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## Trustee Line for December 2007

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### From The Trustees

The subjects listed below are just a listing of themes that have been submitted by other Trustees. You may respond to any of them or start an entirely new subject

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1.	Status of the Trustee Meeting Rules and Procedures Manual	12/9/07 12:32 PM
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Submit a response to the [Trustee Line](#) because of something you have read in this or any other issue.

#### Status of the Trustee Meeting Rules and Procedures Manual

12/9/07 - 12:32 PM

I am absolutely thrilled at the progress the Trustee Meeting Rules and Procedures Committee has been making since the committee was first formed in San Diego just over 2 years ago. Since then, there was a change in the committee chair and 5 members who volunteered initially have been dropped from the committee, unfortunately, a situation that is all too familiar with most of the committees we form. That leaves 5 members who have met regularly on a conference call to follow up on the '2 heads are better than 1 and 5 are better than 2' theme.

What has become very evident is that pending completion in time to be added to the Portland Trustee meeting agenda, the committee will be submitting the manual for the rules and procedures that will dictate how the Trustee meetings will be run as of that meeting. Currently there are 28 major subjects with multiple subsets that the committee has worked on quite diligently. The beauty of this package is that after its approval, there should be no deviation on procedural decisions between the 3 chairs and between Trustee meetings. Of course, there will be new items and subjects that will crop up and as swiftly as they do, the decisions of the BOT will make them immediately effective and they will be added to this manual.

Will it be a perfect manual in the beginning, absolutely not. But the beauty of it will be that it will be a living manual that can and will change based on the group conscience of the BOT. If you look at the current work in progress version of the manual under section 5 - Changing a Procedure on the Trustee website, you will see the language that clearly spells that out:

Agenda items that address Trustee meeting rules and procedures will always be the first order of business and if passed by a simple majority will take effect immediately. Whenever the presiding chair is challenged regarding an existing procedure and the challenge is successful, the new procedure will immediately take effect. All changes will become part of the Rules and Procedures Manual.

In recent Trustee meetings, there has been stance taken by a few that the BOT is trying to control the rooms with more changes to the Guidance Code and other procedures. I want to make it perfectly clear that nothing in this manual affects any areas, Intergroups or rooms. It is limited to the BOT meetings - period, the end. I for one am tired of points of information being acknowledged after an item is finished, or points of order and challenges that have caused many of the chairs' decisions to be passed under duress and improper premises. Although the last few Trustee meetings have been quite docile, I have witnessed anarchy with the Trustees when a Chair stumbles under the

pressure of having to make the right decision and violating another protocol or procedure that others have insisted was 'the way we used to do things.' When the meeting gets out of control like this, it negatively impacts the psychology of how items are heard, discussed and voted on. We need to eliminate all possibilities that could cause the BOT meeting wheels to come off the tracks.

With a manual in place, personalities will be relegated to the background in favor of principles if the members are aware or told of what the exact procedure is supposed to be for all parts of the Trustee meetings. We all have seen how there is an unspoken sense of urgency during the Friday segments of the Trustee meetings to 'race through the agenda' and not take away from the opening ceremonies and the hard work of the conference committee members. If there are fewer points of information, points of order, challenges to the chair, roll call votes during the Trustee meeting, we might see the meetings end sooner and will far less acrimony than many of us have witnessed in the past.

The difficulty will be this. Trustees can't look to vote this manual down because they don't like the wording or content of one or many items. It is truly a starting point upon which to make improvements. This has been a massive undertaking by the committee to bring structure to something that has been more about the Chairs' ever-changing discretion. The Chairs are there to facilitate the meeting and not to dictate how things will be run unless it is the decision of the body as a whole. With the manual, the Trustees will have the control of the meeting based on the decisions they may collectively.

I ask all Trustees to look at this document in its current state and read what has been painstakingly put together through committee consensus. If you believe something has been left out, then by all means get it to the committee chair, Herb B, for possible inclusion into the manual. For the good of the Trustees, I strongly urge everyone to pass this document, which is not literature and will only require a single vote to become effective. Let's all make the Trustee meeting less of a chore and more rewarding for all, without the bickering and tempers that have surfaced in the past.

