

Standing Rules

Of the Delaware Valley Chapter of the AMC

rev. Nov 30, 2007

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Purpose of This Document

The purpose of these Standing Rules is to define the organizational structure of the Chapter (within the parameters set by the Chapter By-laws) and to provide guidelines for the orderly operation of the Chapter and the Executive Committee. They shall specify the makeup of the Executive Committee; the duties of the various Committee Chairs and other volunteer positions; and the current operating procedures of the Chapter.

Article I: General

1. Chapter By-Laws and Club By-Laws supersede these Standing Rules. Upon their adoption, these Standing Rules supersede any previous motions of the Executive Committee that are in conflict with them.
2. The Standing Rules can be adopted or changed by a two-thirds vote of the current voting members of the Executive Committee or by a majority vote of that committee if two weeks' notice in writing of the proposed change has been provided to all voting members.
3. It is the responsibility of the Chapter Chair to bring needed changes in these rules to the attention of the Executive Committee. Any Executive Committee member may move to amend these rules.
4. A rule can be suspended upon recommendation of the Chapter Chair by a majority vote at any Executive Committee meeting where a quorum is present. Such suspension shall be in effect only until the next scheduled Executive Committee meeting.

Article II: The Executive Committee

1. Duties of the Executive Committee Members

Executive Committee members are expected to attend all Executive Committee meetings. Standing Committee chairs are expected to provide a written committee report to the Executive Committee members via email four days prior to each Executive Committee meeting; to present a budget for the coming year to the Chapter Treasurer upon request; and to provide an annual report to the Vice-Chair upon request.

Each individual person holding one or more positions on the Executive Committee has one vote on motions brought to a vote at Executive Committee meetings.

Committee chairs should maintain an active committee comprised of volunteers from the general chapter membership and make use of that committee in all possible instances to assist in the development of new Chapter leadership.

Detailed job descriptions shall be maintained for each voting Executive Committee position. It is the responsibility of each Executive Committee member to assure that their job description is kept up to date.

2. Position Summaries – voting Executive Committee positions:

Chair

The Chair shall preside at all general Chapter meetings and Executive Committee meetings; may appoint non-voting and Ad Hoc committee chairs; represents the Chapter and/or the Club, as required, at both Club and non-Club functions; resolves any question over the areas of responsibility of committees or brings these questions before the Executive Committee for resolution.

Vice-Chair

In the event of the resignation of the Chapter Chair, the Vice-Chair assumes the title and duties of the Chair until the next Chapter annual meeting. In the event of the temporary absence or disability of the Chair, the Vice-Chair assumes the duties of the Chair during such absence or disability.

The Vice-Chair represents the Chapter on Club committees of which the Vice-Chair is a designated member.

The Vice-Chair shall oversee the creation of the Chapter's Annual Report to its members and shall perform other duties as assigned by the Chair.

The Vice-Chair arranges the meeting room for the Executive Committee meetings and acts as liaison with the Plymouth Meeting Friends.

Secretary

The Secretary keeps a record of all the policies and proceedings of the Chapter and of the Executive Committee; notifies the respective members of the date, time, and place of all Chapter and Executive Committee meetings; conducts the official correspondence of the Chapter and keeps proper files and records of same; maintains the Executive Committee Handbook; is responsible for assisting the Vice-chair with the preparation of the Annual Report, and for editing the Chapter Standing Rules annually to reflect any changes approved by the Executive Committee.

If both the Chapter Chair and Vice Chair are unable to perform their duties (for instance, due to illness or extended travel), then the by-laws stipulate that the Secretary shall assume those duties, followed by the Treasurer. However, the Secretary and Treasurer typically are not as deeply informed about the details of running the chapter as the Chair and Vice Chair are. Therefore, in this circumstance, the Secretary, Treasurer and Southern Regional Director should work together as a team (along with anyone else they see fit to call upon), to share information and resources, and work together on decision-making. The Secretary carries the final deciding voice if necessary, in keeping with the by-laws, but consensus should be sought if possible.

