

The Board of Trustees

***‘Do’s
&
‘Don’t’s***

The Board of Trustees

In a healthy Aerie, Trustees are like the children of the proverb: seen and not heard. Their work is competently and appropriately conducted based solely upon the methods clearly stipulated in the Constitution, Statutes and By-Laws of the Fraternal Order of Eagles.

The reverse of this—in Troubled Aeries—the Trustees are both verbal and known to all members. The actual authority of the Board is often surpassed, as control of everything possible is both methodically sought and often acquired, most often while exercising both force of personality and numerous tactics of professional intimidation. The result of this behaviour is usually that some form of malfeasance is in effect. While a Board of Trustees that does nothing usually suggests an Aerie where apathy reigns and no plans for the future are known, a worse scenario exists: a Trustee Board that does everything.

In the hopes that an active and involved Aerie membership learns the scope of the position of Trustee, numerous cases of troubled aeries have been studied and the following examples of improper conduct by Boards of Trustees have been seen to be causes of not only internal dissention in their Aeries but also often represent direct violations of the Constitution and Statutes of the Fraternal Order of Eagles, municipal/State/Provincial/federal laws and/or by-laws.

Keeping in mind that all laws particular to the geography of an individual Aerie supersede any that may be constitutional for that Aerie of the Order, the first part of this report will present the most common examples of wrongdoing; the second part will contain a clear summary of the only duties that all Boards of Trustees are obligated to perform and authorized to conduct.

Part One: What a Board of Trustees *May Not Do*

- a) The Board of Trustees does not have the authority to make purchases or lease of any equipment, repairs, remodeling, etc. without previous approval of the Aerie membership at an Aerie meeting.
- b) The Board of Trustees does not have the authority to hire or pay any employee not specifically delineated in the Local Aerie By-Laws.
- c) The Board of Trustees, while enabled to enforce all House Rules, may not impinge upon the personal freedoms of any human being that are guaranteed by law, namely the freedoms of conscience, religion, thought, belief, opinion and expression, freedom of the press and other media of communication, freedom of peaceful assembly, and freedom of association.
- d) The Board of Trustees has no authority to change the provisions of any House Rule. Aerie House Rules, like Aerie By-Laws, may be accomplished only through proper revision by the members of the Aerie (by a two-thirds margin of those voting).
- e) The Board of Trustees may not interfere with the duties of the other Officers of the Aerie. This includes the following specifics:
 - 1) All equipment, goods, paperwork and assorted chattel entrusted to the Brothers Secretary and Treasurer, the Worthy Conductor, the Aerie Auditor and the Ladies Auxiliary to the Aerie.
 - 2) Any violation of the Worthy President's sworn obligation to maintain harmony and equality within the Aerie.
 - 3) Any violation of the Worthy Vice-President's dutiful influence to confirm that all official matters of interest to the Aerie are being discussed only in the Aerie Room.
- f) The Board of Trustees does not have the authority to expel any member of the Order; it may only suspend the buffet and social room privileges of a member, and then only in a manner consistent with the Aerie's House Rules.

- g) No Trustee may interfere with, or commandeer, or arbitrarily alter the duties of any employee. All changes to job descriptions and/or the described function of an employee may only be made following an official meeting of the Board of Trustees. If a change/issue has occurred, the employee is subsequently informed of the decision/response of the entire Board by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees only, both verbally and in writing. Many an Aerie has become entangled in a lawsuit launched by an employee that has been interfered with in the performance of their duties by a solitary Trustee. Each Trustee is encouraged to remember that from a legal standpoint, the Board of Trustees as a whole is the employer, not any individual Trustee.
- h) If any Bar Steward(s) or Buffet/Social Room Manager is employed by the Board of Trustees and is on duty, s/he/they are empowered with the protection of the Aerie and therefore said employee(s) are to be the only one(s) who are/is to intercede in calling local authorities regarding any violent outbursts by guests or members. Every human being has the right to defend oneself from bodily harm, but any member that enters into a physical altercation while on Aerie premises, is instantly subject to disciplinary action by the Board of Trustees due a direct violation of the House Rules.