You can get to the website page for this manual at the Trustee website by going to the left margin and clicking the Current Committees link, then the Trustee meeting Rules and Procedures link, or simple copy and paste this address into your web browser:  
[http://trusteewebsite.com/index.php/html/main/procedures\\_committee.html](http://trusteewebsite.com/index.php/html/main/procedures_committee.html)

David M. - Area 12 Member - Trustee Meeting Rules and Procedures Committee

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#### Attendance sheets at meetings

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12/9/07 - 1:53 PM

I would like to hear whether or not any group is not using an attendance sheet at their meetings and if not - why? There is no right or wrong here. I do not wish to make this an agenda item. I have just been wondering if anyone thinks it conflicts with 'who you see here'. All responses are welcome.

Thanks,  
Kevin M. - Area 6B

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12/10/07 - 1:59 PM

In our area we find them very useful. The sheet enables you to make sure everyone speaks from one week to another. It helps you determine how many members attend a particular meeting. It also prevents members from hiding for any period of time. We use the member's first name and first initial of his last name as not to jeopardize his or her anonymity. It is a useful item we use in the room and should not be misconstrued.

Thanks,  
Andy M. - Area 12

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#### Vacant Trustee positions

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12/10/07 - 9:57 AM

How can we get Trustee positions filled that are vacant ? I counted 11 open slots just in the US that's about 10 % of the total number of Trustees. Maybe we should have an amendment to the GC saying that if an area doesn't elect a Trustee for a period of two years the position will automatically be dropped ?? Maybe we should stress that it does not require money to be a Trustee-attendance can be by absentee ballot--etc, etc.

Bill B. - Area 15

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12/23/07 - 10:06 PM

To Bill B's suggestions about eliminate unfilled positions, absentee ballots only work for one meeting. You have attend at least one per year otherwise that position will become vacant again. The main problem is that not every area has the funds to send aq trustee to a conference every six months to a year. For example: A flight to Portland from Atlanta is presently \$460+. Add on the cost of the conference and my cost for sure will be over \$1,000. Other locations will be just as costly over even more because they will

have to fly to a hub airport just to get to Portland. Add on the cost of fuel to travel to multiple meetings in a large area and the costs to a Trustee can break a budget in half.

Think about it.  
Ian S. - Area 6D

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**Holiday thoughts**

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12/15/07 - 11:55 AM  
TO ALL TRUSTEES:

I do not have any urgent need to express myself on any of the issues right now. But I wanted to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Happy and Healthy holiday season! This time of year we are all busy with family and friends. And I wanted to take the time, and extend to everyone here a peaceful, and joyous and SAFE, New Year!!!!

All the issues and agenda items are important, but so is my need to be grateful at this time of year. It is a time for me to reflect back and say to myself,"that I have a lot to be thankful for."

My recovery and serenity are very important to me, and all of you have played an important role in that regard. So my heartfelt "thanks"

So to all who read this, Be Safe, and enjoy the Season, whichever one you celebrate. Peace.

Yours in Recovery,  
Richie S. - Area 6  
1st Co-Chair, Board of Trustees

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**20 Questions - Number 12**

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12/23/07 - 10:06 PM

A couple of my local members came to me with a couple ideas for minor changes to the combo book and the unity steps that I would like to hear feedback from fellow trustees before putting them on the docket.

The first one came from a person who thought the idea for one of the twenty questions should be reversed. Instead of: Were you reluctant to use gambling for normal expenditures? They suggested this: Were you reluctand to use normal house expenditures for gambling? Their thoughts were that they were worried about getting caught using the family money for gambling.

Think about it.  
Ian S. - Area 6D

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**Unity Step 11**

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12/23/07 - 10:06 PM

A couple of my local members came to me with a couple ideas for minor changes to the combo book and the unity steps that I would like to hear feedback from fellow trustees before putting them on the docket.

(The first one is cited in the previous segment)  
The second one is one I initially introduced in Irvine and number of years ago and it was brought to me again due to the modernization of the times. The suggestion was to add the Internet to Unity step 11: We need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television, and the Internet. Let me know what you think about both of these ideas.

Think about it.  
Ian S. - Area 6D

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