In the event of a prolonged absence or incapacity of the Chapter Chair and Vice-Chair, the Secretary is responsible for calling a meeting of the Executive Committee for the purpose of naming a committee member to perform the duties of the Chair.

Treasurer

The Treasurer collects and has custody of Chapter funds; disburses said funds under the direction of the Executive Committee; and keeps account of all Chapter property.

The Treasurer annually prepares the Chapter's budget, and at each regular Executive Committee meeting presents to each affected Executive Committee member a comparison of expenses to date vs. budget to date.

The Treasurer annually prepares a financial report at the end of the fiscal year, reviews said report with the Chapter Chair, and provides it to the Vice-Chair for inclusion in the Chapter's Annual Report.

See also the second paragraph in the Secretary section, above, concerning decision-making during absence of the Chapter Chair and Vice Chair.

Membership Chair

The Membership Chair is responsible for facilitating the recruitment, retention, recognition and sense of inclusion of the general membership and serves as a communication link between the Chapter, its members and those who express an interest in joining the Club.

The Chairs of the Standing Committees (one chairperson per committee)

The Chairs of the various Standing Committees are each responsible for assembling and maintaining a committee, and for the general oversight of their committee's area of focus. Further detailed job descriptions shall be maintained separately for each of these positions. They are: Backpacking Chair, Bicycling Chair, Canoeing Chair, Conservation Chair, Education Chair, Hiking Chair, Leadership Chair, Newsletter Chair, Publicity Chair, Shelter Chair, Social Chair, Trails Chair, Webmaster/Website Chair, Young Members Chair and the Chairs of the Lehigh Valley Group and Mid-Jersey Group.

3. Non-voting members of the Executive Committee

According to the Chapter By-Laws, there are also certain ex-officio non-voting members of the Executive Committee:

- Any Chapter members serving on the AMC Board of Directors (during such tenure)
- The immediate past Chapter Chair (for one year after leaving office)

4. Executive Committee Meetings

The Executive Committee meets for its regular business meetings six times each year, every other month. The Committee should set a schedule of regular meeting dates at the beginning of the year, so that these meetings may be announced in the Chapter publications.

At its regular meetings, the Executive Committee normally works on a consensus basis or a simple majority voice vote, as deemed appropriate by the Chair. In the rare cases when this is not feasible or desirable, Robert's Rules of Order may be invoked by the Chair.

In advance of each meeting, the Chair shall provide to committee members an agenda. Committee members wishing to raise issues before the committee shall submit these to the Chair in advance of the Executive Committee meeting for inclusion in the agenda whenever possible.

Minutes from the previous meeting shall be provided by the Secretary to the Executive Committee members via email two weeks prior to the meeting for review.

Typical Order of Business at Executive Committee meetings:

- Call to Order
- Approval of minutes from previous meeting
- Report of the Treasurer
- Committee reports (items not covered in emailed reports)
- Regional Director's Report
- Unfinished business
- New business

5. Electronic Voting

In cases where a decision needs to be made by the Executive Committee before its next regular meeting, an email vote can be called for by the Chair. Such call for vote shall be emailed to all Executive Committee members, with a clear and concise statement of the motion to be voted upon. Members shall be given ample time to reply; the reply deadline shall be clearly stated in the email and shall allow at least three working days for votes to be cast. The motion shall be deemed to have passed if emails in favor of the motion have been received by the chair from a majority of voting members of the Executive Committee before the reply deadline. The result of the voting should be emailed to the members of the Executive Committee once a deciding vote has been cast or the deadline has been reached. The motion and the votes received shall in all cases be reviewed at the next Executive Committee meeting for verification.

Article III: Other Chapter Positions

1. Ombudsman

The position of Ombudsman should be held by a Chapter member in good standing who is not a current member of the Executive Committee but has a strong general knowledge of the Club and the Chapter, as well as an understanding of the goals and vision of the organization.

The role of the Ombudsman is to investigate complaints from Chapter members in an impartial manner, to report their findings to the Executive Committee and help to achieve equitable settlement of any grievances. Issues brought to the attention of the Ombudsman are typically of a time sensitive nature, and as such should be resolved as soon as practicable.

