



# **A Guide to Conducting a Board of Review for the Eagle Scout Rank**

## **Troop 700**

## **Purpose of a Board of Review for Eagle Rank**

The members of an Eagle Board of Review should have the following objectives in mind:

1. To make sure that the Scout has completed the requirements for the Eagle rank.
2. To see how good an experience the Scout is having in the Scouting.
3. To encourage the Scout to continue to contribute to the Troop and to progress further.
4. Make sure the Scout is worthy of the title "Eagle Scout"

Additionally the Board of Review provides an opportunity for the Scout to develop and practice those skills needed in an adult interview situation. It is also an opportunity for the Scout to review his accomplishments.

The Board of Review is NOT a retest: the Scout has already been tested on the skills and activities required for the rank. However, the Chairman of the Board of Review should ensure that all the requirements have been "signed off" in the Scout's Handbook. Additionally, the Chairman should ensure that the Council has "signed off" that the leadership and merit badge records are correct and complete. The Council signature on the Scout's Eagle Application form attests to this assurance.

The Board of Review is an opportunity to review the Scout's attitudes, accomplishments and his acceptance of Scouting's ideals. It is also an opportunity to encourage individual Scout feedback regarding the Scouting program in the District and at the Troop level.

## **Composition of an Eagle Board of Review**

A Canaveral District Eagle Board of Review consists of no less than three but no more than six members drawn from Scouting and the community. Typically, 2 to 5 of the Eagle Board members are provided by the District. The remaining member of the Board comes from Troop's Committee.

## **Board of Review Setting**

Canaveral District Eagle Boards of Review are usually held on the first Tuesday and the fourth Thursday of every month, at the offices of Merrill Lynch on SR 520 in Merritt Island. There are typically many Boards of Review going on simultaneously during the evening, so there is a period of organization at the beginning where it is not unusual to be waiting for instructions.

The dress for the Board of Review members depends on whether they are from Scouting or from the community. Current Scout leaders should wear their full uniforms. Members of the community should be attired in business attire.

The setting for Eagle Boards of Review is private and somewhat formal. Each Board of Review is held in a separate room, adhering strictly to the Guide to Safe Scouting. Typically there is a table in the room, along with chairs for each Board Member and for the Scout.

## **Mechanics of an Eagle Board of Review**

The structure of all Boards of Review is quite similar, but the Eagle Board has more to it. The Board will meet privately before interviewing the Scout and review his Eagle Scout Application, Project Report and Letters of Recommendation. A Chairman of the Board of Review will be selected. The Scoutmaster or person designated by the Scoutmaster, introduces the Scout to the board including his current and pending rank. The Scout should be in full uniform, with Merit Badge Sash on. The Scout should bring his Scout Handbook, with "sign-off" signatures and dates for all requirements for all ranks up through Eagle.

Board Members are invited to ask questions of the Scout. A sample list is provided in the last section of this document. The questions should be open-ended, offering an opportunity for the Scout to speak about his opinions, experiences, activities and accomplishments. Avoid questions that require a simple one or two-word answer. If an answer is too brief, follow up with a "Why?" or "How can that be done?" to expand the answer. The question need not be restricted to Scouting topics: questions regarding home, church, school, work, athletics, etc. are all appropriate. The Chairperson, or the person most familiar with the Scout will brief the Board Members on any subjects that might be "out of bounds" such as recent divorce in the family, etc.

The mechanics for an Eagle Board of Review are similar to all other Boards of Review, except that they are more in depth, and might last as long as 45 minutes to 1 hour. Additionally, the Eagle Scout Rank Application, a minimum of three Letters of Recommendation and the Eagle Project Workbook must be present and reviewed by the Board.

Questions about these documents are appropriate, but the letters of recommendation are for the Board's use only. Any comments or questions about them should not reveal who wrote the letters. After the Scout is approved by the Board or Review, the letters are turned over to the Board of Review Chairman from the Scout's Unit.

When all questions have been asked, the Scout is excused from the room. The Board Members then consider whether the Scout is ready for the rank of Eagle, Scouting's highest rank. The Board's decision must be unanimous.

Once the decision has been reached, the Scout is invited back into the room and the Chairperson informs the Scout of the Board's decision. If the Scout is approved for the Eagle rank, there are general congratulations and handshakes all around, and the Chairman signs the appropriate line on the Scout's Eagle application form. The Scout is also encouraged to continue contributing to the Troop and to its Scouts and to the Scouting program in his life.

