

## **How We Work?**

What is NSHBA? It is a statewide nonprofit trade association whose purpose is to improve the home building industry. It is organized as 501(c6) in the IRS code. It is composed of a Board of Directors, an Executive Committee and various Committees and Councils.

The purpose of the Board of Directors is to determine the “*what*” of the organization. The Board of Directors defines the Mission Statement and what the organization desires to become in broad goal statements as found in the Strategic Plan. The Executive Committee determines the “*when*” and “*who*”. It does this by proposing an Annual Program of Work & Budget and appointing committee chairs. The Committees and Councils determine exactly “*where*” and “*how*” the respective activities will be carried out.

It is with a spirit of *teamwork* that the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee, and respective Committees and Councils go about full-filing the mission statement. The Board of Directors provides guidance by adopting a strategic plan and the annual program of work & budget. It then examines the progress towards the realization of the strategic plan. It is responsible to provide the resources necessary to implement the strategic plan, like financial resources, or to train new leadership and provide for volunteers. While the BOD does not manage or oversee the activities of committees and councils, they use the annual program of work & budget to enlist, guide and manage volunteers. The committee and council structure is used to accomplish the activities identified in the annual program of work & budget. It is the responsibility of the Executive Committee to monitor committee and council activities to be sure they are *completed on time and in budget*. The Executive Committee prepares the annual program of work, sets the annual calendar and appoints the chairs of the committees and councils and then coordinates and monitors their work. In turn each committee and council is responsible to plan and organize how and where activities or events will be accomplished.

**Volunteers** - A trade association like NSHBA is a volunteer based organization with limited staff. The role of the staff is to administratively support the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee. Volunteers are expected to plan, organize and produce the work of the association with little staff support. Successful management and motivation of volunteers requires different methods and concepts than traditionally used by a business, after all you cannot just fire a volunteer. The vitality of an association is the result of an active and involved core of volunteers! A willingness to volunteer comes from a desire to be recognized by one's peers or for an individual's desire to make a difference. It also helps a lot if the assigned task is something that is fun! Recognition as motivation will work for many simple tasks but it is not enough to get a commitment from a volunteer to accept a complex job. Complex tasks often require some skill or knowledge level on the part of the volunteer. Unless a volunteer feels they have mastery of that specific ability their lack of confidence becomes a barrier to volunteering. Therefore matching the skills of volunteers to a job is essential!

A sense of ownership by a volunteer also increases their level of commitment and follow-through. Building a sense of ownership occurs when two things happen. 1) The volunteer is recruited knowing that they are matched to the job based upon their skills and abilities and 2) let the volunteers design, plan and organize their work. Volunteer recognition comes full circle as the astute President provides ongoing recognition and approval by reporting the progress of the volunteer's activities to their peers and thanking the volunteer by name for their service, in front of the association. It is important that this recognition be further enhanced with a spirit of fun and camaraderie so that the term of service is fondly remembered.

**Strengths & Weakness:** When leading a statewide volunteer organization one must recognize that there are inherent strengths and weakness and account for them. The ability to provide volunteer recognition is a good example of a weakness. Although involvement at the state and national level has more prestige and therefore is considered a strength, it is also a significant weakness. As NSHBA only meets four times a year, there are limited opportunities for recognition. A Local HBA meets 8 to 12 times a year so the opportunities for recognition and reward of volunteers are much greater in front of their peers. For this reason the senior officers of NSHBA need to recognize NSHBA volunteers at the Local HBA level. To accomplish this requires the NSHBA President to visit Local HBAs. Local visits to express appreciation, or a heart felt personalized note for a volunteer by a NSHBA senior officer is important! Such recognition becomes even more powerful if the letters are read, or praise is presented at the volunteer's Local HBA general membership meeting.

The problem of time and distance involved in traveling to participate in state meetings is another significant problem. To a great degree the use of conference calls can be just as effective as a face-to-face meeting. But the fundamental issue of concern for the volunteer still is "time away from their business". There is no single answer to resolve this concern, as there are many different reasons why individuals fear to leave their business. The best thing that Senior Officers can promote to counter such concerns is the notion that there are "special personal gifts" that a volunteer receives if they are willing to serve. First, by making time to volunteer they will learn to become a better steward of their priorities and time. Second, leadership skills learned as a volunteer are valuable and transferable to their business. But these "gifts" cannot be received unless they volunteer.

