



ELIOT INSTITUTE

BOARD MEMBER HANDBOOK

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CONSIDERING A BOARD POSITION?

BEING NOMINATED TO THE BOARD

If you’ve been asked to consider joining the Eliot Board, you could have as much as a year before you ever attend a meeting in an official capacity. It takes about six months for the Nominating Committee to come up with a slate of candidates and a summer for campers to vote on the candidates.

- Spring: Nominating Committee presents a slate of candidates in the Eliot spring newsletter.
- Summer: Campers vote on the nominees.

- Fall: Newly-elected Board members participate in the fall Board meeting, on a non-voting basis. Nominating Committee recruits potential candidates for following year's elections.
- Winter: New Board members start their three-year terms at the January Annual Meeting. Retiring members also attend and vote.

GETTING ELECTED:

The Nominating Committee puts together a slate of qualified and willing candidates for the two to four positions on the Board that have come open that year depending on which rotations are due. In the summer — at July, August and Creative Arts camps — voting is by acclamation: “yay!” or “nay” if positions are uncontested. Campers from the previous Winter Eliot vote on the slate in the summer as well, but do it by email.

Except when a qualified camper has petitioned the Nominating Committee to challenge a candidate of the Nominating Committee, campers vote on the slate as a whole — not on individuals.

See full details of the nominating and election process in Part VII of the Eliot Bylaws, at:

www.eliotinstitute.org → [About Us](#) → [Board Manual](#) → [Part A: Organization](#) → [Bylaws](#)

WHO CAN SERVE

The Nominating Committee follows Eliot Bylaws Article VII:

- Any candidate for Director [aka Board member] must have attended at least one camp during the prior year and two camps in the prior four years.
- The primary criteria to be sought by the Nominating Committee shall relate to the skills and abilities offered by a candidate who has demonstrated ongoing commitment to providing high quality experiences for individuals and families in the camp setting.
- The Nominating Committee shall also seek a diversity of Directors with regard to age, gender, geographic residence, sexual orientation, and any other characteristics which seem pertinent to obtaining a representative Board.
- All Directors will be elected to three--year terms with a limitation of six years continuous service on the Board, except that appointment to fill a vacancy of one year or less shall not be counted in this limitation. A break in service must be at least two years in duration.

PERKS AND COMPENSATION

If you submit a registration and deposit for a summer camp by August 31 of the previous year, you'll be confirmed ahead of folks in the lottery. This “bypass the lottery” perk is available for only one camp per summer.

Mileage for travel to attend the board retreat and board meetings is reimbursed at a standard rate. If you use other means of transportation to get to a meeting, you'll be reimbursed at the economy fare rate.

Upgrades, e.g., to business class, are the responsibility of the board member. Eliot doesn't reimburse travel expenses for attendance at an Eliot camp, even when you are serving as Board Representative.

Board members are encouraged to find no-cost homestays, if at all possible. Eliot will pay for accommodation in special circumstances. For any Eliot Board-related trip that requires more than 6 hours one-way, up to \$20 per travel day may be reimbursed for meals. This reimbursement is available to board members, staff, and incoming board members.

Eliot will pay for your attendance at the annual board retreat in January at Seabeck in a standard, double occupancy room. If you choose to have a single room (if available) or want a family member to attend with you, you'll pay Seabeck's charges for the upgrades. Check with the Administrator to see what the current charges are. When serving as Board Representative, you'll receive camp credits sufficient to cover your camp fees at the economy level.

THE BOARD MANUAL

Eliot Board Manual is a great resource for you to become more familiar with the breadth of the job as a Board Member. It's on the Eliot Institute website at

www.eliotinstitute.org → [About Us](#) → [Board Manual](#)

Short summaries of selected parts of the manual plus other guidelines are included in the following pages, to introduce you to your responsibilities and expected commitment to being a Board Member of the Eliot Institute.

NOT QUITE READY?

Perhaps you are not quite ready for volunteering as a Board member right now. Instead, how about volunteering as a Non-Board member of one of thirteen standing committees.