The Ombudsman is appointed by simple majority vote of the sitting Executive Committee, and holds the office until their resignation or replacement by a vote of the Executive Committee.

2. Chapter Youth Programs Coordinator

Chapter Youth Programs (CYP) are activities led by AMC volunteers in which children participate without a parent or legal guardian present. The most common such activities are:

- Activities where the AMC provides outdoor leadership to agencies involved with under-privileged children.
- Trail work activities with organizations such as the Scouts.

CYP activities have special risks resulting from being involved with children. As such, the AMC has special policies for these activities. Any chapter which runs applicable activities must appoint a CYP Coordinator to act as the chapter's interface to the club for CYP related issues, such as CYP Leader approval and CYP Outing approval. Each chapter's CYP Coordinator must be approved by the AMC CYP Committee.

Given the special risks that the CYP Coordinator manages, the person in this role must be on the DV Chapter's Executive Committee. Usually the CYP Coordinator is not a separate role. Instead, an existing member of the Executive Committee, such as Chair, Vice-Chair or Education Chair, acts as CYP Coordinator in addition to his or her other responsibilities. Depending on interest, it may occasionally be necessary to define a separate CYP Coordinator position on the chapter's Executive Committee.

3. Activity Leaders

Requirements for members wishing to lead activities for the Chapter shall be set by the Leadership Committee and by the individual activity committees. The requirements must be in keeping with the Club-wide leadership standards defined by the AMC Outdoor Leadership Development Committee. Prospective leaders should be informed of all requirements upon request. Once the leadership requirements have been met for a particular activity, the individual shall be allowed to lead such activities for the Chapter as long as they are a member in good standing, unless such privilege is revoked as per the Chapter's *Leader Review Policy*.

The procedure for reviewing complaints concerning trip leaders should follow the rules and guidelines established in the Chapter's *Leader Review Policy*, maintained by the Leadership Committee. Said Policy should be reviewed regularly by the Leadership Committee; any changes to said Policy shall be reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee and disseminated to the Chapter trip-leaders, as per the Chapter's Policy Development Procedure (Article V Section 8).

Other related policies in effect: *Social Event Coordinator Policy*, *Canoeing Committee Leadership Policy*.

Article IV: Committees

1. Each of the standing and ad-hoc committees shall be chaired by one person. The appointing of vice-chairs and other committee members, typically by the committee chair, and the delegation of responsibilities to these other committee members, are encouraged. The appointment or election of "co-chairs" is specifically disallowed.
2. Each standing committee should strive to maintain at least a chair and vice-chair, as well as other such members as is deemed appropriate by the committee chair.
3. Mission statements for these committees and job descriptions for their chairs and any other key committee positions should be maintained by each committee chair and communicated to the Secretary for inclusion in the Executive Committee Manual.

4. Current standing committees of the Chapter are:

- Membership Committee
- Backpacking Committee
- Bicycling Committee
- Canoeing Committee
- Conservation Committee
- Education Committee
- Hiking Committee
- Leadership Committee
- Publicity Committee
- Shelter Committee
- Social Committee
- Trails Committee
- Young Members Committee
- Newsletter Committee
- Website Committee
- Lehigh Valley Group
- Mid-Jersey Group

5. Ad-hoc committees and their chairs shall be appointed from time to time by the Executive Committee or the Chair, as deemed appropriate. These committees should be given particular guidelines as to their purpose, goals and expected duration. The members of these committees may be appointed by the Executive Committee, or the Executive Committee may instruct the committee chair to impanel the committee (except in the case of the Nominating Committee.)

6. Typical ad-hoc committees include, but are not limited to:

Communications Committee

This committee is comprised of the publications editors, hotline administrators, website administrators and publicity chair, and is tasked with ensuring consistency of chapter communications to members and the community at large.

Nominating Committee (NC)

This committee should be impaneled by the Executive Committee annually as per By-laws Art. IV Sect. 4. (At least three members; at most one member from the Executive Committee).