Part Two: What a Board of Trustees *Must* Do

- a) Immediately upon installation into office each year, the Board of Trustees shall elect one member of the Board as Chairman and another as Secretary. The Chairman is the only spokesman for the Board of Trustees when dealing with employees, members, or when making recommendations and/or reports to the Aerie floor. The Chairman does not speak for himself until he declares himself as a member of the Order; all comments he makes otherwise are interpreted as being made based solely upon the consensus of the entire Board of Trustees at all times.
- b) The Board of Trustees is to hold in trust all real property belonging to the Aerie, and all personal property not entrusted to any other officer by the Laws of our Order. This includes all furniture, fixtures, equipment, buffet/social room merchandise, assets and encumbrances, both owned and leased.
- c) The Board of Trustees must procure and maintain adequate insurance for the current term against all losses to the Aerie.
- d) The Local Aerie By-Laws stipulate wages/salaries of the employees of the Aerie, and all dealings and contracts with employees must be conducted within the laws and stipulations regarding employees' rights, i.e. compensation organizations, employment laws, etc. If the Board of Trustees employs a Buffet and Social Rooms Manager, that employee must have a written contract (a copy of which must be forwarded to the Grand Secretary each and every time it is amended in any manner whatsoever. If the only change in the contract is a raise in pay not yet in the By-Laws, then a proper By-Law amendment is expected as soon as possible, since it is only legal to pay the manager/employee the increased wage after the By-Law amendment has been approved and returned to the Aerie by the Grand Secretary).
- e) The Board of Trustees shall hold regular weekly meetings and must keep minutes of those meetings only in the Trustees Minute Book. Meetings of the Board of Trustees are assumed be open to the membership unless a meeting has been previously announced that the agenda will consist only of details regarding Aerie employees or of any actions that are disciplinary in nature.
- f) The Board of Trustees must maintain all of their required books and records (Trustees Minute Book, Trustees Weekly Report of Buffet and Social Rooms, etc.), which must be presented to the Aerie Auditor upon demand (not less than once per month). Therefore each month, the Aerie Auditor is to be presented at least four Trustees Weekly Reports, minutes of four meetings, one monthly Profit and Loss Statement, and one monthly Inventory of Buffet Goods.
- g) The Board of Trustees shall supervise buffet and social room activities with the concern of profitability as its primary focus.
- h) Purchase of supplies and merchandise for resale is made as needed and thereafter must be reported upon each week on the Trustees' Weekly Report of the Buffet and Social Rooms.

- i) The Board of Trustees must take inventory of said supplies and merchandise at the start of every 4- or 5-week period.
- j) Before each regular Aerie meeting, the Board of Trustees must pay all money received by it to the Aerie Secretary and receive his Miscellaneous Receipt therefor.
- k) A Physical Inventory of all furniture and contents of the Aerie Home must be performed by the Board of Trustees and updated (including details of any disposition of any previously inventoried items) at least once per year. All previous copies of the Physical Inventory are kept in trust with the Aerie Treasurer for his safekeeping.

In conclusion, it is hoped that this information, when combined with (and confirmed by) the Constitution and Statutes, Fraternal Order of Eagles, The Fraternal Order of Eagles Ritual book and the Fraternal Order of Eagles Officers' Handbook, will aid any current and future members and officers of the Order to understand precisely what an Aerie Board of Trustees is obligated to perform as well as what they are not authorized to do. As is true in any organization, when those responsible do their jobs and only their jobs, the workplace is both more enjoyable and more productive.

At its core, the Board of Trustees is yet another example of an Aerie Committee. Although made up of potentially diverse individual members, it functions properly only when it functions as a cohesive unit—very much the same as our Order does. It can only do the ultimate good when every Aerie, officer, and member are bonded together—each with equal power, equal intention, and equal status. Any member considering accepting the responsibilities of an Aerie Trustee either now or in the future may now more fully recognize that there is possibly no more fulfilling role in any Aerie. The responsibilities can be daunting indeed; but the self-satisfaction that comes from knowing that you served the membership as well and as fairly as you could may have no equal.

Good Trustees contribute to the growth of an Aerie in every way. Bad Trustees are rarely re-elected. And this is as it should be.