See a short description of each committee on Page 7 below.

Committee Chairs are listed on the Eliot website at:

www.eliotinstitute.org → [About Us](#) → [Committee Chairs](#)

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

BOARD POSITIONS

The first four positions are officers and the last six are members at large. There are nine or ten board members on the board at a time, depending on whether or not it's a shadow year for the President-Elect.

The President presides over all Board meetings and assures the ongoing business of the Institute is carried out. Serves two years, after serving one year as President-Elect.

President-Elect's job is to become knowledgeable about the business of Eliot Institute, to participate in Executive and Personnel Committees' business, and to develop working relationships with Board Members and Staff. Serves one year after being elected, concurrent with the current President's last year in office, then transitions to the President's role for two years.

All other positions are three-year terms.

The Vice President - Communications develops and oversees an ongoing communication and marketing program between the Institute and those who have attended or might be interested in attending its camps.

The Secretary/Treasurer oversees the development of the annual budget for the Institute, the keeping of all financial records of Institute business, and the safe and prudent preservation of Institute assets.

The Six Directors, also known as "Members at Large," participate in meetings and committees to support the mission and principles of the Eliot community. Directors are elected for three-year terms, two each year on a rotating basis.

All Board Members are expected to serve on or chair Eliot committees, such as the Health and Safety Committee, Leadership Development Committee, Nominating Committee, etc.

Full job descriptions for each of these positions are on the Eliot website at:

www.eliotinstitute.org → [About Us](#) → [Board Manual](#) → [Part B: Governance](#)

Current Board members (and staff) are listed on the Eliot website at:

www.eliotinstitute.org → [About Us](#) → [Board and Staff](#) (Click on name for email link)

TIME COMMITMENT

We trust you to know best what your schedule is and what you can handle, but want to reassure you that for years busy people have been happy on the Eliot Board. The purpose as board members and staff is to maintain and improve the heritage of Eliot Institute so it may continue to offer fun, safe, and rewarding family camps for present and future generations.

Some Board Members find the work a balancing act to their professional lives and some find it gives added meaning to their lives. Others say they like the service, giving back to Eliot, or enjoy the camaraderie.

The amount of time you'll spend working on Eliot issues day-to-day or month-to-month is clumpy and not completely predictable. It's best to talk to the current title holder to get a feel for the workload, such as email time, other possible meetings, committee obligations, and travel.

You will need time to prepare for board meetings by reviewing and being prepared to discuss multiple pages of administrative, committee, financial, and camp reports.

Terms are three years.

THE YEAR AT A GLANCE

At least once in your term, be Board Representative at an Eliot camp (see page 6.)

Year round, often in clumps of activity, serve on one or more committees (see page 7.)

Attend board meetings.

BOARD MEETINGS

BOARD MEETING ATTENDANCE

Each year of your three-year term you will be expected to attend three regular meetings held throughout the Pacific Northwest. Historically the meetings have been at these locations:

- Annual Winter Board Retreat at Seabeck in January
- Seattle or Bellingham Washington or Greater Vancouver BC in the spring — usually April
- Portland or Vancouver Washington in the fall – usually late October or early November.

As well, you attend:

- The Fall meeting in your election year, as a participating but non-voting member, and
- The January Annual Meeting the month following your final year, as a voting member.

Other Board meetings may be held by video or telephone conferencing.

BOARD MEETING AGENDA

The following are the recurring Items at *all* Board meetings.

See page 5 for special items.

Ingathering:	Opening Reading, Lighting the Chalice All: reading of the Mission Statement and Values Statement Reading: Covenant of Right Relations Check in
Housekeeping:	Review / Approve Agenda Approve Minutes of previous meeting

Consent Agenda (Approval of previously distributed items by agreement, without discussion)

Administrative

Reports:

President

Administrator

Executive Secretary

Treasurer

Camp Reports:

Past camps (if any held since last meeting)

Future camps

Committee Reports:

Canadian-American

Fund Raising

Registration Advisory

Children's Program

Health & Safety

Technology

Communications/Marketing

Leadership Dev.

