

The Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project – Approval Process

On page 21 of the 2011 printing of the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook it states, “The Guide to Advancement, along with the Boy Scout Requirements book, No. 34765, and this workbook, are the only official sources on policies and procedures for Eagle Scout service projects.” Each document provides detail, definitions, and examples missing from previous editions. Together they function like two well designed gears, what one might be a little short on, the other seems to cover.

This presentation is an attempt to offer additional clarity by aligning details from the two documents as they relate to the approval process. This is a simple presentation incorporating details from the specific policies within the official documents. Details from the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook will show a prefix “W” and provide a page, section and occasionally a line number. Eagle Project details within the Guide to Advancement all appear in Section 9.0.2.0 and will reference the subsection and paragraph number.

Should a question or concern arise, consult the source document for the official definition.

Information on the Eagle Scout Service Project Coach is covered in the Coach presentation. Use of a Coach is not required - it is up to the individual Eagle Candidate. The value of having a Coach to assist a Scout in his process cannot be understated. This presentation cannot identify all the individual concerns, concepts, recommendations and requirements involved from beginning to end - but there are at least 100 items deemed important enough to be included in this presentation. A Coach could provide the extra set of eyes to be certain nothing of importance was missed.

~~ 11 ~~ **The Approval Process - Beginning At The End**

Ultimately... the responsibility for the success or failure of his Service Project belongs to the Scout. The final evaluation is left to the board of review to determine whether planning and development of the project was sufficient.

The completed Project Report and Project Plan can provide enormous credibility with the Eagle Board of Review by validating the project was planned and developed as required. The story of this effort might start by explaining the conditions or situations that existed when the project began. “Before” photographs with leading captions can minimize the amount of writing required to explain the details. Additional documentation might be included: perhaps letters, maps, handouts, printed materials or similar items that might enhance the story. Perhaps plans designed for the project or scale drawings used during to help carry out the project. Perhaps a program outline or script would be appropriate if the project was an event or activity.

Almost all projects are modified to some degree between the planning stage and the final approval by the beneficiary and Unit Leader. Most changes are small and cause limited adjustments to the overall project. Essential elements of a proposal should not be changed without good reason because major changes can create major difficulties. A Coach would probably be a good sounding board when reviewing the various concerns of a major change. How could it affect the beneficiary? If they can't accept the change, they can stop work on an approved project. What about those who approved the proposal? Will the change be accepted by the board of review?

References: (W5-6), (W5-8), (W12-2), (W12-3), (W20-3), (W21-5-4)
(9.0.2.1-4), (9.0.2.7-9), (9.0.2.7-10), (9.0.2.7-11)

~~ 10 ~~ **And If There Is A Problem With The Process?**

It is acceptable for a coach to contact the Scout or his parents if concerned the project will not meet the requirements. It is also acceptable for a coach to contact the Scout, parents or beneficiary if concerned the project will not satisfy the beneficiary because the beneficiary can stop work on an approved project.

Should a candidate believe he has been mistreated or his proposal wrongly rejected, there will be a second review opinion and possible approval from a higher authority. If requested by the Scout or his parents or guardian, an explanation of a proposal rejection will be provided in writing, with a copy sent to the council advancement chair and staff advisor. The explanation will identify reasons for rejection and suggestions concerning what can be done to achieve approval.

If there is a possibility the Eagle candidate may run out of time before completing his requirements, the Time Extension Policies & Procedures are covered in the Candidate Presentation and in the Guide to Advancement.

Reference: (W21-5-5), (9.0.2.1-3), (9.0.2.1-5), (9.0.2.7-7), (9.0.2.7-11), (9.0.4.0)

~~ 9 ~~ **What Will The Reviewers Be Looking For?**

BSA National has determined projects will be evaluated primarily on impact: the extent of benefit to the religious institution, school, or community, and on the leadership provided by the candidate. National has also suggested that a good test of any project is to evaluate its complexity. The detail required for a proposal depends on project complexity. Should a Candidate find their proposal must be lengthy and complicated, perhaps the project is more complex than necessary.

Since no one has the authority to modify the Eagle Scout Requirement 5 or the Eagle Scout Service Workbook, reviewers expect the project proposal will match Eagle Scout requirement 5 and will not require more planning & development than necessary to execute the project. However, the proposal must provide a level of confidence that the published tests can be met.

