

Life Member Clubs

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GENERAL

The Life Member club, an organization of retired Pioneers, operates as a subordinate unit of a sponsoring council or chapter. This practice addresses the structure and function of a Life Member club.

FORMING A LIFE MEMBER CLUB

There are no guidelines for defining the optimum number of Life Members required to form a new club. Where groups of Life Members exist in a given locale, and it is determined that an organized unit would facilitate participation in community service and provide a range of activities for those members, consideration should be given to forming a club.

It is the responsibility of the sponsoring council to determine the need for and feasibility of starting a new Life Member club. For the sponsoring unit, ensuring the availability of an adequate leadership pool for current and ongoing club operations is a primary concern. (If the number of Pioneers, either dues-paying regular Pioneers or Life Members, is deemed insufficient for forming individual clubs of the respective groups, a joint club of regular and Life Members should be considered.)

A Life Member club is governed by the constitution and bylaws of the chapter and derives its authority from the chapter's executive committee.

OFFICERS AND THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The **officers** of the Life Member club should be a president, a vice president, a secretary and a treasurer. The offices of the secretary and treasurer may be combined and held by one person.

The **executive committee** of each club should consist of the president, vice president, immediate past president, secretary, treasurer and a specified number of members-at-large. The president and secretary (or secretary/treasurer) act as chairperson and secretary, respectively, of the executive committee. The secretary and treasurer are appointed positions, and holders of these offices are therefore non-voting members of the executive committee.

The executive committee is the governing body of the club in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and bylaws of the chapter and of the Association. The executive committee approves the club's budget for the year, as well as any subsequent changes in the budget, including the allocation of monies to committees. The executive committee has the power to fill vacancies in the offices of the club when these occur. (The nominating committee, discussed elsewhere in this practice, may be asked to suggest names of possible replacements.)

In being responsible for the activities of the club, the executive committee should survey the club's membership and the communities it serves to determine appropriate programs in which the club should be involved.

Also, as bereavement visits to the family of a deceased member or to a member when a death occurs in his/her family are required, these should be made by a member of the executive committee under the direction of the president or vice president.

No member of the club shall hold more than one elective position in the Pioneer organization at any one time. A person who has been appointed to fill a vacancy for an elected office for the remainder of a term may be nominated and elected to that office for the following term. The terms of elected officers begin on January 1.

President

The club president is elected for a one-year term by the club membership. A president may run for a second consecutive term, providing such a candidacy is approved by a two-thirds vote of the chapter executive committee.

The president, who is the administrative head of the unit, presides at club executive committee meetings and those of the general membership. The president can call meetings of the executive committee and, as a member of the sponsoring council's or chapter's executive committee, should attend all of their meetings.

The president, along with the executive committee, can appoint special committees when appropriate and is a member ex officio of all club committees except the nominating committee.

The first duty of a president is the appointment, with the approval of the club executive committee, of a secretary and treasurer and the naming of committee chairpersons.

Vice President

The club vice president is elected for a one-year term to assist the club president and to preside in his/her absence. Besides learning and assisting with the functions of the president, the vice president is involved in the management of club activities as the president and executive committee shall determine.

In the following year, subject to executive committee approval, the name of the vice president is placed on the ballot to succeed to the presidency. If the elected president is unable to complete his/her term of office, the vice president should be appointed by the club executive committee for the unexpired portion of the term.

A vice president may run for a second consecutive term, providing such a candidacy is approved by a two-thirds vote of the chapter executive committee.

Immediate Past President

The immediate past president should act as an adviser to the president and executive committee and should be the chairperson of the nominating committee.

Members-at-Large

These positions are elected for a term of two years. If there is more than one member-at-large, their terms shall be staggered in alternate years to maintain experience and continuity on the executive committee.

Members-at-large of the club are required to take special assignments or to serve on committees as assigned by the club president or executive committee. If appropriate in individual clubs, standing committees are assigned to report to members-at-large. In those cases, the member-at-large is responsible for monitoring and reporting on the activities of those committees to the executive committee.

Secretary

The secretary is an appointed position by the president with the approval of the executive committee. This person is responsible for all records of the club, takes care of the general correspondence and performs additional duties the president or executive committee may assign. Minutes of executive committee meetings should be forwarded to the sponsoring council or chapter leader or manager where appropriate. Minutes of general membership club meetings should be distributed or read at the next membership meeting.

Treasurer

The treasurer is a position appointed by the president with the approval of the executive committee. The treasurer is responsible for handling and reporting all receipts and disbursements of monies relating to the operations of the club. The treasurer should prepare a monthly report of the club's financial activities and provide copies to each member of the executive committee, the treasurer of the sponsoring council and the chapter Pioneer administrator.

