

# Housatonic Council Five Year Plan

## Passed March 17, 2009

### by the Executive Board

*The planning for the future is a central task of any organization. The challenge in planning is to make sure that our goals and objectives while clear are attainable. The further challenge is to respond to a world that seems to not treasure our organization and values in the same way that we do. Scouting in the Lower Naugatuck Valley can and will prosper. This document provides a path and guide toward our future. It is not all encompassing, for example it imagines the activity committees and the specific organizational charts to be fluid and flexible. The specifics of the program happen in church basements and in the woods. This document gives the Executive Board an opportunity to continue to allow our young men and women to benefit from a quality program.*

*Scouting in the Valley is dependent on 600 volunteers spread throughout our units and committees. Our work on the Board must continue to support those volunteers as they continue their work in guiding our young people in the program.*



## Membership

Increased membership is necessary for our future. However, increased membership expectations should be set at a way that is possible and attainable.

Each unit should designate one of its adult members for service on the membership committee. In the yearly meeting with the commissioner that person should be named. The commissioner should encourage that person to participate in the Council's membership committee and activities.

Membership increases in the next five years have to take into account two areas of growth. We should grow the number of traditional units by 1.5 a year or a total of 7 new units in the next five years. The growth area is Venture units, however, we should also try to grow Packs and Troops where possible.

The second area of growth is increased membership in our traditional units. This is only possible with the cooperation of unit leaders. They have to be sold on the idea that increasing membership improves program.

Action Items for the area of membership:

- 1) The membership Chairperson will work with the District Executive and the Commissioner in order to identify the areas of growth.
  - a. By September of 2009 a new Venture Unit will be formed.
  - b. By November of 2009, a new Cub Pack will be formed in East Derby using Hotchkiss Hose as a sponsor.
  - c. A plan will be put together by the membership chairman to be presented at the annual meeting in January for the plan for new units to be formed in 2010. Each year an action item at the annual meeting will be membership plans.
- 2) The commissioner with the assistant commissioners will identify a membership goal for each unit
  - a. A ten percent increase for each unit by January of 2010 will be proposed.
  - b. The unit commissioner will report to the commissioner staff each unit's plan
  - c. Some sort of reward for the units who achieve a ten percent growth in membership should be used, perhaps a full campership for a week at camp or a week at day camp that can be used either for one scout or cub or split up among many.
- 3) The membership chairman along with the District Executive and the Commissioner will continue to make goals for the next five years concerning membership areas. The D.E.'s critical areas in his or her annual review will include membership goals and objectives.

## Resources

Money has been an issue for Housatonic Council. The increased costs of doing business puts the council in a particularly critical position.

This is the most critical part of our five year plan. The financial goals and objectives that are set must be both attainable and not left as orphan goals. The Council President, Council Executive and Vice President of Finance have to be keep on top of these goals. The Council Executive's critical areas in terms of his salary review must include these goals and objectives.

The community has increasingly supported Scouting however, we



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need to also look at our parents and families for assistance

- 1) In the next five years we should work toward increasing the average family gift to \$100.00 a family.
  - a. Historically the presenter at the FOS presentation can increase the unit's participation, great care should be taken by the FOS chair in recruiting presenters. Additionally, the new presenters should be trained.
  - b. Scouting's story on the council level should be told throughout the year. The website, newsletter and positive word of mouth should all be utilized. Additionally any time FOS monies are being used for underwriting an event that fact should be reflected on all the material –registration forms, brochures, etc. – for that event.
  - c. Units that reach the \$100.00 per person goal, and that would be few units, should receive some sort of incentive, a patch, a cut rate at camp, perhaps this could be in concert with the membership incentive.
- 2) Fundraising has always been a priority. Great care should be taken to increase the opportunities for fundraising across the council.
  - a. Board Members should be responsible for fund raising goals and objectives.
    - i. Each board member should make a pledge at the January meeting for an amount that would include what he or she will give, will raise, and will work toward.
    - ii. The President and Vice President for Fundraising will review those goals throughout the year to offer encouragement and assistance.
  - b. New Signature events should be planned. In the next five years there should be three new annual fundraising endeavors added to our list of activities.
  - c. Again, telling the Council Story is as important as raising money. Great care should be taken to tell the story of scouting in the Valley. Each Eagle ceremony should be an opportunity to issue a press release describing what the Eagle did. The DE should provide a form to collect new Eagle information and create a press release to the dailies and weeklies in the valley.
  - d. A yearly report should be made by the outgoing and incoming vice president for Fundraising at the annual meeting. All major fundraisers will be presented for the year.

## Camp and Properties:



The single largest asset of the Housatonic Council is the Strang Scout Reservation. The camp provides a program during the summer months and a place for program throughout the year.

Our summer program provides a quality Scouting experience each summer. The campsites are generally well maintained. There are permanent program areas: The Waterfront, the Ecology Conservation Area, and the Rifle Range. Additionally there are areas that can be moved: the archery range, the Scoutcraft area, the new-Scout area, and the handicraft area. There is a health lodge, a combination office pavilion area, the Dining Hall, the Bassett Building – which is used for Conservation area in the summer, and the Training Center. There are also numerous small structures throughout the camp. There is a house for the resident ranger.

The showerhouse is in the process of being re-built. A new building should be open by the 2010 season.

The Dining Hall was built more than forty years ago. If the campsites are all being utilized the Dining Hall is not large enough for all the campers and staff. Additionally the Dining Hall is precariously perched on its foundation. The building is only used for the seven weeks of the summer. The building is shut down to use throughout the year. The Dining Hall has to be renovated or replaced in the next five years.

The camp has been dutifully cared for by a dedicated group of volunteers. They keep the buildings in operational order and save the council money by utilizing in-kind donations for maintenance and repair.

As a council we have to study the future needs of the camp and look toward the camp's viability both as a summer program and off-season destination.

Action Items:

- 1) The Camping Committee's Five Year Plan will be submitted to the Executive Board for amendment and approval.
  - a. The Executive Board will decide whether a capital campaign is warranted for the camp.
  - b. The Campaign's success depends on the entire council coming behind the camp as a program resource.
- 2) A needs assessment should be undertaken by the Camping Committee to see whether the buildings of the camp are being utilized properly.
- 3) A camp Marketing committee should be formed.

## **Volunteer staffing and recruitment:**

Housatonic Council relies on its many volunteers for its myriad of programs. The vast majority of Scouting's volunteers are active on the unit level. These men and women make the program at the point of contact with our cubs, scouts and venturers work.

However, we have a need for our council's standing committees, commissioner staff, and Executive and Advisory Boards to be staffed at the proper levels.

#### Action Items

- 1) The Nominating Committee in conjunction with the President will be responsible for recruiting the chairs of the standing committees as well as identifying possible members.
  - a. the unit commissioner will meet with all new volunteers in a unit and invite them to consider service on the district or council levels.
  - b. Each Standing committee chair will make a report in the Fall and winter of each year to the appropriate Vice President of the needs for volunteers for the committees.
  - c. The annual awards dinner can and should be used as a way of recruiting people for district and council service.
- 2) The professionals of the council will work within the appropriate Key Threes to ensure that the council is at proper levels of staffing.
- 3) At the annual meeting each year the Nominating chair will make a report concerning the staffing needs of the ensuing year.