

QUESTIONNAIRE

Survey of County and Local Political Party Committees On Committee Roles in Maintaining and Strengthening the Grass Roots of American Democracy

Instructions: Please answer all questions and check off all responses that apply to a question. Note that some questions ask you to rank items according to their importance. Please return the completed questionnaire to Peter Bearse, 16 Broad St., Merrimac, MA 01930, ASAP, no later than October 1, 1999. If you received it via e-mail, please first print it out, then complete and return it.

Committee Membership and Meetings:

1. No. of committee membership slots authorized _____. No. of slots filled _____.
5 year trend in no. of slots filled: Up____ Down ____ Little or no change ____
2. Percent of members who are actively involved ____ %.
5 year trend: Up____ Down ____ Little or no change ____
3. Is there competition for committee slots? YES ___ NO ___. For committee officer positions? YES ___ NO ___. For all positions? ___ Some positions? ___.
4. Are there active, on-going efforts to recruit new members? YES ___ NO ___.
5. Committee meetings: Average frequency -- once every?(check one): month___ quarter___ year ____.
Average or typical attendance at meetings (#) _____.
Trend of typical attendance: UP___; DOWN ___; NO CHANGE ____

Committee Roles in Political Campaigns:

6. What have been Committee roles in recent campaigns? (check all that pertain)

	Lit. Distribution	Door-to-door	Calling	Fund-raising
Local -- Mayor				
-- Council/Selectmen				
-- School Committee				
-- Other_____				
County				
State -- Legislature				
-- Governor				
Federal -- Congress				
-- President				

Committee Activities and Functions:

7. Voter Registration (VR):
Does your Committee mount VR campaign(s)? ____ YES ____ NO. No. of times a year? ____
Trend of Committee VR efforts: Increasing?__ Decreasing?__ Stable?__
Registration Methods: ____ Door-to-Door
____ Committee notices or advertising that tell people where to register.
____ Committee tables at shopping centers or public places.
____ Committee assisting others' VR efforts (e.g., LWV)?
____ Other? (please specify)_____

Effect of "Motor Voter" registration on Committee VR efforts:

POSITIVE ___ NEGATIVE ___ NONE ___

No. of new voters registered over the past year through Committee efforts: # _____.

Trend: UP ___ DOWN ___ ABOUT THE SAME ___

Committee VR efforts with/in high schools or colleges?: YES ___ NO ___

8. Get Out the Vote (GOTV) Activities:

A. Does the Committee do GOTV for candidates and their campaigns?

YES ___; NO ___. If "YES," for which? -- All campaigns? ___ Local? ___; County? ___ State
Legislative? ___ Gubernatorial? ___ National? ___

B. What GOTV methods does the Committee primarily utilize? (Check all that apply) --

Checking at the polls ___; Calling ___; Driving Voters to the polls ___
Door-to-door contact ___; Door knockers/notices ___; Mailing(s) ___;
"Street money" ___ Standouts/signs ___ Other ___ (please specify _____)

C. Does your committee usually establish a campaign headquarters during campaign seasons?

YES ___ NO ___. Is it frequently manned? YES ___ NO ___.

D. What number of people are typically engaged by the Committee in GOTV activities on election
day(s)? _____ (#)

E. What have been some trend(s) affecting Committee GOTV activity? [**Rank top four** from 1-4, with
1=most important]

___ Decreasing demand for Committee volunteers from campaigns.
___ Increasing difficulty of getting people to volunteer and commit time.
___ Lack of back-up or material support from campaigns or State Committee.
___ Other (please specify _____)

9. Campaign and Party Literature Distribution:

A. How does the Committee distribute political literature? (check all that apply):

___ **Mainly via in-person distributions**, including
___ "lit drops" door-to-door;
___ "standouts" (e.g., at street corners, shopping centers, et. al.)
___ voter pick-up (at campaign headquarters or Committee offices)
___ other (please specify _____)
___ **Mainly via mail.**
___ **Both** in-person distributions and mailings.

B. Does the Committee distribute literature for (check all that apply):

Campaigns? ___; the Party? ___; Both? ___ Neither? ___.

C. During an election year, what is the typical frequency of literature distribution by the Committee?--

___ times per month before Labor Day;
___ times during the month immediately after Labor Day;
___ times during the month immediately preceding the election.

