

Summary of NAMI Lowcountry (SC) Bylaw Changes

- 1. Rearranged the document.** *The current Bylaws evolved over the years and had areas where the content was in the wrong place and inconsistently structured.*
- 2. Edited the text to make it more specific and consistent throughout the document.** *There were numerous areas in the current Bylaws where the language was unclear and ambiguous.*
- 3. Changed Required Member Meetings to once per year (Annual Meeting) rather than once per month.** *Aligned with the current practice of NAMI Lowcountry (SC) and with the impracticality of conducting monthly meetings.*
- 4. Redefined the functions of the Annual Meeting.** *The election of the Board of Directors and approval of Bylaws is still accomplished by members at the Annual Meeting. The election of Officers is now assigned to the Board.*
- 5. Made the Board composition requirement more general to emphasis “balance” rather than a specific percentage of certain types of groups.** *The current Bylaws require that “no more than 30% of the Board of Directors may be composed of professionals sympathetic to mental illness.” This requirement is too restrictive for comprising an effective Board.*
- 6. Removed nomination functions from the Governance Committee.** *Nominating functions are now performed exclusively by the Nominating Committee.*
- 7. Defined when officers are elected.** *The revised Bylaws assigns the election of officers to the Board. The incoming Board is directed to select officers immediately following the Annual meeting.*
- 8. Confirmed how Directors are elected and vacancies are filled.** *Current Bylaws indicate that Members elect Directors at the Annual Meeting, which is continued. The revised Bylaws allows the Board to appoint new Directors if the number of Directors falls below the minimum number of nine (9).*
- 9. Restricted any given Director to a second four (4) year term, with a provision to allow additional terms after being off the Board for one (1) year.** *Length of service on a volunteer board should be limited to prevent burnout and to provide opportunities for new Directors.*
- 10. Removed the development role for the Finance Committee.** *Development, and particularly fund raising, is a function not normally assigned to a finance committee. Committees such as Development, Housing, Programs and Advocacy should be established by the Board as ad hoc committees if required.*
- 11. Clarified the role of the Board relative to the Executive Director.** *Current Bylaws do not address responsibility for managing, hiring or removal of the Executive Director. This is prescribed to be the responsibility of the Board in the revised Bylaws. Also, the Executive director reports to the Executive Committee.*
- 12. Added an Article concerning the “Advisory Board” and changed the name to Advisors.** **Codified the role and organization as described in the memorandum entitled "Advisory Board of Beaufort County, September 24, 2013".** *This is not addressed in the current Bylaws. Advisors are needed and should be codified in the Bylaws, but the term “Board” is misleading. Furthermore, NAMI Lowcountry (SC) Advisors do not operate as a board with officers, do not conduct official meetings, nor perform other board functions.*
- 13. Added a Glossary and Index to make the Bylaws more readable and user friendly.**