

B. NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION MEMBER

ROLES

In order for a neighborhood association or any organized group to be effective, members' roles should be clearly defined. While each neighborhood association is responsible for determining which committees and executive positions it will have, there are certain positions which are commonly held in neighborhood associations. This section provides ideas and guidelines to help neighborhood associations clearly define the roles and responsibilities of these positions.



EXECUTIVE BOARD

Any resident, property owner, or business within the neighborhood association boundaries can participate in the association meetings. Those who will commit to regular attendance at the meetings (usually once or twice a month) can be elected to an executive board to work on items of interest to the neighborhood. **Each association has bylaws that specify how many people can serve in a formal capacity, but anyone can attend meetings and work on projects.**

OFFICERS

Each neighborhood association's bylaws outline the duties of their officers. Suggested general duties are listed below.

Chairperson

Responsible for the general supervisory and directional powers of the activities of the executive board and association. Responsible for writing and submitting meeting agendas (see C2, How to Write an Agenda and C3, Agenda Items to Consider). Presides at all meetings of the executive board and general membership. Generally an ex-officio member of all committees.

Vice Chairperson

Assists the chairperson. In the absence of the chairperson, the vice chairperson conducts the meetings and exercises all the usual duties of the chairperson.

Secretary

Records the minutes of the meetings of the executive board and delivers a copy to the City's Department of Community Services, Community Resources Division. City staff then provide copies of the minutes and agendas to all the executive board members. (See B3, Hints for Secretaries of Neighborhood Associations.)

Treasurer

Has access to the funds of the neighborhood association. Most boards do not require anything but an occasional status report from the treasurer. (Note: This is an optional position since some executive boards do not have a treasury. The treasurer position could also be added to the secretary position as a secretary/treasurer.) (See B4, Notes to Treasurers.)

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMITTEES

Many neighborhood associations organize their work through committees. Each association's executive board decides which committees are needed and what their relationship is to the board. Some standing committees may be described in an association's bylaws.

Section J of this manual includes detailed information pertinent to many of the common neighborhood association committees.

Neighborhood committees generally operate under one of the following two criteria:

1. All recommendations of the committee are approved by the association's board, or
2. The committee may make recommendations on behalf of the neighborhood association and executive board within adopted policies of the neighborhood association (e.g., neighborhood plan, special neighborhood study, specific land use policies). *Recommendations that do not fall within adopted policies must be approved by the executive board.*

Examples of neighborhood association committees:

BUDGET/C.I.P. (CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM)

Reviews proposed budgets and C.I.P.'s, reports back to the neighborhood association, and makes sure that the neighborhood association's interests are represented in budget and C.I.P. processes.

See sections J8, J9, J10, and J11 for detailed budget information.

LAND USE COMMITTEE

Reviews land use proposals, including specific cases filed with the City, land use policies such as the comprehensive plan, zone code revisions, etc., and makes land use recommendations to the neighborhood association. The position of land use chairperson can be very demanding. Each week, he or she receives a packet that contains summaries of land use matters affecting the neighborhood and the city as a whole.

See sections J1 and J2 for a summary of land use actions and processes.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR/COMMITTEE

Oversees production of the annual neighborhood association newsletter. The committee chair or editor assigns articles to be written by others in the group as well as writes, collects, and reviews articles, and gives them to the City's Neighborhood Newsletter Coordinator. The editor assists with layout and proofs the newsletter draft.

See section D2 for "Council Policy on Newsletters."

PARKS COMMITTEE

Reviews proposals for park development projects and/or organizes a park project. Works with Parks Operations Division on Park Partnerships.

See sections J6 and J7 for more information on Salem Parks.

POLICE-NEIGHBORHOOD LIAISON COMMITTEE/NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Neighborhood Watch Coordinator plans, organizes, and carries out the Neighborhood Watch Program for the association. Each association is also invited to have a representative on the Police-Neighborhood Liaison Committee, which meets the first Wednesday of each month at 12:00 noon. Crime statistics are presented for each neighborhood, and there is general discussion of police-related concerns.

See sections J12, J13, and J14 for more information on Crime Prevention programs, Neighborhood Watch, and Police-Neighborhood Liaison Committees.