ELECTION AND INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

Candidates for office are elected annually by club members according to the process defined by the respective chapter's constitution and bylaws.

At the club's final general membership meeting or luncheon of each Pioneer year, officers for the ensuing year should be installed. To conduct the installation ceremony, the incoming president may select a member of the club (preferably a past president other than the outgoing president), sponsoring council or chapter (including a Life Member representative).

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The continued success and growth of a Life Member club is reliant upon having qualified and motivated people serving on the executive committee. Therefore, it is imperative that each club have an organized and effective nominating committee.

This committee should be composed of at least five people and should be chaired by the immediate past president. The other four members are appointed by the new president. At the beginning of each Pioneer year, the nominating committee should begin to evaluate potential candidates for the following year's executive committee positions. Meeting as often as required, the committee should submit in writing to the club president a final slate of recommended candidates for each elective office by July 20.

If a person leaves office for any reason, the president may ask the nominating committee for recommendations before appointments are made to fill any such vacancies.

For more information on the operation of this committee, see the Nominating Committee section of the TelecomPioneers Practices.

CLUB MEMBERSHIP

Per Article II, Section 4, of the Association constitution, "Regular members who retire from employment and receive a service pension shall be granted Life Membership, effective the day following retirement. Regular members who otherwise leave the employment of a sponsor company may apply for Life Membership upon the attainment of age 55. Life Members shall be entitled to all membership privileges but shall be exempt from the payment of dues."

Affiliate membership status may be obtained if a Life Member moves outside of his/her chapter's geographic area. Affiliate membership in the new chapter's area should be offered to Life Members who become permanent residents or who live in the area more than six months during the span of 12 consecutive months.

Life Members who relocate should take the initiative in informing their home chapter Pioneer membership person that they are changing locations and where they can be reached. The home chapter office should send Form PA-8A and other correspondence covering affiliations of Life Members to the new chapter. If already moved, the Life Member should contact the new chapter's administrator and have them exchange the appropriate forms with the home chapter manager/membership person.

Affiliate members are entitled to all membership privileges except the right to vote in affiliate chapter elections or in matters involving the administrative affairs of the affiliate chapter. They are, however, considered regular members of the Life Member club with which they are affiliated and are entitled to all membership privileges of that club.

Associate membership, which may be granted by the chapter executive committee to the Partner of a deceased regular member or Life Member, is Pioneering's way of continuing the friendships established with the families of Pioneers over the years. An associate member shall be entitled to such privileges as the chapter executive committee may designate, including the right to vote, hold office, or serve as a member of the executive committee at the club level only. An associate member shall be exempt from the payment of dues.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FISCAL YEARS

The administrative and fiscal years of the club shall run concurrently, beginning July 1 and ending June 30 of the following year.

FINANCES

Operating funds may be allocated to the club through the budget process of the sponsoring unit. Funds may also be derived from fund-raising activities, from donations and from other sources which have been approved by the chapter executive committee as consistent with the organization and operation of the Association.

In order to assure the Pioneer organization remains a tax-exempt organization as classified by the Internal Revenue Service, it is extremely important that all clubs maintain proper and accurate accounting records of Pioneer funds. Procedures and required financial forms are contained in the Financial Management section of the TelecomPioneers Practices. This section, which includes guidelines for handling and raising funds and information on insurance, should be reviewed to make sure the club's activities do not jeopardize the tax status of the chapter under state or federal law.

All unusual or questionable fund-raising projects should be cleared with the chapter Pioneer administrator before they are begun.

Although the TelecomPioneers is exempt from federal income tax, the Association is required to file an annual report with the Internal Revenue Department. Each Life Member club treasurer is responsible for providing such financial reports as may be required to the Pioneer manager, who, in turn, files reports with the Association office. These reports are subsequently consolidated for all U.S. Pioneer chapters and filed with the IRS.

All financial records of the Life Member clubs must be available for annual auditing. The Life Member club treasurer should maintain records and account for funds in a manner consistent with both the Internal Auditing Procedures section of the TelecomPioneers Practices and the established methods of the chapter.

RECORDS AND REPORTS

Life Member clubs should report their activities directly to the secretary of the sponsoring council or chapter Pioneer administrator. These reports include, but are not limited to, the following:

- PA-7 - Monthly Participation Report (can be entered directly via PA-7 system)
- Membership roster updates
- TelecomPioneers 17 - Income and Expense Statement and Balance Sheet
- Annual audit report
- Newsletters
- Minutes of board meetings and membership meetings.

