBOOK**

**NEBRASKA ASSOCIATION OF FSA COUNTY OFFICE EMPLOYEES**

**AS AMENDED APRIL 23, 2016**

The success, survival, and growth of NASCOE and its affiliated State Associations depends on the performance of the Officers, Executive Committee, Directors, and appointed Committees. The following outlines the duties of the officers and committees and the procedure for conducting meetings and activities.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS DUTIES & FUNCTIONS**

The President of the Association will appoint each director to a committee. It will be the responsibility of the directors to carry out the duties of the committee they are appointed to.

The President will also select two delegates from the Board of Directors to attend the Northwest Area (NWA) Rally and the National NASCOE convention, with the registration fee, travel, and lodging to be reimbursed.

The Board of Directors are reimbursed for travel and lodging to the quarterly meetings, except for the State Convention which will be at their own expense. The Board of Directors is also reimbursed for any supplies or postage expenses when working with NASCOE business. Expense vouchers are to be turned into the State Treasurer.

A member of the Board of Directors is also responsible to contact their alternate director if they are unable to attend a quarterly meeting. The Director shall send any reports to be presented to the board with their alternate.

The following is expected of all Officers, Directors, Alternates, and Committee Chairs:

* Be familiar with Roberts Rules of Order as they shall cover the discussion and parliamentary procedure in all meetings of this association
* All members present at the board meetings may take part in the discussion process. The officers and directors are the only members of the board able to make motions and to vote. If a director is not present, their alternate may vote and make motions in their place.
* Be familiar with NEBRASCOE’s Constitution and By-Laws
* The Officers (President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer are elected by the general membership at the State Convention
* Be prepared to perform such duties as the Governing Body may prescribe
* All decisions and actions shall be made in the best interest of the association
* Remember the importance of communication, diplomacy and courteous behavior
* When representing NEBRASCOE/NASCOE act in a responsible and professional manner in accordance with the Association’s Constitution and By-Laws while ensuring every member receives proper representation

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

A regular order of business such as outlined below should be followed:

1. Meeting called to order.
2. Roll call to determine if a quorum is present.
3. Reading of minutes of last meeting by Secretary and approved with any additions or corrections deemed necessary.
4. Report of the Treasurer
5. Report of Standing Committees
6. Report of Special Committees
7. Discussion of old or unfinished business
8. Discussion of new business
9. Adjournment

**DUTIES OF THE PRESIDENT OF NEBRASCOE**

The President is the Chief Executive Officer of the Association. He or she presides at all meetings and is Chair of the Board of Directors. While certain duties of the President are set forth in the Constitution and By-Laws, experience has shown that it is not only desirable but important that the President should do certain things which are not specifically stated in the Constitution. Among these are:

* The President serves as the liaison for the Association in dealing with the State FSA Director and the

 State Committee.

* Serves as the Chairman of the Board of Directors.
* Has the authority to call a meeting of the Board of Directors.
* Is responsible for appointing committees and the chair of each committee.
* Presides over meetings of the Board of Directors. Prepares an agenda in advance for each meeting of the Executive Committee and Board of directors and follows the accepted rules of parliamentary procedure to conduct the proceedings of all meetings.
* With the approval of the board, purchases equipment or materials to be used for the benefit of the association.
* Presides over the first half-day of the annual meeting with Vice-President presiding over the second half day if the meeting extends past noon.
* Answers questions and responds to concerns from FSA employees.
* Represents the association in personnel hearings when asked to attend.
* Maintains close contact with the State FSA Director in matters affecting FSA employees and working conditions.
* Appoints other Directors and Officers when there is a vacancy. The appointment is subject to board approval at the next meeting.
* Assures that the responsibilities of the Board Members are carried out as directed by work with and assisting Committees in carrying out their duties and responsibilities.
* Is responsible to the members that expenditures of the Association monies is necessary and prudent for the benefit of the Association.
* Represents the Association at Area and National meetings.
* Assures that the actions of the Board are in accordance with the Constitution and By-Laws of the Association.
* Keeps the Executive Committee and Directors informed of official activities.
* Ensures that the Association Treasurer prepares a financial statement to be reviewed by the Executive Committee and Board of Directors.
* Have an annual audit made of the records and accounts of the Treasurer.