D. What is the typical coverage of literature distribution by the Committee?

___ community-wide;
___ select or targeted wards or precincts

E. What is the typical number of people engaged by the Committee to distribute literature during peak election periods? _____(#)

F. What are major trend(s) affecting the Committee's ability to serve as a distributor of political literature and campaign materials? --

- ____ increasing support for the Party in your area
- ____ decreasing reliance upon party committees by candidates/campaigns
- ____ little or no State Committee support
- ____ small or decreasing supply of literature and materials to distribute
- ____ increasing difficulty of mobilizing enough volunteers
- ____ increasing reliance upon non-print media to deliver political messages
- ____ other (please specify _____)

G. Does the Committee or any of its officers employ e-mail____? Have a web page?____ Have a list server? _____

Committee Involvement with Public Issues:

10. In what ways does your Committee get involved with public issues?

- ____ NOT involved with issues in any way outside of elections or campaigns.
- ____ sponsorship of, or participation in, forums, presentations or other public meetings in which issues are discussed or debated.
- ____ discussion of issues during Committee meetings.
- ____ preparation and/or distribution of "white papers" or other issue-oriented materials to inform the public on issues.
- ____ sponsorship of, or participation in, media events or features focused on issues
- ____ collaboration with other community-based organizations on shared concerns over issues.
- ____ other issues involvement (please specify _____)

11. To what extent does the Committee work with other community-based organizations (e.g., business, fraternal or charitable organizations) to pursue political or public issue-oriented concerns of any sort?

- ____ Frequently
- ____ Sometimes
- ____ Not at all. Why? _____

12. What are factors affecting Committee involvement with public issues?

- ____ Increasing attention to "issue advocacy" and/or use of such ads during major campaigns.
- ____ Public issues not a traditional area of Committee concern or responsibility.
- ____ Lack of interest among Committee members.
- ____ Dominance of TV and other media with respect to issues' coverage.
- ____ Lack of interest in public issues among voters.
- ____ Lack of encouragement for attention to issues from officials, candidates, or State Comm
- ____ Issues an area of interest only during election season(s).
- ____ Other (please specify _____).

Major Committee Events

13. Does the Committee have a regular "Annual Dinner"? -- YES____ NO____
If "YES," what number of people attended the last such event? # _____

14. Does the Committee sponsor periodic breakfast or lunch events? -- YES____ NO____.

15. What are the trends in attendance at Committee events? -- UP___ DOWN___ STABLE___.

16. Do Committee events net any significant revenues? -- YES___ NO___.

17. Does the Committee give any honorary awards each year? YES___ NO___.

Fund Raising

18. What fundraising methods does the Committee usually employ?

- ___ Ticket sales for Committee events.
- ___ Direct mail.
- ___ Appeals or solicitations via media.
- ___ Committee membership dues.
- ___ Sales of goods or services; e.g., bake sales; yard sales.
- ___ other (specify_____)

19. What proportion of the Committee's budget derives from various sources?

- ___ % from State committee. Trend: UP___ DOWN___ STABLE___
- ___ % from annual dinner and/or other Committee events.
Trend: UP___ DOWN___ STABLE___
- ___ % donations. Trend: UP___ DOWN___ STABLE___
- ___ % dues. Trend: UP___ DOWN___ STABLE___
- ___ % sale of various items. Trend: UP___ DOWN___ STABLE___
- ___ % other (specify_____)

20. Towards what purposes are funds raised by the Committee typically devoted? (check all that apply):

- ___ support of the Committee and its activities.
- ___ contributions to the State Committee.
- ___ contributions to candidates and/or campaigns.
- ___ contributions to other "good causes" in the community.
- ___ other (specify_____)

Candidate Recruitment and Selection

21. To what extent does the Committee get involved in recruiting candidates for public office? -- NOT AT ALL___; RARELY___; OCCASIONALLY___; ALWAYS or OFTEN___.

22. Does the Committee's recruiting include candidates for local office? ___ county offices? ___ state legislature?___ Governor? ___.

23. Does the Committee regularly sponsor candidate forums or other events to help its members and others evaluate candidates prior to party primaries? -- YES___; NO___.

24. What number or percent of Committee members typically become delegates or alternate delegates to state party conventions? (#) _____ (%) _____.

25. How many committee members have been candidates for public office at any time over the past five years?_____

Support for the Committee and Its Activities

26. What kinds of support does your local committee receive from your State Committee? [Check off below all that pertain]

- ___ Monetary [On average, how much per year? \$_____]
- ___ In-kind -- What kinds? (**Check below** any that are received.)
 - ___ Campaign materials
 - ___ Training
 - ___ Computer files and printouts
 - ___ Data; e.g., demographic and polling
 - ___ Legal assistance
 - ___ Political consultants' assistance
 - ___ Volunteers to supplement your Committee's own.
 - ___ Other (please specify_____)

___ Occasional attendance at your Committee's meetings by State Committee members?

27. **Frequency of interaction** between your Committee and State Committee? (on average) ___ **times**
 (per month? ___; quarter? ___ or year? ___) **Trends?** UP ___ DOWN ___ NO CHANGE ___
28. What kinds of support does your Committee receive from the State Committee to back up its involvement in political campaigns? [**Check off all that apply below.**]

