**Procedure Number: GP 15**

**Procedure Title: Exit Interviews**

**Purpose:** The purpose of conducting an exit interview for outgoing board members is fourfold:

1. It’s an opportunity to learn valuable insights into ways the board is currently functioning and how it might improve;
2. It’s a meaningful way to capture wisdom that was gained while serving on the board so it can be passed on to others;
3. It’s a graceful way to thank an outgoing board member, recognize his/her accomplishments, and end their involvement on a positive note; and
4. It’s a way to keep the individual connected to the organization as a supporter and donor.

**Process**

The exit interview will be conducted separately by one or more members of the Board Affairs committee. The place and time of the exit interviews will be determined by the Board Affairs committee based on the number of outgoing board members and the circumstance surrounding their departure. Either a meeting room at the center or an off-site luncheon would be appropriate.

Rather than have a checklist of questions, it’s both more effective and important to let the interviewee(s) direct the conversation to the specifics he or she believes are the most relevant. The interviewer(s) should then use open-ended questions combined with follow-up questions that ask for specific examples or suggestions on how board operations could be modified and/or improved.

Some areas that might be explored (along with possible follow up questions) are as follows:

* Use of talents – How effectively did we use your talents? How well did you feel your contributions to the board were recognized and appreciated? How well did you feel you were listened to and respected in meetings? What about your board service could have been improved?
* Board meeting agendas – Did the board spend its time on the right things? What are the primary attributes that made board meetings successful? Do you feel we adequately monitored compliance with all our policies over the course of the year?
* Meeting effectiveness – How effective were the board and committee meetings? Did you feel that your time was spent on important or valuable issues and tasks? How might we improve board meetings?
* Director of Mission and Ministry relations – Do you have any suggestions for improving the interactions between the board and the Director of Mission and Ministry? Do you believe the Director of Mission and Ministry is in compliance with the Ends Policies and Executive Limitations Policies and, if not, what are your thoughts or suggestions?
* Future board candidates - What are some things that would be important to tell Board candidates about the Board? Did you feel prepared for your board responsibility? Were the board’s expectations made clear? Were you surprised by anything? Do you feel that you had access to the information and training necessary to be an effective board member and to make decisions at board meetings? If not, how can we improve?
* Future involvement – How would you like to stay involved with the organization? Who else do you think might be interested in knowing more about our organization? (This question is part of an ongoing engagement strategy which can result in expanding the retreat center’s supporters and ambassadors. Follow up questions could be: Would you be willing to make an introduction? What do you think they would be most interested in? Where else are they involved in the community?)

The interview should always end with the expression of appreciation for all the contributions the board member(s) provided over the years as well as for the insights shared in the interview.

**Documentation**

The Board Affairs committee member(s) conducting the interview should document (CP 15.a) the key points raised so they can be reviewed by the full Board Affairs committee and summaries of the interviews will be entered into the Board Affairs committee meeting minutes. In determining action steps, the Board Affairs committee should be particularly alert for common themes from different people. Each area for improvement should be evaluated to determine what, if any, action steps should be taken. In some cases, an improvement that was suggested might not be cost beneficial in terms of time or money. Or the suggested improvement might be a low priority compared to other initiatives. However, making these assessments is a key part of the process.