**DUTIES OF THE VICE PRESIDENT OF NEBRASCOE**

The Vice-President is a member of the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors. The Vice-President shall perform the duties of the President during his/her absence and at such times the President deems necessary. The Vice-President shall succeed to the office of the President in the event such office becomes vacant during the term of the President. The Vice-President will assist the President by serving in other capacities designated and by overseeing the functions of certain committees.

**DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY OF NEBRASCOE**

The Secretary is the recording officer of the Association. The official actions of the Secretary are under the direction and supervision of the Association President and Board or Directors of which he or she is a member. Specific duties include:

* Keeping the general Association records, including minutes of all meetings, Committee appointments, and officers list.
* Ensures that copies of the minutes are sent to the Publicity Chair and the Webmaster.
* Records minutes of special meetings and conference calls.
* Assist President and Publicity Committee Chair in keeping membership informed of State and National Activities.
* Be familiar with and keep an up-to-date copy of the Constitution and By-Laws.
* Advise President of items needing specific actions prior to meetings.
* Send out notices of meetings and prepare correspondences as directed by the President.

**DUTIES OF THE TREASURER OF NEBRASCOE**

The Treasurer is the financial officer of the Association. The official actions of the Treasurer are under the direction and supervision of the Association President and Board or Directors of which he or she is a member. Specific duties include:

* Submit financial reports and information as requested by the President or Board of Directors.
* Receive all monies and deposits in the same bank or other financial institution approved by the Board of Directors.
* Pay out monies only on authority of the Board of Directors using checks or the association debit card.
* Be prompt in answering correspondence and submitting membership dues to NASCOE in accordance with instructions.
* Files annual incoming tax filing for non-profit organization and pays any applicable State sales tax due on an annual basis.
* Assist President and Publicity Committee Chair in keeping membership informed of State and National Activities.
* Pays quarterly dues to the NASCOE treasurer.
* Pay annual dues of $1 per member to the NWA fund.
* Be familiar with and keep an up-to-date copy of the Constitution and By-Laws.
* Advise President of items needing specific actions prior to meetings.

**DUTIES OF THE SCHOLARSHIP CHAIR**

A Nebraska State Scholarship application offers three $500 scholarships using the same criteria as the National application. Completed applications must be returned to the Chair by **January 1**. The Chair then appoints a panel of at least three NASCOE members to serve as judges. The applications are then judged, ranked, and all applicants are informed of the results. Upon confirmation of enrollment from a school of higher learning, the $500 checks can be sent to the winners. Checks must be returned if at least one full semester is not completed. The winners are also invited to be guests of NASCOE at the State Convention where they are publically recognized. A complete summary of the years’ scholarship activity is sent to the State Secretary for inclusion in the annual report. The State Scholarship Chair shall forward the original application of the three winners to the NWA Scholarship Chair no later than **February 1**.

The Northwest Area (NWA) offers a $1,000 scholarship to NASCOE members, members’ spouses, or members’ legal dependents. Applicants are judged on mental and physical ability, initiative, industry, persistence, leadership ability, and personal and social adjustment. Each area winner then competes for a National Scholarship. The State Scholarship Chair needs to ensure that each NASCOE member has access to an Area/National application. Completed applications must be submitted to the Membership Chair by February 15 of the applicable year so that NASCOE membership status can be confirmed. The State Chair must then submit the original application plus five copies to the NWA Scholarship Chair by March 1 for judging.

The Scholarship Chair is expected to:

* Be familiar with the awards handbook as it applies to scholarships
* Publicize the timetable for submitting and judging the applications
* Publicize the availability of the forms and rules for the scholarship program
* Forward all applications meeting the requirements to the Area Scholarship Chair. Verify that nominations submitted meet the eligibility requirements and are certified by an Officer of NEBRASCOE.

**DUTIES OF THE BENEFITS CHAIR**

The Benefits Chair shall maintain information and procedures on all the benefits allowed to NASCOE membership. The Benefits Chair shall send out a list of benefits to each County Office on an annual basis. The State Benefits Chair shall keep in touch with the Northwest Area and National Chairpersons for any additions or changes to the benefits package so as to keep the State Delegation up to date.