Initially, the proposal must show the candidate is on the right track with a reasonable chance for a positive experience in project management and taking responsibility for a significant accomplishment. There must be evidence of planning and development and an opportunity for leadership. Giving leadership means at least two other people besides the Scout.

Should a candidate choose, he will be allowed to have a parent, unit leader, or other adult present as an observer at any time he is discussing his proposal or project with someone who is reviewing it.

Reference: (W3-2), (W3-3), (W4-2), (W4-4), (W5-4)
(9.0.2.1-1), (9.0.2.1-2), (9.0.2.3-1), (9.0.2.4-1), (9.0.2.7-2), (9.0.2.7-4),

~~ 8 ~~ **What Will It Take To Get Approval?**

The proposal must be complete. The required planning, development, and leadership must show how it will benefit the beneficiary. All safety concerns presented by the project must be addressed with enough detail to provide a level of confidence the Candidate understands what must be done to guard against injury and knows what must be done if someone does get hurt.

If tools and equipment are involved in the project, the Candidate must show that he understands the limits in the use of hazardous power tools, machinery, and equipment, and also such activities as working at heights or on ladders, and driving motor vehicles. To provide a level of confidence, the Candidate must identify how helpers under 18 will be supervised and provide details on that tool supervision. Reference should be made to any manufacturer's restrictions the helpers may need to

know about. If other products, or potentially hazardous chemicals such as paints, stains, lacquers, are to be in use, manufacturer's warnings and restrictions need to be known to the helpers.

The Candidate needs to check for and verify that activities contained in his project do not include activities for youth that, by law, they would not be allowed to do in a workplace.

Additionally, action steps for further detailed planning must be included. A list of the key steps identifying the plan has enough details to be carried out successfully.

Reference: (W5-3), (9.0.2.7-1/3), (9.0.2.14-2), (9.0.2.14-3)

~~ 7 ~~ **How Is The Unit Involved?**

BSA National has determined all Eagle Scout service projects constitute official Scouting activity and thus are subject to Boy Scouts of America policies and procedures. These policies, procedures add additional requirements regarding Youth Protection and two-deep leadership. It is the responsibility of the Eagle Candidate to coordinate his project plans with the Unit leadership as they are charged with same responsibilities of keeping their members safe. If the project requires any traveling, tour permit requirements need to be coordinated with the Unit.

As with any Scouting activity, the Guide to Safe Scouting applies and the "Sweet 16 of BSA Safety" must also be consulted as an appropriate planning tool. The health & safety of those working on Eagle projects must be integrated into project execution.

Reference: (9.0.2.14-1)

~~ 6 ~~ **What About Fundraising?**

Note: The following is a short list of the details that are covered in the Fundraising Presentation:

Fundraising is permitted only for securing materials and otherwise facilitating a project.

A Fundraising Application is NOT required if funding comes from the beneficiary, from the Candidate, Candidate parents or relatives, the Candidate's unit or its chartered organization, or the parents or other members in the unit. A Fundraising Application is REQUIRED if money, discounts or materials will come from any other source.

Allow two weeks for Fundraising Application processing – before – the fundraising can begin.

Reference: (W5-7), (W17-1), (9.0.2.10-1)

~~ 5 ~~ **What Else Do The Reviewers Want To See In The Workbook?**

Reviewers will not require proposals to include more than described in the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook.

- Attach sketches or "before" photographs if these will help others visualize it.
- Tell how your project will be helpful to the beneficiary.
 - Why is it needed?
- When do you plan to begin work on your project?
- How long do you think it will take to complete?
- Approximately how many people will be needed to help on your project?
- Where will you recruit them (unit members, friends, neighbors, family, others)?