If there are issues that prevent the Scout from advancing to Eagle, the Board must detail the precise nature of the deficiencies. The Scout must be told specifically what must be done in order to be successful at the next Eagle Board of Review. The Chairperson must send a written follow-up to the Scout, Scoutmaster and the District Advancement Chairman, regarding the deficiencies. The application and all materials are returned to the District Advancement Chairman.

## **The Nature of the Questions**

Although similar, the Board of Review for an Eagle rank is different from the other Boards of Review in which the Scout has participated. The members of an Eagle Board of Review are not all from his Troop Committee. Introductions are essential and a few “break in” questions are usually appropriate.

At this point, the goal is to understand the Scout’s full Scouting experience, and how others can have similar meaningful Scouting experiences. Scouting principles and goals should be central to the Scout’s life – look for evidence of this.

Although this is the final rank, this is not the end of Scouting trail – “Once an Eagle, always an Eagle.” Explore how this Eagle Scout will continue with Scouting activities, and continued service to his home, church and community.

Below are a few questions that are typical of an Eagle Board of Review. Rather than factual questions, which are often asked at lower ranks, these questions generally seek to aid understanding of how Scouting is becoming an integral part of the Scout’s life. Remember it is not the point of a Board of Review to retest the Scout, but questions like, “Where did you learn about...” or “Why do you think it’s important for an Eagle Scout to have this skill?” are valid.

If a Scout appears nervous or anxious about the Board of Review, it might be appropriate to ask one or two questions for lower ranks to help “break the ice” and establish some rapport. Eagle Boards often ask a question from The Boy Scout Handbook about basic Scouting history. For Order of the Arrow members, there are questions about the role of OA within Scouting.

These questions are intended to serve only as a guide. There are more questions than time available.

## **What Every Scout Should Know**

### ***The Scout Oath***

On my Honor, I will do my best  
To do my duty to God and my country  
And to obey the Scout Law;  
To help other people at all times;  
To keep myself physically strong,  
Mentally awake, and morally straight.

### ***The Scout Law***

A Scout is... Trustworthy,  
Loyal,  
Helpful,  
Friendly,  
Courteous,  
Kind,  
Obedient,  
Cheerful,  
Thrifty,  
Brave,  
Clean,  
Reverent.

Ensure that the Scout understands the meaning of these characteristics.

### **Scout Motto**

Be Prepared.

### **Scout Slogan**

Do a good turn daily

### **Outdoor Code**

As an American, I will do my best to –  
Be clean in my outdoor manners,  
Be careful with fire,  
Be considerate in the outdoors, and  
Be conservation-minded.

## Sample Eagle Board of Review Questions

1. What would you suggest adding to the Scout Law (a thirteenth point)? Why?
2. What one point could be removed from the Scout Law? Why?
3. Why is it important to learn how to tie knots and lash poles and logs together?
4. What is the difference between a "Hollywood hero" and a real hero?
5. Can you give me an example of someone who is a hero to you? (A real person, not a character in a book or movie.)
6. Why do you think the Family Life merit badge was recently added to the list of the required merit badges?
7. What camping experience have you had that you wish every Scout could have?
8. What is the role of a Senior Patrol Leader at a Troop meeting?
9. If you could change one thing to improve Scouting, what would you change?
10. What do you believe our society expects from an Eagle Scout?
11. The charge to the Eagle Scout requires that you give back to Scouting more than Scouting has given to you. How do you propose to do that?
12. As an Eagle Scout, what can you personally do to improve your Troop?
13. What will you be doing in your unit, after receiving your Eagle Rank?
14. Tell us how you selected your Eagle Leadership Service Project?
15. From your Eagle Leadership Service Project, what did you learn about managing or leading people? What are the qualities of a good leader?
16. What part of your Eagle Leadership Service Project was the most challenging? Why?
17. If you were to manage another project similar to your Eagle Leadership Service Project, what would you do differently to make the project better or easier?
18. What are your future plans (high school, college, trade school, military, career, etc)
19. Tell us about your family (parents, siblings, etc). How do you help out at home?
20. What do you think is the single biggest issue facing Scouting in the future?
21. How do your friends outside of Scouting react when they learn that you are a Boy Scout? How do you think they will react when they learn that you have become an Eagle Scout?
22. Why do you think that belief in God (or a Supreme Being) is part of the Scouting requirements?
23. How do you know when a Scout is "active" in his unit?
24. You have been in Scouting for many years. Sum up all of those experiences in one word. Why did you choose that word?
25. What one thing have you gained from your Scoutmaster conferences over the years?
26. How does an Eagle Scout continue to show Scout Spirit?
27. If the Scout is a member of the Order of the Arrow:
  - What does OA membership mean to you?
  - How does OA help Scouting in your unit?
28. [Traditional last question] Why should this Board of Review approve your request for the Eagle Rank? or – Why should you be an Eagle Scout?

