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Advisory
Council

Martha L. Orr, MN, RN
Executive Director



Constituent of The American
Nurses Association

NEW YORK STATE NURSES ASSOCIATION
2113 Western Avenue, Guilderland, N.Y. 12084, (518) 456-5371

February 18, 1987

To: Advisory Council
Board of Directors Committee to Study the Role of the
Advisory Council

From: Martha L. Orr
Executive Director

The following information is provided to assist you in your
consideration of the purposes and functions of the Advisory
Council.

1902 - 1918

The original bylaws of the Association do not mention any
type of advisory council. The first such mention of an advisory
council is found in bylaws amendments of 1918, in which the
following article was adopted:

Advisory Council

Section 1. The officers of this Association, the
Chairmen of Standing Committees, the Chairmen of
Sections, ex-Presidents, District Presidents, the
Presidents of Alumnae Associations, the Editor in Chief
of the American Journal of Nursing, the President of
the State League of Nursing Education, the President of
the State Public Health Nurses' Association, and the
Director of the Department of Nursing and Health at
Teachers' College, shall constitute an Advisory Council
to consider and promote the interests of the New York
State Nurses' Association.

Section 2. Meetings of the Advisory Council shall be
held in connection with each annual meeting at such
times as shall be designated in the program.



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Documentation of the activities of this body has not been found except for scant references in early minutes of the Board of Directors.

1918 - 1951

The above section of the bylaws is found in much the same form through 1951. In 1935, the bylaws were changed to require that representatives on the Council be nurses and, in 1945, that they be members of the Association. In 1951, there was a proposed amendment to delete this section from the bylaws.

The transcript of the 1951 House of Delegates indicates that the Advisory Council recommended the deletion. Discussion referred to the inability of the Council to take "final steps" in the business of the organization. There was also considerable discussion about the desirability of Alumnae Associations being represented on the Council. The motion to delete the section lost.

A review of meeting summaries and minutes of the Board of Directors has not revealed any substantive discussion of the purposes and functions of the Advisory Council. Recurrent topics of discussion included such items as proposed legislation, establishment and use of a relief fund, business practices of Districts, membership dues, and membership recruitment.

1953

A proposed amendment to delete the Advisory Council and to substitute an "Open Forum" passed the House of Delegates with no discussion. The substitute section specified:

There shall be an open forum meeting held in conjunction with the meeting of the House of Delegates of the New York State Nurses Association. All members of this association are eligible to attend. This group will discuss matters of particular interest to the association and make recommendations to the House of Delegates.

Board minutes prior to this meeting state:

The Board members strongly favored Mrs. Delehanty's proposal that the Advisory Council be changed to an open forum which any member might attend and gain information from the discussion of the various problems. It was agreed that such an arrangement will be recommended to the Advisory Council.

953 - 1967

During this interval of time, it appears that several meetings of District Nurses Association officers and the President of NYSNA were held. These meetings were sometimes called "District Officers' Institutes." A 1964 memorandum to DNA Presidents from then Executive Director Marion Klappmeier cites these purposes of those meetings:

The purposes of the institute are to lend assistance to district officers with their responsibilities in this role, particularly as pertains to interrelationships with the state and national associations; to familiarize them with certain procedures, especially membership processing, and to acquaint them with their state headquarters office.

Board of Directors' minutes in December, 1965 refers to a pattern of meetings with District Presidents:

There was a review of the pattern which has been followed for Board meetings in the past, i.e., on the first day of the Board meeting, the district presidents are invited to attend and this is followed by executive session of the Board. It was noted that only nine of the 18 district presidents were able to be in attendance at the meeting today, and that the agenda was completed by 11:30 a.m. There was general discussion about the primary purpose of a Board of Directors meeting and whether this was the most effective means of giving assistance to districts. Some of the members present, who had also been in the position of district president, commented on their experiences and noted particularly the value that they attached to the all day meeting of district presidents and executive directors. Other methods of assistance and closer working relationships with the district were reviewed and discussed. The difficulty, and resultant frustration, of going through the agenda without taking action was commented upon. The general feeling was expressed that it might be more effective and more satisfying for both the Board of Directors and the District Presidents if the present pattern of meetings were to be changed. The comment was offered that with the increasing number of major issues the Board needs to consider, it might soon become necessary to expand the number of days for the Board meeting unless the present time could be used more effectively.

Miss Notter moved that in view of the success of the all day meetings for district presidents and executive directors and of the other means used to assist and keep the presidents informed on all board action and association activities, it would be a more effective use of both the district presidents and of the NYSNA

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Board of Directors time, to continue, and to increase such means of assistance, and to discontinue the district presidents' forum and meeting with the board of the first day. This new approach to be tried for a two year period of time. Seconded. Carried.