The Benefits Chair shall also be responsible for ensuring that all members have access to pamphlets or brochures that explain the benefits and how to apply for them.

NASCOE now offers a benefits package to its members to help improve the quality of their lives and those of their families.

Some of the many benefits offered are Vision Care, Life Insurance, Dental Insurance, Health Insurance, retirement plans, cell phone discounts and shared leave. Supplemental health plans available to members only are cancer, heart attack, hospitalization and long term care.

The NASCOE Benefits Chair and Executive Committee research various benefit options to provide the best benefits they can to the membership. They along with the state Benefits chair also accept benefit requests and ideas from the members.

This is all done in consultation with the NASCOE Legislative Committee as Congress is constantly looking for ways to decrease spending. The benefits we now enjoy are under scrutiny at all times. All of these committees and individuals are working to continue the benefits we now have and to work towards new ones.

The Benefits Chair is expected to:

* Work closely with the Northwest Area Benefits Chair.
* Forward information received from the Area Chair to the State Officers and Directors. The Chair and State President shall develop a plan as to how the information will be passed on to the membership.
* Timely communicate both NASCOE and government-wide benefit information to the membership through NEBRASCOE newsletters and website.
* Be on the lookout for programs, products and services that would be beneficial to all NEBRASCOE members. If this would benefit members in other states forward the information to the area chair for them to pass on to the NASCOE Chair and Board.
* Work with the President to ensure an invitation is sent to Teresa Dillard with Dillard Financial Services to attend and speak at our State Convention. This is all in accordance with our National Contract with Dillard Financial.
* Keep yourself updated on the many benefits available to assist members with any questions or concerns regarding these benefits.

**DUTIES OF THE EMBLEMS CHAIR**

The State Emblems Chair is responsible for all NASCOE emblems sales within the state of Nebraska, including both National and State emblems.

The Emblems Chair shall promote NASCOE emblem sales and shall keep a register of all orders placed, received, delivered, and paid for. A record of all remittances shall be kept. From these records, the Chair shall report an account of all sales on a quarterly basis to the Northwest Area Chair. A report shall also be made to the State Board of Directors at all quarterly meetings.

Sales remittances shall be records and forwarded to the State NASCOE Treasurer to be deposited. Vouchers shall also be sent to the Treasurer requesting remittance to be forwarded to the National Emblems Chairperson for all National items sold.

The Chair is also responsible for keeping the State NASCOE membership body informed of all items available for sale, and providing an adequate amount of inventory on hand for immediate sale at the annual State Convention.

The Emblems Chair is expected to:

* Encourage the membership to purchase NASCOE emblems online at *thenascoestore.com.*
* Forward any suggestions received on new emblem items to the area chair.
* Discuss with the membership and board if there is an interest in NEBRASCOE items. If so, the chair would need to organize the vendor, ordering of items, prices etc. with the help of the board as needed.

**DUTIES OF THE LEGISLATIVE CHAIR**

It is the responsibility of the Legislative Chair to meet with the Officers and Directors to outline plans and goals for the ensuing year and to inform other committee members of the plans and goals. They shall alert other members about pending legislation.

The job of the Legislative Chair is a position which generates a great deal of feedback and response from membership. The purpose of the Legislative Chair is to represent membership with active legislative communications.

This process includes a grassroots effort by all members through email, phone and personal contacts.

It is important for the legislative chair to create a working relationship with individual congressional and senatorial staff. Hopefully then, the staffers will contact the legislative chair when issues applicable to the membership arise.

The Legislative Chair is expected to:

* Send copies of all information received from the area chair to the Officers, Board and general membership of NEBRASCOE.
* Keep abreast of any legislation that could have an effect on NEBRASCOE members. If you feel it has an effect on a bigger area, contact the area chair.
* Alert the Board and members about pending legislation and any actions they should take as defined by the area Chair or NEBRASCOE Officers.
* Encourage members to make contacts on key legislation.
* Encourage members to make personal contacts with their Senators and Representative when they are home from DC.
* Keep the NEBRASCOE Officers informed of legislative activities, correspondence and personal contacts.
* Attend NEBRASCOE Legislative Conferences. These are usually held in February in DC. NASCOE members gather and go to the Hill with certain issues to discuss with their Senators and Representatives. NASCOE pays room and travel for the state Legislative Chair. NEBRASCOE then pays room and travel for other members to attend as deemed by the President and Board. Every other year there is normally a Mini Legislative Conference where only certain state legislative chairs are invited to attend.
* Remain as non-political as possible in order to develop a working relationship with both parties.