SCHOOLS/YOUTH COMMITTEE

Reviews proposals affecting the school(s) and/or youth and makes recommendations to the executive board on policies or programs concerning schools and youth that the neighborhood association should follow. Lobbies on behalf of the neighborhood association for those policies, and serves as a liaison with the Local School Advisory Committee(s) (LSAC).

SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE

Reviews social needs in the neighborhood to make recommendations to the neighborhood association on social issues and to advocate on behalf of the neighborhood association with the appropriate community resources to get the needs met.

TRAFFIC/TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Reviews proposals for changes in traffic patterns (stop signs, parking, signals) and transportation proposals (major street improvements, studies, policies), and recommends traffic/transportation policies or changes to the neighborhood association. This committee might also review transit proposals or make recommendations on transit and advocate on behalf of the association. The position of traffic chairperson can be time consuming. The traffic chairperson often presents testimony to the Citizens Advisory Traffic Commission (CATC) or City Council on the neighborhood association's behalf.

See sections J3, J4, and J5 for more information on traffic and transportation.

AD HOC COMMITTEE

When an issue or project arises of such magnitude that it seems prudent to have a special committee assigned to work on that one item, the executive board may choose to appoint an ad hoc committee with one charge only and which will disband when the issue/project is completed. Examples of such committees are Neighborhood Plan Committee, Zone Code Revision Committee, and CIP Committee.

OTHER COMMITTEES/LIAISONS

Other committees that exist or have existed in some neighborhood associations:

- Community Services Committee
- Historic Preservation Committee
- Housing Committee
- Neighborhood Watch
- Police-Neighborhood Liaison Committee (PLC)
- Watershed Council Representative
- State Fair Representative
- Fall Leaf Haul
- Salem Neighborhoods Inc. (SNI)
- School Representative

NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS B2

Every group needs leadership. Someone needs to keep the group organized and on track. Outside of meetings, this means the leader (usually a chairperson) needs to spend time making phone calls, following up on decisions, and making sure the group is effective. At meetings, a chairperson helps determine the ultimate success of the group by making sure meetings are run well. It is important that a chairperson be an impartial bystander, and NEVER monopolize the floor or dominate discussions. He/she is also the person who makes sure that people keep to the agenda, both in content and timing.

HOW TO RUN AN EFFECTIVE MEETING

- **Prepare for the Meeting:** Create an organized agenda and submit it to your Neighborhood Services Counselor by the Monday of the week before the meeting. Complete other preparations (See C1 “Meeting Checklist,” C2 “How to Write an Agenda,” and C3 “Agenda Items to Consider” for details).
- **Start and End Meeting on Time:** People like to know when they will be done with the meeting and able to return to the rest of their lives. If meetings are continually running long, consider putting less on the agenda and set time limits for each item.
- **Introduce Yourself:** Do not assume people know who you are. If there is time and the group is of a reasonable size, have others introduce themselves as well.
- **Follow the Agenda:** Keep discussion to the topic and time allotted. When it is time to end a discussion, announce that time is almost up. Select the final speakers and their order from those still indicating a desire to speak. When those people finish speaking, the discussion is over.
- **Direct the Discussion:** When issues are brought up that are irrelevant, remind them that there will be a time for new business. If people are repetitive, recap the information that has already been shared. If a decision needs to be made, inform members. Limit your own opinions.
- **Facilitate Voting and Decision Making:** Bring issues to a vote as needed. Never assume there is agreement until it is put to a vote.
- **Mediate Arguments When They Arise:** Remain impartial and fair. Give each side a chance to state their point of view.
- **Review What Has to Be Done:** Review all discussions, decisions made, and tasks to be assigned. Make sure people leave the meeting with a clear understanding of what decisions have been made and which tasks are to be done by whom.
- **Follow Up on Decisions:** Encourage members to get things done and help them when necessary.
- **Encourage Participation from All:** Recognize that people respond differently, based on their background (gender, ethnicity, physical disability) and try to allow for these differences.
- **Act as a Chairperson, Not a Dictator:** Do not ignore those who want to speak, or monopolize the floor because you are the chair. A chairperson facilitates discussion and does not dictate decisions. A chairperson should remain neutral. If you want to speak, you may call on yourself,

temporarily step out of your role as the chair, then say your piece. Return to your role as the chairperson. **DO NOT** continue to speak when your turn is finished.