- Explain:
- What do you think will be most difficult about leading them?
- What types of materials will you need?
 - You do not yet need a detailed list of exact quantities, but you must show you have a reasonable idea of what is required.
- What kind of supplies, if any, will you need?
 - You do not yet need a detailed list of exact quantities, but you must show you have a reasonable idea of what is required.
- What kinds of tools, if any, will you need?
- Will you need to secure permissions or permits (for example, building permits)?
 - Who will obtain them?
 - How much will they cost?
 - How long will it take to secure them?
- You do not need exact costs.
 - Reviewers will just want to see if you can reasonably expect to raise enough money to cover the original estimate of expenses.
- (Enter your estimated expenses)... Materials... Supplies... Tools... Other (Such as food, water, gasoline, parking, equipment rental, sales tax, etc.)... Total Costs...
- Explain where you will get the money for total costs indicated...
- Think of your project in terms of phases and list what they might be.
 - The first might be to complete your final plan.
 - Others might include fundraising, preparation, execution, and reporting.
 - You may have as many phases as you want, but it is not necessary to become overly complicated.
- How will you handle transportation of materials, supplies, tools, and helpers?
 - Will you need a Tour Permit?
- Describe the hazards and safety concerns you and your helpers should be aware of as this project is conducted.
- List some action steps you will take to complete a final plan.
 - For example, "Complete a more detailed set of drawings."
 - (You should not have to list every step, but it must be enough to show you have a reasonable idea of how to complete a final plan.)

When the reviewer is satisfied the above tests can be met, approval will be granted.

Reference: (W8-1), (W8-2), (W8-3), (W8-4), (W9-1), (W9-3), (W9-4), (W10-1), (W10-2), (W21-5-2)
(9.0.2.7-5)

~~ 4 ~~ **Who Will Be Approving The Project?**

A project proposal must be approved by the organization benefiting from the effort, your unit leader and unit committee, and the council or district before you start.

Reference: (9.0.2.0-1)

~~ 3 ~~ **When Can Work Begin On The Actual Project?**

Until the project proposal has been approved, do not begin any work or raise any money or obtain any materials. Beginning the project before all reviewers have given approval is counter to the requirements. In such cases, it may be necessary for a Scout to select a different project.

Reference: (W5-5), (9.0.2.7-8)

~~ 2 ~~ **Where to Start the Official Process?**

Use of the official Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook, No. 512-927, 2011 printing is required. The workbook may be printed and completed in ink or with a typewriter. If you prefer an electronic version, a fillable PDF is available at www.scouting.org. If the format of the workbook is limiting, as many pages as needed may be added.

If properly used, the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook very nearly assures success. It should not become a source for rejecting candidates based on "technicalities" that have nothing to do with the intent of the requirement. Should a candidate believe his proposal wrongly rejected, there will be a second review opinion and possible approval from a higher authority. If requested by the Scout or his parents or guardian, an explanation of a proposal rejection will be provided in writing, with a copy sent to the council advancement chair and staff advisor. The explanation will identify reasons for rejection and suggestions concerning what can be done to achieve approval.

Reference: (W2-6), (W2-7), (W3-1), (W21-5-5)
(9.0.2.0-1), (9.0.2.1-5), (9.0.2.7-1), (9.0.2.7-4), (9.0.2.7-7), (9.0.2.7-11), (9.0.4.0)

~~ 1 ~~ **Research - Looking For A Good Project**

Service, impact, and leadership are the objectives and measurements. Planning and development require forethought, effort and time - sometimes more than for execution. "Canned" projects with no further planning would not meet the test.

An Eagle Scout Leadership Service Project doesn't have to be original but it is an individualized experience without a specific standard beyond being limited to one Eagle Scout candidate receiving credit for it. Projects are not required to have a lasting value and there are no required minimum hours of work.

An Eagle Candidate should decide on a worthy project for any religious institution, any school, or your community. The unit's chartered organization is certainly a good candidate, as are other youth organizations such as the Girl Scouts. The term "your community" has recently been redefined to include the "community of the world." Additionally Candidates may consider scenarios in which an individual in need can affect a community. It is then a matter of identifying a source representing the "community" who will provide approvals. Also, the project beneficiary need not be a registered nonprofit.

A project might be construction, conservation, or remodeling or it could be the presentation of an event with a worthwhile purpose. While projects may not be of a commercial nature or for a business, this is not meant to disallow work for community institutions, such as museums and service agencies (like homes for the elderly, for example).

A Project Coach, knowledgeable and experienced with project approvals, might be able to help find an approval path for Routine Labor which is not normally appropriate for a project.

A project may not be a fundraiser, even for a worthwhile charity, nor can projects be performed for the Boys Scouts of America, or its councils, districts, units, or properties.

Reference: (W2-2), (W4-3), (W4-4), (W4-5), (W4-6),
(9.0.2.0-1), (9.0.2.3-1), (9.0.2.4-1), (9.0.2.5-1), (9.0.2.6-1), (9.0.2.9-1), (9.0.2.12-1),
(9.0.2.12-3)