**DUTIES OF THE PROGRAMS CHAIR**

Problems arise throughout the year concerning the programs we administer (software, forms, program requirements etc.).

The Chair is responsible for educating the membership as to the purpose, responsibility and availability of the Programs Committee.

The Programs Chair is expected to:

* Understand the difference between Program Efficiency items and Negotiation items. Program items can be submitted any time of the year, whereas Negotiation items have a limited time period for submission. Therefore, the Program Chair must be able to explain the submission of these program items. Know where and how these items are to be submitted. The form to be submitted is available on the NASCOE website.
* Contact the person submitting the item acknowledging receipt and explain the forwarding process. When the item has been addressed at the national level, ensure that the member submitting the item is contacted. This may all be done at the national level also, but additional acknowledgement at the state level is also needed.
* Some of the items submitted will not be able to be addressed as program issues, but may then be referred as negotiation items.
* The area chair may request your input and research on the item submitted.

**DUTIES OF THE PUBLICITY CHAIR**

Communication is an important part of NEBRASCOE. The printed newsletter is an important part of that communication. Membership contributions are a key to communication. The Publicity Chair shall be responsible for editing and publishing a State Newsletter and will solicit articles from Officers, the Board of Directors, and members.

 The Publicity Chair is responsible for the following:

* Publishing the NEBRASCOE newsletter which includes establishing deadlines for receipt of information and publication dates and designing the layout of pictures, reports and notices

* Discuss with the board the number of newsletters to publish per year. (There are certain requirements if the newsletters will be entered into the national publicity contest.)
* Generally the newsletter is to include an article from the President and Vice President, minutes of any board meetings held since the last newsletter, reports from the Committee Chairs, an article from the NE RASCOE President, coverage and pictures of the state conventions, delegate reports and pictures from the area rally and national convention.
* If unable to attend the conventions and rally ask someone attending to take pictures for the newsletter
* The remainder of the newsletter content is up to the publicity chair and the membership such as county news, feature counties, recipes, feature stories from members etc. It is recommended that the chair (through the President) contact the membership to see what they want in their newsletter.

* Work closely with the Web Master as much of the same information will be on the web site.
* If participating in the national publicity contest, be aware of the deadlines for submission of newsletters and feature stories. The NASCOE website contains the National Publicity Policies.

**DUTIES OF THE NAFEC CHAIR**

The NAFEC Chair is responsible for working with the State NAFEC Director(s) to support and assist NAFEC in increasing membership within the State. The NAFEC Chair is further responsible for:

* Reporting NAFEC activity to the Board as necessary
* Work closely with the NWA NAFEC Chair and National Chair
* Assist State NAFEC in its efforts to educate COC members on the importance of NAFEC. This may include sending membership packets to the Board for distribution to all FSA offices within the state.

**DUTIES OF THE MEMBERSHIP CHAIR**

The Membership Chair is responsible for maintaining all membership records and shall submit membership reports to the President or Board of Directors as requested. They shall issue membership cards on an annual basis and will assist the President and Publicity Chair in keeping membership informed of State and National activities.

The Membership Chair shall also be responsible for the following:

* Providing leadership in an effort to promote and maintain high levels of membership in NEBRASCOE.
* Understand the current NEBRASCOE bylaws regarding who can join as full regular vs. associate members.
* Contact all employees (County Office, GS County Office, State Office and retirees) to join NEBRASCOE
* Personally contact every non-member County Office Employee in the state about joining NEBRASCOE and/or coordinate efforts of the members to assist in getting non-members to join.
* Produce and maintain quarterly membership reports. Provide reports to the Treasurer for submission of dues to NASCOE by Oct 1st, Jan 1st, April 1st and the final report by June 15th or as per Treasurer’s request.
* Complete and send membership cards to each member on an annual basis.
* Prepare requests and /or waivers for all applicable counties and/or individuals who qualify for 40, 45 and 50 year membership awards. The Chair must timely submit the requests to the state Secretary/Treasurer for certification, who in turn forwards them to the National Membership Chair by June 15th. The Chair is responsible for presenting these awards at the State Convention.
* Work with the state Awards Chair to maintain a list of individuals who have received NASCOE Honorary Lifetime Memberships.
* Work closely with the state Treasurer to ensure all reports, dues transmittals and awards are completed timely.
* Verify membership qualification for scholarship and publicity awards.
* Notify Directors of new members so they can keep their member distribution list up to date. Courtesy Copy to Officers and Chairpersons to keep everyone up to date.

**DUTIES OF THE AWARDS CHAIR**

Primary Objective: to make membership award of what awards are available and to motivate members to nominate people deserving of those awards. The Chair should have each NASCOE Director encourage their districts to send in at least one nomination for each award. This approach is to generate a number of nominations so that the awards are truly competitive.

Review the AWARDS PROGRAM BOOKLET. Become familiar with the requirements of the nominator and nominees and the various awards. Prepare handouts of eligibility requirements and score sheets used in selecting award winners to give to the Directors at the October quarterly NASCOE meeting. Write an article for the fall NASCOE State Newsletter explaining and encouraging nominations for Awards. Include eligibility criteria and a copy of the cover sheet and the standards used for scoring. Give the deadline of February 1 for nominations to be mailed to the Awards Chair.

The Awards Chair shall select five judges from across the state, including CED’s, PT’s, and COT’s. The selected judges shall be contacted to make sure they are willing to take the responsibility. The five judges shall be sent one copy of each nomination and scoring sheets for each category by February 5. The Awards Chair is responsible to forward the winning nomination and five copies for each category to the Northwest Area Chair by February 20.

The State Awards Chair must order the awards for each category to be presented at the State Convention. Generally, a short synopsis of the nomination is read at the State Convention when the award is presented by the Awards Chair. The Chair is also responsible for providing an article for the State Newsletter following the State Convention.

The State Awards Chair will also be responsible for advertising and obtaining sick leave awards. The sick leave award certificates and plaques can be obtained by contacting the National Awards Chair.

The Awards Chair is expected to:

* Be familiar with the National Awards handbook available at the NASCOE Website
* Encourage membership to nominate deserving members
* Publicize the deadlines for the awards nominations for judging purposes
* Be sure to publicize where the awards nomination forms can be found and make them available
* Select three members to be judges for the awards submitted. These judges are to review the Awards handbook which lists their duties. The judges must adhere to the established timetable.
* After winners are selected by the judges, the chair is to contact the person(s) that submitted the winning nominations.
* Work with the Secretary and Membership chairs regarding eligibility and the ordering of the awards plaques so they arrive prior to the convention.
* Announces and hands out the awards at the State Convention.
* Forward NEBRASCOE winners to the North West Area Chair. Verify that nominations submitted meet the eligibility requirements and are certified by an Officer of NEBRASCOE.

**DUTIES OF THE WEBMASTER**

Communication is an important part of NEBRASCOE. The website is an important part of that communication.

The Webmaster shall be responsible for:

* Keeping the website updated regarding officers, directors, committee chairs, board meeting dates, dates and registration information for state and national conventions and rally
* Update website Home Page, forms, menus, tables, graphics etc. as needed
* Scan and upload photographs, convert documents to .PDF format and upload to the appropriate place in the web
* Maintain the website structure and organization backing up the website, deleting unused files, repairing broken links and other upkeep as needed
* Include President and VP articles, committee reports, board meeting minutes including past reports depending on available space
* Contact (through the President) the membership for their ideas of what they want to see on the website
* The Webmaster will need to identify what is appropriate for the web, the President and other officers will help with those decisions.

**DUTIES OF THE ELECTION COMMITTEE**

Responsibilities of the Elections Committee consists of conducting elections on a biennial basis. In general, elections are held in one half of the districts each year. The districts to hold elections shall be selected by the Board of Directors according to the Constitution and By-Laws.

