

Process for Addressing Advocacy Issues

Drafted by GEARS Board Executive Committee, Feb. 6, 2017
Adopted by the Board of Directors at the February 7, 2017 Meeting
Amended by the Board of Directors at the March 7, 2017 Meeting

Statement of the Problem: In recent years GEARS has dealt with taking organizational positions and publicly advocating for them on a case-by-case basis. Some issues are very clear cut so that it's difficult to imagine any of our cyclist members disagreeing with the position. An example is our writing a letter to ODOT regarding safety improvements to the Highway 58 bridge near Pleasant Hill. Other cycling related issues are not so obvious, nor would GEARS membership have anything near unanimity on them, e.g. Willamette St. restriping. As we have now established a GEARS Education and Advocacy Committee, some board members have asked for a policy and process for the board in taking positions on public issues. This document is an attempt to do so.

General Guidelines:

- GEARS through its board should address matters of public interest to cyclists, especially where our voice can make a difference
- Board positions on issues where there is a potential for divided membership should be made with sensitivity to the minority position
- When such positions are taken they should be clearly and promptly communicated to the membership
- In recognition that the month-to-month management of club activities already takes significant time, we must take care that advocacy issues don't dominate our meeting time.

Specific Process for Advocacy Topics:

1. The president or executive committee places the topic on the agenda when brought forward by a member or board member.
2. The person proposing the topic provides a short written summary of the issue, including the action proposed, to the president at least three days before the board meeting. The president passes this on to board.
3. The person initiating the proposal is encouraged to come to the meeting to present and discuss the issue, but this isn't required.
4. The president shall establish a time limit for the topic as with any agenda item
5. The board discusses, disposes, or tables the motion related to the topic.
6. If a position is adopted, the person initiating the motion must provide an initial draft of the support letter and a newsletter article to communicate the position. The board is responsible for the final version of both the letter and article.