**Organization Structure & Focus:** The focus of the typical committees and councils of a Home Builders Association relate to the organization's mission. It is important that leaders recognize that there are differences and manages their time and attention accordingly. Typically, a large investment of a leader's time and effort is committed to "governance committees" such as Strategic Planning, Membership Development and the Executive Committee, as they are necessary to manage the activities of volunteers. Volunteers are in a sense much like temporary employees. They demand a lot of oversight and frequently reinvent the wheel. Unfortunately, this often leaves the association leadership with little time to realize the real mission of the association - ***member services and benefits!*** Individuals join an association to receive services and benefits. Services or benefits can be for themselves, in the form of a professional designation for example or participating in networking activities to cultivate business

contacts. Services or benefits also accrue for the good of the industry and or to a specific business or industry segment. A governmental affairs program is such an example where you make a difference for a whole industry. Often so much attention is given to Strategic Planning, Membership Development and the Executive Committee that they fail to realize that little attention is being paid to the real work of the organization - ***member services and benefits!***

It is important that the senior leadership makes every effort to reach well beyond the governance roles and make a special effort to do two things.

- (1) Enlist and motivate volunteers to accomplish the activities of committees and councils, which provide member services and benefits.
- (2) Inform members about what the association does for them and how they can receive the benefits and services that the association offers.

***The NSHBA Mission Statement ...***

The Nebraska State Home Builders Association represents the residential and light commercial building industry at the state level and assists member associations and individual members by pursuing a suitable environment to ensure the vitality of the building industry for the benefit of its members, and to meet the housing needs of the citizens of the great State of Nebraska.

***Mission Goals:***

- To be an effective governmental affairs and political action force that advocates the needs and concerns of our industry at all levels of government.
- To provide professional development opportunities for members.
- To be a strong communications link between, and among, national, state and local associations.
- To be a strong association through increased membership, and to support the growth and effectiveness of local associations.

Committees & Councils are classified as either Governance Committees which addresses internal affairs and do not provide member benefits. Or Industry Services Committees whose activities benefit the industry as a whole or businesses in an industry segment. The target of Member Services Councils is to benefit individuals in the industry.

**Industry Services**

Codes & Standards Committee  
 Industry Awards Committee  
 Green Building Task Force  
 Affordable Housing Task Force

Government Affairs Trustees  
 NSHBA PAC  
 NSHBA BUILD Fund

**Member Services**

Associates Council

Professional Development Council

**Governance**

NSHBA Executive & BOD  
 Membership Development

Nominations & Install

**NAHB, NSHBA and Local HBA Relationships:** *Special consideration* must be paid to our affiliated organizations. Each Local HBA receives its charter from the state association and the national association charters the state association. But do not be fooled by this vertical hierarchy, in fact it operates much differently, more like a confederacy instead of a union. Local HBA's make far more money through their Home & Garden Show and Parade of Homes, than through membership dues. The national and state organizations are dependent upon the Local HBA to collect and remit dues on a timely fashion on their behalf. The point being, the power lies at the local level and respect and consideration should be shown!

This makes everything from planning a golf outing to reaching agreement over political issues a big deal! The key is to not have hurt feelings. Agreement by consensus is the preferred way of operating. The resolution of issues by a simple majority is how things are done in democratic organizations, but sometimes this can prove to be a contentious process. As the leaders of the state association you are charged to ***keep the group together and get the job done.***

It is also noteworthy that subdivision development is done differently in the Omaha market as compared to the rest of the state. In the Omaha market, subdivisions are built outside the city limits and within the two-mile territorial jurisdiction of the city instead of inside the city limits. Subdivisions are also financed by SID's in the Omaha market instead of using conventional financing, as is the practice through out the rest of the state.

Again the responsibility of the state leadership is to ***keep the group together and get the job done,*** while respecting the different viewpoints and local HBAs.