

MINUTES
Professional Development Committee
Fri., Feb. 16th, 9:30 – 10:30 a.m., Hillsdale Conference Center
Charlottesville Area Association of REALTORS®

In Attendance: Ashleigh Abrams (Chair), Carol Davis, Woody Fincham (Board Liaison), Marcella Johnson, Katelyn Mancini, Melissa Moody (Vice-Chair), Sally Neill

Staff: Lauren Graf, Teresa Kirkhart

Absent: Carol Carder, Deb Jewell, Percy Montague, Errin Searcy

Chair Ashleigh Abrams welcomed the committee members and reviewed the Antitrust Statement.

Approval of the January Meeting Minutes: The committee was unable to approve the January Meeting Minutes because those in attendance did not meet the quorum requirement.

Board Updates

The 2024 Board of Directors meetings have consisted of closed-door sessions with legal counsel, focusing on the association's sustainability. Although Board Liaison Woody Fincham couldn't divulge specifics, he reassured the Professional Development Committee that the Board is taking proactive measures due to ongoing NAR lawsuits. Their efforts aim to uphold professional values and enhance collaboration within the association.

During the Broker Council meeting on Wednesday, President Anne Burroughs recommended thehub.realtor and competition.realtor as essential resources for real estate professionals to stay updated on legal developments. CAAR will refrain from issuing talking points, as NAR has already provided comprehensive guidance. Michael Guthrie emphasized the importance of exercising caution in discussions related to lawsuits to avoid potential legal ramifications.

Old Business

Last week, the CAAR Conference & Expo Task Force reached out to all affiliate members via email, seeking input for their "ignite sessions." As of now, only two responses have been received. Staff plans to send a follow-up email to affiliate members with a deadline for responses by close of business on Fri., Feb. 22nd. The CAAR Conference & Expo is scheduled to commence at 9 a.m. and conclude at 2:30 p.m. on Thurs., Sept. 12th. The event will utilize two main rooms at The Point Church – Charlottesville Campus: the auditorium for the General Membership Meeting, Economic Update, and Continuing Education (CE) classes, and a basement classroom where five ignite sessions will run concurrently with the CE classes.

The February General Membership Meeting, held on Thurs., Feb. 8th from 9 to 10:30 a.m., was highly successful, with over 110 members in attendance. Staff is actively working to incorporate Contract Update classes into CAAR's schedule following the positive feedback from members. Moreover, in response to the remarkable turnout and support, CAAR has introduced a new class scheduled for Fri., Mar. 1st from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Hillsdale Conference Center Ballroom. This session, titled "Buyer Broker & Listing Agreement," will be instructed by Attorney Michael Lafayette, covering the recent Virginia REALTORS® contract update effective Feb. 1st. Although there won't be a virtual option available for this class, it will be recorded and promptly shared on the CAAR YouTube channel. During the General Membership Meeting, there was a query about the possibility of making MLS training mandatory for all new members. CAAR already mandates an MLS class for all new members as part of their New Member Orientation, to be

completed within 6 months of joining. Additionally, CAAR offers a "Listing Entry Workshop" as part of the New Member Incentive program.

The inaugural Latte & Learn event of 2024 hosted by CAAR took place on Fri., Feb. 9th, from 9 to 10 a.m. via Zoom. This session, titled "Cville Zoning: It's a Whole New World," was led by Neil Williamson, President of the Free Enterprise Forum, and Valerie Long, Attorney Partner at Williams Mullen. The discussion was specifically requested by CAAR President, Anne Burroughs. Remarkably, this session witnessed the highest level of participation in the history of CAAR's Latte & Learn events, with nearly 100 attendees.

CAAR's ABR® (Accredited Buyer Representation) class is scheduled over two days, on Thurs., Feb. 22nd from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Fri., Feb. 23rd from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. This course serves as the initial step toward attaining the ABR® designation. Individuals who already possess the ABR® designation have the option to retake the class at a reduced rate. Participants will earn a total of 16 hours of CE credits. However, it's important to note that the Code of Ethics segment of the class does not fulfill NAR's Code of Ethics requirement; rather, it fulfills DPOR's requirement. While participants can apply these Code of Ethics credits toward their license renewal with DPOR, they cannot be counted toward the Ethics requirement for Cycle 7.

New Business

The current cycle of the NAR Code of Ethics, Cycle 7, is set to conclude on December 31st, 2024. It is mandatory for all REALTORS®, irrespective of real estate licensure status, to fulfill their Code of Ethics obligation during this period. Failure to do so will lead to membership termination. Members can ascertain their completion status for this cycle through the CAAR SSO Dashboard. They can meet this requirement by attending one of CAAR's Code of Ethics classes, taking a course via the CE Shop, or utilizing the NAR learning portal. It's important to note that not all external providers meet NAR's Code of Ethics criteria.

The committee reviewed the outcomes of the 2025 Education survey, which was distributed to the entire membership in January, to gain insights into planning for 2025. During the assessment, it became apparent that many of the classes requested by the membership were significantly more costly than initially anticipated. Several committee members said that if they had been aware of the pricing and requirements for these courses, they might not have selected them in the survey. Consequently, it was agreed that for the 2026 Education Survey, pricing details and additional designation requirements will be incorporated. Based on survey feedback, the committee tasked Staff with investigating the Seller Representation Specialist Designation, the GREEN Designation, the Senior Real Estate Specialist Designation, and the New Home Construction and Buyer Representation Designation.

A question was raised about the difference between a certification and a designation: a designation requires annual dues and typically additional requirements to obtain the designation, while a certification only requires the application fee.

The survey findings revealed that 90% of respondents found the General Membership Meetings to be at least "somewhat valuable." However, the specific feedback regarding the meetings' value was vague. Many responses indicated sentiments such as, "I find the General Membership Meetings beneficial when they pertain to my business." During the meeting, various topics were proposed for the 2025 Latte & Learn sessions and General Membership Meetings, including Pricing Strategies and the significance of REALTOR® Designations. Staff will explore potential instructors for a discussion on septic and well systems. The committee opted to maintain the current schedule of six General Membership Meetings instead of reducing it to four. They will

deliberate on topics they believe would be beneficial for the membership, excluding the December General Membership Meeting, as the topic for that session is selected by the President-Elect.

Staff reviewed the existing school policies. Given recent challenges with certain class attendees, CAAR sought guidance on the most effective approach to tackle these issues. The Professional Development Committee is confident that CAAR has implemented appropriate measures concerning its school policies and procedures. Staff will be making several revisions to the school policies and plans to send her proposed edits to the committee for approval via email.

Staff presented the 'Showing Etiquette' document to the Committee for final review before distributing it to the Brokers during the upcoming Broker Forum. No further edits were suggested by the committee; thus, the document will be included in the packet for the Mar. 6th Broker Forum and listed on the agenda.

Adjourn

Chair Ashleigh Abrams reviewed the dates of the upcoming Professional Development Committee meetings and important association events. The meeting was adjourned at 10:41 a.m.