OTHER DUTIES OF A CHAIRPERSON

The work of a chairperson is not just the facilitator of a meeting. An effective chairperson may also undertake the following responsibilities:

- Sort through your chair's packet to determine which materials are of interest to your association or committee.
- Understand, promote, support, and interpret the overall goals of the association as well as the committee.
- Consult the executive board and past committee chairperson in choosing members for committees. Ask members to serve. Outline committee responsibilities clearly.
- Schedule and conduct meetings. Notify all members, guests, and key people well in advance of the meeting.
- Observe correct procedure for corresponding with residents. (i.e., Does the neighborhood association require prior board approval? Letterhead?)
- See that meeting proceedings are recorded. (See B3 for details.)
- Delegate and divide responsibilities among members. See that work gets done. Give credit and recognition for accomplishment.
- Welcome the police officer attending your meeting and make sure he/she understands how much time he/she has on the agenda. Before the meeting, call the officer if there is a particular incident or topic you want him/her to be prepared to speak about, or call your Neighborhood Services Counselor for assistance in connecting to the appropriate officer.
- Maintain a meeting climate which is respectful to all guest speakers and meeting attendees.
- Talk with your Neighborhood Liaison regularly. Provide information and ask for assistance.
- Attend or send a representative to any citywide network meeting. (i.e., Land Use Network, Police-Liaison Committee, Salem Neighborhoods Inc.)

See Section F2, "Problem Solving and Decision Making Processes,"
for more on running an efficient meeting.

REMEMBER:

Delegate work often to involve other people in your group and to
avoid "chairperson burn-out."

Do not forget to be creative, and above all, enjoy your experience as the chair.

HINTS FOR SECRETARIES OF NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS

B3

WHY KEEP MINUTES?

1. To record:
 - C Decisions
 - C Who participated in decisions
 - C How many people agreed and disagreed
 - C Some of the reasons leading to the decisions
 - C Minority opinions
2. To provide a history of group progress.
3. To make sure that all participants agree on what action was taken.
4. To provide city, state, and federal officials with evidence of citizen participation in decision making.
5. To provide a means of letting people not in attendance know what happened.
6. To remind people of what occurred.
7. To continue the association's status as City recognized under Salem Revised Code Chapter 64.

HOW TO TAKE MINUTES

The following suggestions are offered to assist secretaries of neighborhood associations. Your association may have adopted procedures or identified preferences for what is included in meeting minutes. Secretaries should check with the chairperson or the previous association secretary.

1. Routine matters to record are:
 - C Where and when the meeting was held
 - C Who attended (or attach attendance list)
 - C Who presided
 - C Who recorded
2. How to handle reports:
 - C *Summarize briefly* what is reported and by whom. (If a report is written it should also be attached to minutes.)
 - C *Summarize briefly* the discussion if it is important. (Do not include editorial comments or unrelated remarks.)
 - C *Record specifically* any action which the group takes in regard to the report; this may be a recommendation, referral to another group, or even a decision to take no action.
3. How to handle other agenda items:
 - C *Use subject headings* to separate topics of discussion.
 - C *Summarize the matter* that is presented, including who was the spokesperson.
 - C *Record* important parts of the discussion (as above). (Be brief and do not include editorial comments or unrelated remarks.)



4. How to handle motions:
 - C Be sure you write the *exact wording* of any motion. This includes motions amending other motions, and motions that die for lack of a second. You may need to ask the group whether you have the correct wording for a motion. Do this before a vote is taken.
 - C Use a format that will make motions easily identifiable. Some good ways are to type the motion in italics, bold, or upper case (capital letters), or indent any motion that is voted upon.
 - C It is optional to include the names of the persons who made and who seconded the motion.
 - C Record the number of persons voting for and against the motion.

WHAT TO DO WITH MINUTES?