The Executive Committee shall provide the NC with a list of Standing Committees for the following year; the chairs of these committees will serve on the Executive Committee, along with the other officers specified in the by-laws. The NC is tasked with finding candidates for all Executive Committee positions and submitting a slate of candidates to the Executive Committee prior to its July meeting, so that the slate may be prepared for timely publication in advance of the Annual Meeting. See also the relevant sections of the Chapter By-laws.

Each nominee for office should receive any pertinent documents, including at least copies of the Chapter By-Laws, Chapter Standing Rules, and Position Guidelines for the position(s) they have been nominated to and contact information for the current holder of that position.

By-Laws Review Committee (BLRC)

This committee should be convened every five years as per By-laws Art. VIII Sect. 3.

This committee was last active in 2004. The BLRC is tasked with reviewing the content of the Chapter By-laws and submitting a detailed recommendation to the Executive Committee as to any amendments that it feels should be applied to the By-laws. See also the relevant sections of the Chapter By-laws.

7. Regional Groups

Current Regional Groups within the Chapter are:

Lehigh Valley Group

Serves the needs of Chapter members in the Lehigh Valley area. Holds monthly meetings in Bethlehem, PA.

Mid-Jersey Group

Serves the needs of Chapter members in central New Jersey. Holds monthly meetings in central New Jersey.

Article V: Chapter Operations

1. Chapter Meetings

The chapter membership at large shall be informed of all Executive Committee meetings, as well as all annual and special meetings of the Chapter. Such announcements shall be made at least three weeks prior to such meeting.

2. Committee Meetings

Each standing or ad-hoc committee of the chapter shall hold meetings as deemed appropriate by the chair of said committee. The chapter website (<http://amcdv.org>) should be kept up to date with information on meetings of these committees. Information on typical meeting schedules and locations, as well as contact information for chairs should be made available to allow chapter members to attend such meetings.

See Article II Section 7 for particulars about Executive Committee Meetings.

3. Annual Report

The chapter Vice-Chair shall collect information from the various Executive Committee members for the Chapter's Annual Report to its members, and see that the Report is printed and distributed. Executive Committee members and standing committee chairs are responsible for timely preparing and providing to the Vice-Chair their reports to the Chapter membership for inclusion in the Chapter's Annual Report.

The report will be provided at no charge to members attending the Annual Meeting, and will be made available on the Chapter website. The Secretary will mail the report to any non-attendees who provide postage to the Secretary, as long as extra copies are available. Members not attending the Annual Meeting shall be notified of its availability.

4. Mandated Reporting to AMC Headquarters:

Annually, the Chapter is responsible for submitting the following documents/information to AMC's Office of Volunteer Relations:

From the Chapter Treasurer:

- Financial Audit Summary Report – Due February 1.

From the Chapter Secretary:

- Roster of Executive Committee Officers, and Annual Report – Due February 1.

From the Leadership Chair:

- List of all Currently Approved Activity Leaders – Due February 1.

From each Activity Chair:

- Copies of all Liability Release Waiver forms for all Chapter activities.

5. Grant Applications

Proposals for Club-wide funding, such as Supplemental Dues Allocation grants and Special Projects Fund grants, and for grants from outside agencies, must be submitted first to the Chapter Executive Committee for approval. The Executive Committee will evaluate each such proposal to make sure it is in line with the mission and goals of the Chapter, and to avoid competing or overlapping proposals within the chapter. Once the Executive Committee has approved the proposal, it may be submitted to the proposed funding source.

6. Financial Guidelines

It is the intention of the Chapter that any reasonable and legitimate expenses incurred by Chapter committees in the normal operation of Chapter business shall be paid for by the Chapter, not by the committee members. Committee budgets should be planned to include reimbursements for such expenses as telephone and postage costs related to Chapter operations. Requests for reimbursement shall be made to the Treasurer by the appropriate committee chair. Any committee chair requesting such reimbursement shall provide the Treasurer with a detailed summary of expenses incurred, including date incurred, reason, amount and any pertinent receipts. Expense reimbursement forms may be found on the Chapter website at <http://amcdv.org/Leadership/>

This provision is not intended to discourage donation to the Chapter of such expenses by any such volunteer. However, the wish of the Chapter is that no person be precluded from service to the Chapter due to financial circumstances.