A summary report of a 1966 meeting confirmed this action:

Miss Klappmeier reviewed the Dec. 6, 1965 Board of Directors' action regarding the significance of an all day meeting of District Presidents and Executive Directors such as this one, instead of merely a forum and attendance at the first day of Board meeting. Due to the increasing need for Districts to mutually explore problems and be aware of activities of other districts, it was felt that an all-day meeting would be more beneficial and profitable. This in turn would be supplemented by materials sent from headquarters office. After discussion it was agreed that these meetings were beneficial and in the future perhaps three or four per year could be scheduled. The possibility of two persons attending from a District was also discussed and will be considered in light of the District paying total expenses for the second person.

Another (undated) paper refers to the policies of a "Presidents' Forum":

Purpose of the Forum: (1) for discussion of mutual problems; (2) for free discussion of state and local questions; (3) to make recommendations to the Board of Directors of NYSNA.

A special report to the Board of Directors by then President Disosway states only that dues processing, a proposed dues increase, and central billing were discussed. No other record of the substance of these meetings has yet been found.

1967

A bylaw amendment was proposed to replace Article XI - Open Forum, with the following Article X: Advisory Council:

Section 1. The president, or an alternate, and the executive director of this association and the presidents and executive directors of the constituent district nurses associations shall constitute an Advisory Council to consider and promote the interests of the New York State Nurses Association.

Section 2. Meetings of the Advisory Council may be held at such times and places as shall be determined by the Board of Directors of this association.

The convention transcript indicates no discussion of the proposed amendment, which was passed.

1969 to 1987

A review of reports of meetings of the advisory council indicates that there has been a common pattern to the meetings:

- review of NYSNA programs and activities
- review of NYSNA Board action
- review of District activities
- review of ANA activities

Discussion of common concerns has often focused on the following topics:

- membership processing and dues collection/distribution
- membership recruitment
- programming for meetings/convention
- NYSNA legislative program
- ANA House of Delegates matters

From time to time, guests have been invited to meetings of the Advisory Council (e.g., Executive Secretary of the State Board). Continuing education programs have also been incorporated into the meetings (e.g., Parliamentary Procedure, Financial Management; membership recruitment)

Since January, 1986, the subject of the purposes and functions of the Advisory Council has been discussed at each meeting. Excerpts from the meeting summaries of January and April, 1986 meetings are attached.

There have been two minor changes in bylaws respecting the Council since 1967--to permit DNA Presidents to specify alternates who are not necessarily officers, and to structure the bylaws section in three sections: membership, purpose, meetings.

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1/20/86 Advisory Council Meeting

VII. OTHER ITEMS

A. Functions and Purposes of Advisory Council

Advisory Council representatives engaged in a discussion about the purposes and functions of the Council, the nature of meetings and possible ways in which they may be improved, and the uneven pattern of attendance of meetings. The discussion included consideration of these elements of the Council and its operation:

1. There are difficulties inherent in scheduling meetings of twenty-one prospective participants which will continue to exist.
2. Although the practice of sharing DNA activities, successes and problems has been very helpful to district leadership, devotion of a portion of the agenda to concerted discussion of problem resolution could have the potential to be of greater assistance.
3. Designation of portions of the agenda for these subjects might be appropriate and desirable: orientation to DNA leadership roles and responsibilities and the SNA-DNA relationship; leadership development; appropriate resources of SNAs and DNAs.

Advisory Council representatives present at the meeting concurred that consideration of the functions and purposes of the Council should be continued at the next meeting. Staff was requested to notify District representatives not in attendance of the issue and request that they be prepared to discuss it during the next meeting.

B. Possible Assistance with DNA Newsletter Production by NYSNA

The possibility of NYSNA's providing cost-effective assistance with DNA newsletter production was noted and discussed briefly. It will be given further consideration. Monies acquired by NYSNA by provision of such assistance would constitute non-dues-related income.

4/7/86 Advisory Council Meeting Summary

6. Library

Mr. Hawkes directed attention to the written report.

7. Organization Services

Ms. Maune directed attention to the written report, noting in particular information about the 1986 NYSNA convention.

V. PURPOSES AND FUNCTIONS OF ADVISORY COUNCIL

District representatives discussed at length various aspects of Advisory Council functioning, including:

- A. The role and relationship of DNA leadership vis-a-vis NYSNA.
- B. Similarity of NYSNA Advisory Council functioning to that of the ANA Constituent Forum.

The following possible functions of the Advisory Council were identified:

- A. Providing vehicle for DNA contribution to NYSNA Board deliberations.
- B. Providing vehicle for soliciting of DNA membership about ANA/NYSNA matters.
- C. Sharing information.
- D. Providing DNA network.
- E. Problem solving.
- F. Providing vehicle for continuing education.

District representatives agreed to schedule a two-day Advisory Council meeting in September. One day would be devoted to orientation of newly placed DNA presidents and executive directors; the second day would be devoted to conduct of a regular Advisory Council business session.

VI. ANA ACTIVITIES

Ms. Orr summarized significant issues which will come before the 1986 ANA House of Delegates in June, including the issue of future membership in the Association. Advisory Council