Youth

Creative Arts

Nominating

Finance

Program

Unfinished Business

New Business

All: Share Your To Do List

Adjourn, Closing Reading, Extinguish the Chalice

BOARD MEETING DISCUSSION ITEMS

Adding special items to the Agenda and Distribution of Documents

- Correspond with the President well in advance of meetings, to add any special items to the meeting agenda.
- Reports and other documents for discussion (including you own reports) are distributed to all Board members a minimum of two weeks before each meeting, using Google Drive.

Recurring Items at all Board meetings

- Board Meeting Agenda items (see previous page 4)

Recurring Items at Board meetings, as needed

- Select Board Representatives for future camps
- Committee membership updates - new members, volunteers, people to ask
- Special topic or workshop, sometimes with guest presenter

In addition to the agenda items and recurring items:

Fall Board Meeting

- New Members invited to attend this meeting
- Review current year's Summer Camps
- Incoming Board photo

January Annual Meeting / Retreat

- Review and approve Budget for year

- Review previous Winter Camp
- Report on current year's camps
- Set camp rates for current year's Winter Eliot
- Appoint Board members to individual committees
- Set Board and Committee goals for year
- Plan for displays at Pacific North West District (PNWD) and Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) annual meetings
- New members are invited to this meeting
- Incoming Board photo
- Seabeck Conference Centre update from Chuck Kraining, Executive Director
- Review and renew staff positions and stipends
- Hugs and thanks for departing Board members

Spring Board Meeting

- Final Financial Report of Previous Fiscal Year
- Set camp rates for following year's summer camps.
- Determine Hand and Heart award winners for current year.
- Make final decision on next year's Board Representatives (if not already done.)

INGATHERING & CLOSING

Board meetings include more than just business. At ingathering, along with the lighting of the chalice, a board member will share a reading of their choice with all. Following this, all members join together in reading aloud Eliot's Mission Statement:

"Eliot Institute creates and supports an inclusive community of celebration, friendship, exploration, relaxation and joy for Unitarian Universalists, their families and friends"

and Eliot's Values Statement:

"Eliot Institute is a welcoming spiritual community which encourages individual search for truth, while valuing joy, peace, justice and care for the earth."

A board member will then read the Covenant of Right Relations, as on the Eliot website at:

www.eliotinstitute.org → [About Us](#) → [Board Manual](#) → [Part A: Organization](#)

At the closing of the meeting, with the extinguishing of the chalice, a board member will share a reading of their choice with all.

ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

Official Version

For running board meetings, committee meetings, and even meetings at camps, the Eliot Institute has adopted Robert's Rules of Order. Over the years, many different versions and interpretations of Robert's Rules have been published, but Eliot follows the official copyrighted

version, the latest edition of “Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised.” As of September 2018, it’s the 11th Edition.

Robert’s Rules “Small Board/Committee” Procedures

For board and committee meetings, Eliot Institute follows Robert’s Rule’s small board/committee procedures where “...most parliamentary rules apply, but certain modifications permitting greater flexibility and informality are commonly allowed.” (RONR, page 9.)

Here is the basics of Small Board / Committee procedures (RONR, page 488.):

- Formal procedures such as standing to “obtain the floor” (i.e. speak to the motion) are not followed.
- Motions need not be seconded.
- Note: under Robert’s Rules, the names of seconders to motions are not recorded in the minutes, in both small boards or when following regular procedures in large meetings.
- There is no limit to the number of times to speak to a debatable question (other than appeals).
- Informal discussion is permitted while no motion is pending.
- A vote can be taken without a motion if the proposal is perfectly clear to all present.
- The chair can fully participate in discussion and voting.

