

**Perpetual Calendar Rationale  
Governance Working Group  
October, 2015**

In his book *Boards That Make A Difference*, John Carver writes the following: “(The saying) ‘If you haven’t said how it ought to be, don’t ask how it is’ describes the principle that requires a board to monitor instead of meander.” There is also, however, the constant danger of meandering in our monitoring, to monitor intermittently or to neglect monitoring entire policies. The perpetual calendar is designed to keep us on the straight and narrow path in all our work, including monitoring. It assigns monitoring dates for each of our policies and their subsections. As well, the calendar indicates which monitoring method will be used for each policy and subsection. In policy governance, three methods of monitoring are prescribed: Executive Report, External Audit, or Direct Inspection.

The administration has been faithfully keeping to its monitoring schedule, offering the board regular reports on progress toward or adherence to policies 1 and 2. As is obvious after a quick look at the proposed perpetual calendar, the Board of Trustees needs to begin monitoring its adherence to policies 3 and 4. In this perpetual calendar, each subsection of policies 3 and 4 is assigned a monitoring date. We will be using a simple online survey, distributed by the Governance Working Group well in advance of each meeting of the Board of Trustees, as the mechanism for the board to monitor these two policy sections.

The surveys will be assessed by the GWG. If there is no controversy, the surveys could simply be accepted in the consent agenda as monitoring reports. If there seems to be some need for discussion, the GWG would request meeting agenda time. To be as objective as possible in our assessment, each of the subsections of policies 3 and 4 should be accompanied by a list of observable behaviors which would help us assess our performance on each policy/subsection. This is a major undertaking, and the work has not yet been done, though a template for such was provided by Policy Governance Consultant Eric Craymer.

A perpetual calendar can also contain other “undelegateable” work of the board. We have added to this calendar a time each year for the Board of Trustees to review the ends of the association to determine whether they are still realistic and whether they remain visionary, leading the association into something not yet achieved. The principle behind this addition is that ends statements should not be evergreen, but should be evaluated regularly by the body which crafted them. The method of our evaluation of the ends statements will be decided by the BoT as a whole body, or can be delegated back to the GWG.

Many thanks to Harlan Limpert for his design of this calendar and much more, and to Terasa Cooley and the other members of the staff who have spent time working with us on this project. We look forward to continuing to work together to streamline monitoring and other governance processes.

Respectfully submitted,

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