1. If possible, review a copy of the minutes with the person who chaired the meeting.
2. Give a copy of the minutes to your Neighborhood Services Counselor by the Monday of the week before the next meeting for official filing and distribution to the Executive Board, mailing list, and Neighborhood Liaison.
3. Keep a copy in the secretary's notebook.

WHAT MEETINGS NEED MINUTES?

1. All executive board meetings.
2. All general meetings.
3. All subcommittees where decisions are made, including decisions to make recommendations. (Not required by City code, but a good practice.)

WHAT OTHER RESPONSIBILITY DOES A SECRETARY HAVE?

1. The secretary, as a member of the group, can and should participate in discussion and vote on issues.
2. If you cannot attend a meeting, find a replacement secretary. Your bylaws may designate that this must be another board member. If not, you may arrange for another volunteer. (It is not appropriate to ask your Neighborhood Liaison (See D4) to take minutes, since this would conflict with their role as a resource during the meeting.)
3. Write minutes as promptly as possible and send a copy to your Neighborhood Services Counselor by the Monday of the week before the next meeting. Minutes can be faxed, e-mailed, or hand-delivered.
4. If your neighborhood association is incorporated, the secretary has responsibilities defined by state law.

- Some neighborhood associations have funds for which a bank account is needed. Banks require a tax identification number for every bank account. For personal accounts, that is one's Social Security Number. For an organization account, the Social Security Number of a member can be used or the organization may be able to get a tax identification number (also called employee identification number) from the IRS by filing form SS-4. An organization also needs forms which prove its existence (i.e. SRC Chapter 64 or approved bylaws). Banks will report interest earnings to the IRS.
- Before opening a bank account, talk with a new accounts representative at the bank so that you will know how the bank account will be treated and the name under which the interest earnings will be reported.
- If your neighborhood association is currently recognized by the IRS as a nonprofit organization or is interested in becoming so, refer to sections M7 and M8 of this handbook for more pertinent information.



Leadership is a shared responsibility. Members play an important role in making the group effective, productive, and welcoming.

BEFORE THE MEETING - BE PREPARED

As a committee or group member, it is your responsibility to prepare for the meeting. If you have a committee job or responsibility, be sure to complete your assigned tasks. If you have no specific assignment, be sure you are familiar with the goals and purposes of the organization or committee. Read your agenda and the enclosures so you can formulate questions and be prepared for discussion. Being informed, will put you in a better position to stimulate action that will solve problems and contribute to the success of the organization.

DURING THE MEETING

■ **Be On Time**

The sooner the meeting starts, the sooner the business at hand will be finished!

■ **Speak Freely**

The strength of a group is that the collective thoughts of all members are of more value than single ideas or the dominance of a few.

■ **Be a Good Listener**

The more points of view you have knowledge of, the better choice you can make when it is time to vote.

■ **Be Informal**

Waiting to be recognized by the chairman before speaking helps maintain order in an auditorium full of people, but for small groups the formality of raising your hand or standing up to speak may hinder the group. Each neighborhood association should establish their own procedures on matters of process.

■ **Give Others an Opportunity**

Make your point in a few words, then allow someone else to voice their views.

■ **If You Get Lost**

If you lose the train of thought of the discussion, do not be afraid to ask questions. Other people may also be lost or confused, and you are doing the group a service by asking for clarification.

■ **Disagree But Do Not Be Disagreeable**

When you find you are on the opposing side from the general discussion, say so and tell why, but disagree in a friendly manner. Everyone is after the truth, and a friendly discussion of opposing views adds interest to any meeting.

AFTER THE MEETING

■ **Evaluate the Results**

As a group as well as individually, members should evaluate the accomplishments of the discussion in view of what the group set out to do. What went wrong? What were the strong points of the discussion? Was there a need for more facts and information? How might we gain by this experience? Offer suggestions to the chair on how the group could improve. Don't

criticize the chair or leader behind his/her back. The leader is also a volunteer and is interested in the group. He or she would like to hear your ideas or constructive criticism.

■ **Do Your Homework**

If you have been given a responsibility, fulfill it. The group is depending on your commitment just as you depend on the group to fulfill your individual needs.

Adapted from Oregon State University Extension Service