The handling of finances for extended trips/outings, which may require significant advance outlays by the trip leader, should follow the rules and guidelines established in the Chapter's *Extended Trip Financial Policy*, maintained by the Executive Committee. Said Policy should be reviewed annually by the Executive Committee; any changes to said Policy shall be reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee and disseminated to the Chapter trip-leaders, as per the Chapter's Policy Development Procedure (see Article V Section 8).

7. Executive Committee Travel Reimbursement

In order to encourage members of the Executive Committee to participate in distant Club-sponsored meetings such as the Club-wide Annual Meeting, Fall and Spring Gatherings, etc., the Chapter will reimburse travel expenses incurred as a direct result of attending such meetings. Qualified Executive Committee members generally will have specific duties to perform at said meetings or be chairs of committees that have scheduled meetings on the agenda.

The Chapter Chair must approve all attendees and their anticipated expenses prior to the event. Reimbursable expenses include registration fees, accommodations and travel mileage or airfare, as well as certain meal expenses. Reimbursable meal expenses include only those that are incurred as part of a required component of a meeting or event. Meals purchased during travel to and from events are not reimbursable.

Automobile mileage reimbursement will be made at the same rate that the Club reimburses staff for travel mileage at the time of the event. As per the Club policy for reimbursing staff, to encourage car-pooling, the per-mile rate will be increased by 2 cents for each additional approved attendee sharing the vehicle. Toll costs are part of the calculated per mile rate, and as such are not separately reimbursable. The Chapter Treasurer is tasked with confirming the Club's current rate in effect on a quarterly basis, at a minimum. Travel by air is rare due to usually higher cost; however, there are occasional situations where travel by air is optimal, and the cost can be approved by the Chair.

8. Policy Development Procedure

All chapter policies and guidelines shall be assigned an overseeing committee. Policies affecting a particular area or activity should be overseen by the appropriate standing committee; broader Chapter policies should be overseen by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall determine the oversight of each policy.

The creation and amendment of Chapter policies and guidelines shall adhere to the following process: A draft document, developed by a task force or subcommittee, shall be reviewed by the overseeing committee and then distributed to the affected members for comments (for example, leadership policies might be distributed to the list of trip leaders.) The comment period should have a clear deadline for comments to be submitted to the overseeing committee, which is then responsible for incorporating any changes into the draft document. If substantial changes are made, another comment period should be held. Once the overseeing committee has reached a final draft, the policy shall be presented to the Executive Committee for approval. Finally, the approved policy (along with any relevant discussion of alternative proposals) shall be disseminated to all concerned members and posted on the Chapter website.

All policies, procedures and guidelines of the Chapter shall be made available to chapter members via the Chapter website.

Article VI: Events and Activities

1. Chapter Activity Postings

Practices for posting trip announcements to the email hotlines, website and newsletter should follow the rules and guidelines established in the Chapter Trip Posting Policy, maintained by the Communications Committee. Said Policy should be reviewed regularly by the Communications Committee; any changes to said Policy shall be reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee and disseminated to the Chapter trip-leaders, as per the Chapter's Policy Development Procedure (see Article V Section 8).

2. Chapter-wide Events

Customarily, the Chapter holds a variety of annual or periodic gatherings for its members. These gatherings normally include the Annual Meeting (a.k.a. Annual Dinner), the Annual Picnic and the annual Activities Social, all coordinated by the Social Committee, as well as various new-member socials organized by the Membership Chair.

Typically, the Activities Social is in March, the Annual Picnic is in June and the Annual Meeting is in early November. The Annual Meeting is the venue for Executive Committee elections, presentation of the Annual Report to the Chapter members and any other Chapter-wide business.

3. Executive Committee Retreat

Customarily, the Executive Committee holds a weekend retreat on the first weekend in December, which all newly-elected, as well as any outgoing Executive Committee members are requested to attend. In the past this retreat has been held at Mohican Outdoor Center, but in 2007 the venue moved to Weisel Hostel. Planning of goals for the coming year is the main topic of the retreat. This retreat is scheduled and organized by the outgoing Chapter Chair in conjunction with the incoming Chapter Chair.