	Local	County	State Legislative	Governor
MONETARY				
IN-KIND (by type, below)				
Campaign lit. & materials				
Volunteers				
Training				
Computer files / printouts				
Data (polling, demographic)				
Political consultants assist.				
Other (specify: _____)				

29. Is support for your committee and its activities from all sources....ADEQUATE? ___;
 INADEQUATE? ___
30. **Trends:** How has support for your committee's activities from all sources been changing?
 INCREASING? ___; DECREASING? ___; STABLE? ___.
31. Is the change or lack of change noted above primarily due to changes in:
 STATE COMMITTEE? ___ CAMPAIGNS? ___ OTHER SOURCES? ___ (please specify)

Committee Members Involvement in Other Aspects of Their Communities

32. Are Committee members **actively** involved in other local or community-based organizations? ___ YES
 ___ NO. If "YES," which types of organizations? (**Check off below all those that pertain**)
- ___ Local business organizations; e.g., Chamber of Commerce or Rotary
 - ___ Social service or health-related organizations
 - ___ Church or other religious organizations
 - ___ Fraternal societies or Sisterhoods
 - ___ Veterans' organizations
 - ___ Other politically-related; e.g., League of Women Voters
 - ___ Civic Association(s)
 - ___ Arts or cultural-related
 - ___ Sports clubs or coaching
 - ___ Other (please specify_____)

Your Opinions on "Getting People Involved"

33. **What do you think are the major reasons for declines in people's political participation?** [Please **RANK** top 4: 1,2,3,4]

- Increasing domination of campaigns by political "pro's."
- Women in workforce reducing volunteerism
- People working longer hours
- Voter registration largely taken over by motor voter or other agencies.
- Lack of support from state committee
- Politics increasingly money and media driven
- People increasingly apathetic or cynical about political involvement
- Changes in attitudes towards party (ies)
- TV
- Lack of materials or interest from candidates &/or their campaignS
- Other (specify) _____

34. **How to revitalize local political party committees?** [Please **RANK** the top 4 -- 1,2,3,4, starting with #1 for the option you consider to be most important]

- More active recruitment efforts
- Changes in party rules or procedures (which? _____)
- More state committee support
- Change in attitudes towards politics overall
- Change in attitudes towards party
- Better or more attractive candidates for office
- More cooperation / collaboration with other Community based organizations
- More and better political leadership by elected officials
- More attention
- Better civic education to issues in the schools
- Changes in nature of American politics. Which? _____
- Other _____ (put 1st?)

35. **What are the main barriers and constraints to people getting involved politically?** [Please **RANK** the top 4 -- with #1 for the option you consider to be most important]

- Working life demands
- Two F/T job families
- TV
- Apathy and cynicism
- Worries about personal security or safety
- Campaigns increasingly run by "pro's"
- Campaigns increasingly dependent upon money rather than people
- Greater attractiveness of other civic or community activities
- Other (please specify _____)

36. **What works to get people involved?** -- [Please **RANK** top 4 -- starting with #1 for the option you consider to be most important]

- Neighbor-to-neighbor outreach and recruitment
- Exciting political campaigns
- Charismatic political leaders
- Non-political leadership
- City hall support
- Other [specify _____].

37. **What are the "best practices" of your committee**, including innovative or remarkably effective ways to reach out to people, get them involved, recruit or help candidates, etc.

38. **Remarks or comments** on the questions or content of this survey or the aim of the book? -- If any, please write in below.

39. Information about yourself (please provide -- anonymously or in confidence):

Age ____ Sex ____ Education (years of) ____ Occupation (please specify) _____

Member of labor union, business or professional association? YES ____ NO _____. Of which? (please specify organization(s) here _____

Married? YES ____ NO ____; No. of children ____; Home owner? YES ____ NO ____

Years of active membership in your Committee ____

Committee officer? YES ____ NO _____. Position? (please specify) _____

Years resident in your community ____ Active in...a church? YES ____ NO ____... Fraternal or sisterhood association? YES ____ NO ____... Political club or civic association other than your party Committee? YES ____ NO _____. Local sports team or youth coaching? YES ____ NO ____.

Have you ever run for public office? YES ____ NO ____.

Have you ever served in a public office? YES ____ NO _____. Elected? YES ____ NO _____. Appointed? YES ____ NO ____.

IF you wish to receive draft sections of the book for your review and comment, please provide your e-mail or postal mail address here:

PLEASE return this questionnaire to: Peter Bearse c/o COS, P.O. Box 1664, Gloucester, MA 01930.

This document was created with Win2PDF available at <http://www.daneprairie.com>.
The unregistered version of Win2PDF is for evaluation or non-commercial use only.