COMMITTEE ON MEMBERSHIP

David Podwall, MD, Chair
David Jakubowicz, MD, Vice Chair
Parag Mehta, MD, Commissioner

Meeting of July 29, 2015

ACTION ITEMS

Item 1: Recommended Procedures for Handling Special Requests for Life Membership:
MSSNY’s Bylaws establish age and retirement criteria for Life Membership, but state that the Council may waive the requirements when there are extenuating circumstances. At its June meeting, the Council directed the Membership Committee to propose a procedure for dealing with special requests so that the member’s circumstances could be given consideration without airing them in a public forum.

The Membership Committee considered various alternatives to the current system, whereby county medical societies submit all Life Membership applications, including special requests, through the MSSNY Information Services Department, in order to verify particulars of the physician’s age and membership history. Special requests typically include a brief statement as to why the county is requesting special consideration.

Discussion brought agreement that the county medical society is the best place for examination of special circumstances, but that guidelines should be provided to help in county determinations.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The appropriate place for determining the merits of special requests for Life Membership is the county medical society. However, some criteria or guidelines should be established for counties to follow in determining whether or not requests should be submitted to the Council.

The following criteria are proposed as essential for any special requests for Life Membership:

- At least 10 years of membership in good standing
- Personal issues determined by the county society to warrant granting of free life membership locally and recommending that MSSNY do the same.

(FOR COUNCIL APPROVAL)

Item 2: Special Request for Life Membership on behalf of George Anstadt, MD:

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:
Based on information confirming that the Monroe County Medical Society had appropriate reasons for requesting a special exception in the case of George Anstadt, MD, the Membership Committee recommends granting him Life Membership in 2015.

(FOR COUNCIL APPROVAL)
**Item 3: Adopting a Dues Requirement for Physicians who Become Life Members in the Future**

The Council has asked the Membership Committee to consider recommending a modest dues amount to be charged to those granted Life Membership in the future.

Committee members expressed concern that imposing a dues requirement would run counter to the intent of Life Membership, which is to recognize members for loyalty and facilitate their remaining connected to their colleagues after the value of many of the society’s benefits and activities has become less relevant for them.

Feedback from county societies suggested that many or most of their members who will soon reach eligibility for life membership would not remain as members if dues were imposed. It was noted that Life Members who also belong to the AMA count toward MSSNY’s delegate allocation.

Members suggested that MSSNY make an annual practice of requesting Legacy Donations from all Life Members, and reminding them that being part of the profession means giving back, either financially or in service to the profession or the community. Noting that the special Life Member status is granted in order to keep members involved in their profession, MSSNY should point out that there are many opportunities for involvement, and that participation by Life Members is a great way to stay active and connected.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:**

The Membership Committee recommends that MSSNY not impose dues for future Life Members, but instead make annual requests to all Life Members for Legacy Donations, in the form of financial or service contributions.

*(FOR COUNCIL APPROVAL)*