Nomination petitions are sent to each County Office in the selected Districts to complete a ballot of at least one CED delegate and one PT delegate in each District. Persons nominating an individual should ensure that the person is willing to serve and is a NASCOE member before completing the nomination. The Membership Committee or Secretary/Treasurer should be consulted to obtain a current membership listing and mailing labels. Only members can be nominated and only members can submit nominations and vote. The election should be completed and the results reported by May 1 of each year.

The second function includes presiding over the elections of a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer at the annual State Convention. A roll call will be conducted, with two delegates voting form each County Office. Nominations shall be accepted from the floor for each office. The nominee receiving a simple majority vote shall be declared elected. Voting shall be by a show of hands unless otherwise properly moved by the voting body.

**DUTIES OF THE PAST PRESIDENT OF NEBRASCOE**

The NEBRASCOE Past President will provide support and guidance to the leadership of NEBRASCOE while continuing to promote the Association’s goals and objectives. He/she serves as a “sounding board” for newly-elected officers, and offers advice and council where appropriate. Individuals in the position of Past President possess institutional and historical knowledge of the association which will be a valuable tool to assist the current leadership.

The Past President continues to support the Association by accepting duties or responsibilities as assigned. Assigned duties may include:

* + The Past President often serves as the Parliamentarian and Resolutions Chairperson, and may act as a technical advisor to the Board of Directors and/or NASCOE members. As such, the Past President would review and present any proposed resolutions to the membership during the state convention. As Parliamentarian the Past President may also review prior to being proposed any suggested resolutions to change the Constitution and Bylaws of NEBRASCOE. He/she may provide guidance to committee members on the proper format of preparing reports and minutes of meetings. He/she may also be asked to review Parliamentary Procedure during board meetings.
	+ The Past President may be asked to take an active role in the Negotiation Process including assisting in the assignment of issues, writing NEBRASCOE position on issues, and educating and preparing the Negotiation Team.
	+ The Past President may be asked to take the lead on other various projects and he/she will be responsible for reporting to the Board of Directors on activities and contacts made in these efforts.
	+ He/She may maintain a file of all Past President Activities and the progress of such to be forwarded to the next Past President.

NEBRASCOE Past Presidents have traditionally continued to promote the goals of NEBRASCOE long after service is completed. They have provided moral support to future generations of officers assuring that, as far as they can influence, they foster the continuation of the great association of NEBRASCOE.

**GOVERNMENT COMPUTER USAGE**

**FSA Employees** haverecently received reminders cautioning employees on proper use of government resources, computers and the internet.

NASCOE members repeatedly ask NASCOE for a list of DO's and DON'Ts on FSA computers and email usage. Your NASCOE leadership agrees with this need, however, it is impossible to identify every potential situation that could result in someone losing their job from misuse of government resources.

**As for the DON'Ts, here's what we do know.** Government computers, internet, email and other resources can never be used to solicit monies on behalf of NASCOE or our State Affiliates. These items can definitely never be used for political purposes, including lobbying Congress for support or repeal of any legislation, program, or proposal, or frankly, anything.

**What can we DO?**  The membership can be kept informed through the electronic newsletter “NASCOE Now”. Information on benefits, awards and scholarship deadlines can also be offered. It is permissible to write, submit and read negotiation/consultation items. There is no problem in relating concerns and issues and how they relate to FSA. And, you may offer questions, suggestions and solutions to your NASCOE leadership.

**When in doubt...**Good Judgment and Common Sense never cost anyone their job. If you question an email's subject matter, *don't send it*! If you still care about earning thousands of income dollars, *don't send it*! While you cannot control emails received, you can control what is passed on or saved. When in doubt, throw it out!

You have heard that occasional personal use of government resources is permissible. This is a privilege not a right or entitlement. The quickest way for everyone to lose this benefit is for a few to abuse it. Limit your personal use during breaks or lunch times, or before or after work.

Your help is needed! NASCOE and State Affiliates are developing a database of home email addresses. Any item, issue or announcement that is controversial, questionable or lengthy can be sent directly to you at home. This is the preferred method when corresponding with each other as well.

Hopefully this message gives you a better idea of what you CAN and CANNOT do!

Sincerely,

Your NASCOE Executive Board