## More Sample Questions

1. Ask questions about his understanding and adherence to the Scout Oath and Scout Law: The Board should make sure that good standards have been met in all phases of the Scout's life. A discussion of the Scout Oath and Scout Law is in keeping with the purpose of the review, to make sure that the candidate recognizes and understands the value of Scouting in his home, unit, school and community.
  - What is the hardest point of the Scout Law for him to live by - why?
  - What point of the Scout Law is the most important to him - why?
  - What does "Scouting Spirit" mean to him - why?
  - What do the various points of the Scout Law mean to him?
  - What values has Scouting taught him that he thinks others see in him - at home, in his unit, at school and/or in the community?
  - How does he live by the Scout Law and Oath?
  - What do the different points of the Scout Oath mean to him?
  - What does "duty to God" mean to him?
  - What does "duty to Country" mean to him?
  - How does he "help others at all times"?
  - How does he feel about wearing his uniform in public?
  
2. Ask questions about his camping experiences:
  - What was his most enjoyable experience in Scouting?
  - Conversely, what was his least enjoyable experience?
  - How many summer camps has he attended and where?
  - What did he enjoy most about his summer camp experiences?
  - Ask him about his outdoor experiences in Scouting.
  - Ask him what he remembers of the "Outdoor Code".
  
3. Ask questions related to his Scouting experience:
  - What leadership positions has he held?
  - What were his responsibilities in each position?
  - What leadership position does he hold now?
  - Ask him what he would do if a scout refused to comply and/or ignored a valid request he made in the performance of his duties.
  - Ask him about his troop's discipline policy and where he figures in it in his present leadership position.
  - Ask him other questions related to merit badges he has earned (remember you are not testing him).
  - Has he earned any merit badges that will help him in his choice of occupation?
  - What merit badge did he enjoy working on the most - why?
  - Conversely, which one did he enjoy working on the least - why?
  - Ask him what changes he might make in his unit.
  - If he earns his Eagle rank tonight, what does he intend to do to repay Scouting, his unit and its leaders?
  - Who has been the most influential person in his Scouting career?
  - Is there anything Scouting did not give him that he feels could be beneficial to the program to help other young men develop?

4. Ask pertinent questions about his project. The Board should make sure that a good standard of performance has been met.
  - What group benefited from his project?
  - How did he find out about the need?
  - Ask him to walk the Board through the project from beginning to end. The planning phase, the organization of personnel, directing the project to completion
  - Did he have to contact any city, county or state officials for permits or to find out about ordinances, etc. - did the Citizenship in the Community Merit Badge help - how?
  - Once his project was approved, did he have to modify it - what did he learn from that experience?
  - Who did he get involved in helping him with his project - scouts, adults from his troop, members of the benefiting organization....?
  - Did he have any problems directing adults in their work - how did he feel about that?
  - In what ways does he feel he demonstrated leadership in this project?
  - Every scouts feels his project was "special" - how is his project "special"?
  - Thirty years from now when someone else asks him what he did for his Eagle project, what will stand out in his mind - how will he answer that question?
  
5. Ask about his plans for the future. The Board should attempt to determine the Scout's ideals and goals.
  - Ask him about his plans for the future - college, Armed Forces, trade school,
  - How does he feel earning Eagle will help him in those plans?
  - When he turns 18, he assumes some new responsibilities - What are they? Sign up for the draft, register to vote and responsible for his actions in the eyes of the law.
  - What should an Eagle Scout be expected to do and what responsibilities does he think come with the rank?
  - What does he plan to do in scouting in the immediate and long range future?

These are by no means the only questions that may be asked. They are merely examples to be used as a springboard to other questions and further discussion. Please do not assume that you are to ask only these questions and consider the interview complete. The interview should come to a natural conclusion as each board member runs out of questions. There is not set length of time for an Eagle Board of Review. However, 15 minutes is probably too short and an hour is probably too long.