Robert’s Rules References

The following books are recommended:

- For the seriously serious — the full text: Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised, 11th Edition; Robert’s Rules Association; De Capo Press; www.robertsrules.com (NOT .org)
- For a short guide to the basics: Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised In Brief, 2nd Edition; Robert’s Rules Association; De Capo Press. (Also available on Kindle)
- An excellent text for learning Robert’s Rules and a good reference text for its interpretation: Robert’s Rules for Dummies; C. Alan Jennings; Wiley Publishing. (Also available on Kindle, Kobo, etc.)

OTHER BOARD OBLIGATIONS

BOARD REPRESENTATIVE AT CAMP

Ideally, one of your commitments as an Eliot Board Member is to serve as Board Representative to at least one Eliot camp during your term.

You advise, support, and consult with the Dean / Co-Deans and Registrar before and during camp to ensure a quality Eliot camp, and as well, act as host to the camp community, to make all members of the community feel welcome.

You are also responsible for helping to resolve any conflicts at camp using established Eliot policies and procedures.

See the Board Representative job description and timeline at:

www.eliotinstitute.org → [About Us](#) → [Board Manual](#) → [Part B: Governance](#) → [Board Rep at Camp](#)

GOVERNANCE: Your Legal and Fiduciary Duties and Beyond

For an outstanding article on the meaning of governance, strategic leadership, a discussion of your legal and fiduciary duties, and your roles and responsibilities as a board member on a nonprofit board, read (in less than an hour): *Nonprofit Governance and the Work of the Board*; David O. Renz, Midwest Center for Nonprofit Leadership, University of Missouri:

www.bloch.umkc.edu/mwcnl/resources/documents/overview-nonprofit-governance.pdf

COMMITTEE WORK

Another commitment as a Board member will be to serve on at least one committee, either as the Board representative on that committee, as a member only, or perhaps as its chair. All committees, except the Executive Committee and the Personnel Committee, also have non-board members of Eliot campers. Chair can be a board member or non-board member, except where noted below.

Here is a mini-description of each Standing Committee:

- **Canadian-American (Can-Am)**
Oversees the development of Eliot at a British Columbia site.
- **Children's Program**
Plans and monitors effectiveness of children's and infants' program.
- **Communications — Marketing**
Prepares and implements a Communication—Marketing plan. Chaired by the Vice-President.
- **Creative Arts**
Plans workshops and finds presenters for those workshops for the Eliot Creative Arts camp.
- **Executive Committee**
The four officers of the Board plus the Leadership Development Committee Chair, to handle board matters that may occur between regular Board meetings. Chaired by the President.

- **Finance**
Develops the annual budget. Oversees and monitors Eliot’s financial position and camp rate structures. Chaired by the Treasurer.
- **Fund Raising**
Develops and implements plans for fund raising.
- **Health & Safety**
Develops guidelines and procedures for assuring health and safety of all persons and property at camp. Assists Deans in managing waterfront and boat dock staff. Chair is a board member.
- **Leadership Development**
Identifies and recruits Non-Board volunteers for Eliot committees and Deans for future camps. Plans and implements long-term leadership development for Eliot and its Board. Chaired by a Board member. Chair is a member of the Executive Committee.
- **Nominating**
Assesses skills, balance, and experience needed for nominees to fill Eliot Board and Nominating Committee. Publishes a slate of recommended candidates.
- **Personnel**
A Committee of the Whole of the Executive Committee, handling day-to-day matters and making recommendation to the Board regarding staff positions and compensation.
- **Program**
Plans adult programs for July, August, and Winter Eliot camps. Recruits speakers.
- **Registration Advisory**
Provides input for the implementation of the registration and room assignment process. Implements the financial assistance (scholarship) program.
- **Technology**
Researches, recommends, and implements technological solutions to further the Eliot Institute mission.
- **Youth**
Makes recommendations on issues affecting the youth program at Eliot camps. Provides recommendations to Deans for youth program staff.

The full standing committee charters are on the Eliot website at:

www.eliotinstitute.org → [About Us](#) → [Board Manual](#) → [Part C: Standing Committees](#)

Other temporary committees and task forces may be appointed by the Board as particular needs arise.