LIFE MEMBER REPRESENTATIVE

The Life Member representative is, as the title indicates, the representative of all Life Members in a chapter. The Life Member representative, as a chapter-level executive committee officer, is elected by all the members of a chapter (other than the affiliate members, even though the Life Member representative may be an affiliate member). The chapter's constitution and bylaws will specify the number of Life Member representatives permitted, but the number should not exceed two, except in those chapters where there may be an unusually high number of Life Members or where the chapter territory covers a very large geographic area.

The term of the chapter Life Member representative may be two years, at chapter option. When there are two, their terms should be staggered, with one retiring each year, so as to maintain experience and continuity on the executive committee.

Responsibilities of a Life Member representative include the following:

1. Keep fully informed on all matters affecting the Life Member clubs (by attending board/membership meetings and projects, where appropriate) and present the club's viewpoints to the chapter executive committee;
2. Help other officers in presenting chapter or council viewpoints and programs to the Life Member groups;
3. Advise and assist the chapter executive committee by organizing and placing into effect Life Member programs and stimulating and promoting active participation of Life Members in these programs;
4. Coordinate and cooperate with the chapter executive committee on all matters pertaining to the Life Members, and
5. Help with training where required.

One Life Member representative from each chapter will act as a voting delegate at the Association's annual General Assembly.

COUNCIL LIFE MEMBER COMMITTEE

Organization

The council Life Member committee should be composed of three or more members of the council. Normally, Life Members, as well as regular members, serve on the committee. The council president and chapter Life Member representative(s) are ex officio members.

Duties and Responsibilities

The basic responsibility of this committee is to coordinate the activities of all the Life Member clubs within the sponsoring council, acting as the primary liaison between the council executive committee and Life Member clubs in all matters pertaining to the Life Member clubs. The committee representatives perform the same functions on a council level as the Life Member representative do on the chapter level.

The chairperson of this committee should meet regularly with the chapter Life Member Representative(s) and the executive officers of the sponsoring council so the council is kept informed of the needs and programs of the Life Members. The committee should be alert for instances in which the actions of a club might be in conflict with the constitution and bylaws of the chapter. If this situation occurs, it should be brought to the attention of the club executive officers so they will recognize why this action may not be taken.

CLUB PROGRAMS AND MEETINGS

The Life Member club should have a broad but effective program base designed to attain Pioneer goals in general and club goals in particular. Activities sponsored or engaged in by the club should be consistent with the purpose of the organization as stated in the Association constitution and bylaws. When needed, Life Member clubs should assist in the program requirements of their sponsoring council, chapter or affiliate office. The opposite is also true, as the sponsoring council, chapter or affiliate office should be available to assist in program efforts when requested by the Life Member club.

Each club's program should be developed in concert with the service needs expressed by the club's sponsoring company, the communities the club serves and the interests of the club membership. Sponsoring company management and community leaders (e.g., city council members, business leaders and representatives of other volunteer organizations) should be surveyed annually for their input as to what the needs of the community are. Annual surveys should also be conducted to get input from club members on the community service projects and fellowship activities in which they would like to become involved. This input from club members, community leaders and sponsoring companies forms the basis of the club's program of activities for the ensuing year.

A written outline of each club's planned program of activities should be prepared early in the Pioneer year. This plan should include a brief description of each of the club's committees and projects, as well as the planned budget for the year.

Care should be given to have a good balance of fellowship and community service programs. Fellowship was the basis for the founding of our organization and is an important reason why people continue their involvement, particularly the Life Members.

Community service, though, is the backbone of our organization, as our sponsoring companies look more and more to the TelecomPioneers as an extension of their community relations effort.

Active participation of all members in both fellowship and community service projects should be the objective of every club. Effective calling committees should be developed to contact every member every month to inform them of upcoming meetings, socials and community service projects. Entertaining meetings and socials, based upon the interests of the club members, should be held monthly. Club newsletters and/or email newsletters should be sent monthly (or as often as funding permits) to all members.

Well-rounded community service projects, reflective of both the communities' needs and members' interests, will result in more participation by each club's membership. A membership committee should be formed to keep membership information up to date (based upon the sponsoring unit's requirements) and to develop ongoing programs to recruit new members to the organization.

The number and responsibilities of committees will vary from club to club. Each committee should have a chairperson, or co-chairpersons, and enough members to meet their responsibilities. If committee members incur out-of-pocket expenses, they should be reimbursed by the club or chapter treasurer, as long as the expenses have been approved in the club's budget. As clubs become even more active in their community service activities, additional fund-raising efforts should be planned to help defray the costs associated with community service projects.