

# Steering Committee Member Agreements and Qualities

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The Syracuse Peace Council is a non-hierarchical, democratic organization committed to peace and social justice, and the Steering Committee is primarily responsible for matters concerning the organization's structural and financial sustainability, as well as its overall political direction.

To ensure that Steering Committee members can effectively work together to support SPC's mission, Steering Committee members must meet the following criteria:

## Political Agreements

- Agreement with SPC Statement of Purpose (see below), and willingness to carry out Steering Committee work within this context.
- Commitment to nonviolence as the primary strategy for SPC's work.
- Commitment to grassroots organizing models in building a social movement.
- Commitment to SPC's tradition of anti-militarism/anti-imperialism work, and recognition that SPC may work on other issues understanding connections among them.
- Recognition of the relation between systems of privilege and oppression, and how systemic oppressions manifest in racism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, classism, and other forms.

## Personal Qualities

- Previous familiarity and reasonably good connection to SPC in more than a casual way.
  - Willingness to work within a collective decision-making process using consensus, and flexibility with its application (see description of SPC's consensus process).
  - Ability to set aside personal agendas for the good of the organization and have in mind the best interests of SPC as a whole when making decisions as a Steering Committee member, not just the particular interests of one committee, one area of work, another organization, or ones own personal priorities.
  - Ability to make at least a two-year commitment (one year is acceptable in special circumstances).
  - Ability to follow through on tasks, and availability for at least one meeting per month.
- Steering Committee members are also expected to participate in SPC in an ongoing way, in addition to attending Steering Committee meetings. This may be participating in a committee or subcommittee, or other ongoing work (for events, office work, etc.).

## Organizational Positions

**Additionally, Steering Committee members should understand the following organizational positions and be willing to recognize them as such in their role as a member of Steering Committee. These positions are highlighted here due to past events and to prevent any misunderstandings.**

- We support the sovereignty of the Onondaga Nation and its traditional government.
- We are a feminist organization and support a woman's right to her own reproductive choices.
- We support liberation struggles and self-determination of oppressed people. We recognize and support the Palestinian liberation struggle against Israeli occupation and apartheid.

## SPC Statement of Purpose

The Syracuse Peace Council (SPC), founded in 1936, is an antiwar/social justice organization. We are community-based, autonomous and funded by the contributions of our supporters.

SPC educates, agitates and organizes for a world where war, violence and exploitation in any form will no longer exist. We challenge the existing unjust power relationships among nations, among people and between ourselves and the environment. As members, we work to replace inequality, hierarchy, domination and powerlessness with mutual respect, personal empowerment, cooperation and a sense of community.

Present social injustices cannot be understood in isolation from each other nor can they be overcome without recognizing their economic and militaristic roots. SPC stresses a strategy that makes these connections clear. We initiate and support activities that help build this sense of community and help tear down the walls of oppression. A fundamental basis for peace and justice is an economic system that places human need above monetary profit. We establish relationships among people based on cooperation rather than competition or the threat of destruction.

Our political values and personal lives shape and reflect each other. In both we are committed to nonviolent means of conflict resolution and to a process of decision-making that responds to the needs of us all.

## Organizational Statements

Additional SPC issue statements – such as statements regarding acts of war, timely responses to the political climate, solidarity with ongoing struggles, events of historical importance – are available online at [www.peacecouncil.net/statements](http://www.peacecouncil.net/statements).