

Leadership Roles and Responsibilities

Chapter officers—the president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and past president—and the directors are elected by the general membership of the chapter from individuals proposed by the nomination committee. Officers are expected to be experienced in leadership roles, familiar with parliamentary procedures, knowledgeable about history and migration trails in the Northwest, and cognizant of chapter members' abilities for leading outings, speaking, or taking on responsibilities.

Committee chairs, individuals with an interest in a particular activity, such as trail marking and mapping, trail monitoring, or Overland Trail diaries, are appointed by the chapter president and approved by the board.

Specific roles and responsibilities follow.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The chapter officers constitute the executive committee. They are authorized to conduct the business of the chapter between board meetings, as approved in chapter and national OCTA guidelines.

Responsibility for arranging and coordinating chapter tours, activities and outings resides with the executive committee, and is usually assigned to the vice president.

BOARD

The voting membership of the board is made up of the executive committee and the chapter directors.

Any NW OCTA member or corporate representative may attend any chapter board meeting in a non-voting capacity. Appointed committee leaders as well as all the elected officers are especially encouraged to attend board meetings as subject matter experts.

The board provides chapter governance by conducting the general business in a prudent and timely manner. To accomplish its purpose, the board determines policies that will guide the chapter in accordance with National OCTA policies and guidelines, establishes the budget and makes decisions about funding; approves appointees proposed by the president; authorizes all chapter programs and projects; and ensures that information of interest or importance, such as preservation or legislative concerns and other matters related to organizational goals, are communicated to chapter members.

The board addresses legal and personnel issues, as necessary.

A newly installed board ensures that newly elected or appointed personnel are informed of their responsibility to read (online or in paper form) its Chapter Handbook; and that other pertinent materials are transferred from the former to the new officers, board members, and committee chairs by the March general meeting.

PRESIDENT

The president, as the chief executive officer of the chapter, presides at all chapter, board and executive committee meetings. The president is an ex officio member without vote of all committees except the Nominations and Leadership committee.

If an officer or director vacancy occurs between elections, the president must present a candidate for replacement to the executive committee for approval within 60 days.

In general, the president is responsible to carry out the expressed wishes of the board. The president proposes candidates for appointment as trail preservation officer, web master, and newsletter editor and presents them to the board for approval. To establish committee leadership or special committees not provided for in the bylaws, the president proposes appointments from the general membership of the chapter and presents them to the board for approval. The president arranges for an audit of the treasurer's books at any time it is deemed appropriate, and at the end of each term of office, and presents the audit report to the board. The president sends letters of thanks to individuals for making their property available for trail marking, or for other occasions where recognition is appropriate.

The president may prepare the quarterly article for inclusion in the national OCTA publication, "News from the Plains."

The president should prepare an article about chapter activities for inclusion in the Mid Year board packet, and the Convention board meeting packet.

The President should arrange for a yearly audit of the chapter treasurer's books, to comply with current national OCTA regulations for yearly financial audits.

VICE PRESIDENT

The vice president is a member of the executive committee.

The vice president assumes the duties of the president during the president's absence.

The vice president assists the president as required. The president may request assistance in preparing for the March general chapter meeting and the Fall board meeting by finding locations, or setting up programs.

Responsibility for coordinating the chapter tours, activities and outings is usually assigned to the vice president.

SECRETARY

The secretary is a member of the executive committee.

The secretary records and stores the minutes of the chapter, board, and executive meetings; obtains copies of all reports from committee chairs and keeps them for organizational records; and makes copies of minutes available for the following chapter and executive meetings, pending approval.

The secretary assists the president as required.

TREASURER

The treasurer is a member of the executive committee. The treasurer assists the president as required.

The treasurer serves as the custodian of all chapter funds. Responsibilities include accepting said funds, depositing them in an interest-bearing account when feasible, and disbursing them in accordance with the approved chapter budget. If an emergency budgetary override is required, the treasurer is authorized to dispense funds as approved by the Executive committee or the president.

The treasurer follows general bookkeeping principles to account for the flow of chapter funds. The treasurer separately records and tracks all special funds, such as the cost share program payments, and all convention and other sales.

The treasurer may be responsible for purchasing general office supplies such as stamps, envelopes, stationary, or membership cards.

The treasurer reports the status of the organization's funds at each executive, board or general meeting, and provides a copy of the report to the secretary for chapter records.

The treasurer provides a report to the national treasurer at the end of each budget year, indicating the chapter bank balance at the beginning of the year, total receipts, total expenditures, and balance at the end of the year. This is new information, but it has been done for four years, now.

The Treasurer should be prepared for a yearly audit of the books, to comply with current national OCTA regulations for yearly financial audits.

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

The immediate past president is a member of the executive committee.

The president, upon leaving office, continues to serve as a chapter officer with the title "Immediate Past President" until the successor president leaves office. If the immediate past president chooses not to serve or is unable to serve, another past chapter president is selected by the board to fill the position.

The immediate past president chairs the Nominations and Leadership committee, acts in an advisory capacity to the president, and performs other functions as requested by the president.

DIRECTORS

The three directors attend board meetings to advise officers in the performance of their duties, and to make suggestions when appropriate.

Directors follow the bylaws of the national organization and the chapter, and ensure that the chapter is run in accordance the national organization's objectives ⁽¹⁾. They are expected to have knowledge of the western emigrant trails. Although not a requirement, directors usually have experience in other profit or nonprofit organizations.

The three directors should be familiar with, and understand, the overall duties of the officers and chairs of the Northwest Chapter. It is their responsibility to attend board meetings to advise officers in the performance of their duties, and to make suggestions when appropriate.

A director may fill in for any officer unable to attend a meeting, if requested by the president or presiding officer. Directors may perform any other duty assigned by the president.

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

The national association accepts all membership requests, and sends the member names and payments to the chapter. The treasurer usually takes responsibility for chapter membership.

The membership chair receives membership names and enters them in a list of current members, with phone number, address, and e-mail address if available. Lists are kept up-to-date on computer and in a written book. All new members receive a current and a welcoming cover letter.

The membership chair distributes the membership roster to the chapter board at the beginning of each calendar year.

The membership chair ensures that copies of the newsletter are distributed to all active members and those with gift mailings. The chair works with the chapter handbook/communications chair to update the lists of members who will receive the newsletter in paper form and those who will receive the newsletter via e-mail. When the newsletter is completed, the editor delivers the PDF of the newsletter to the communications chair, who distributes it to those who want it in electronic form, and delivers the PDF to the membership chair. The membership chair arranges for paper copies. When copies are printed, the membership chair prepares and mails them.

As needed, the membership chair ensures that copies of notices for events are prepared in a manner similar to the newsletter.

The membership chair reports on membership status at executive, board, and general meetings, and may provide a written report to the secretary, if requested.

CHAPTER PRESERVATION OFFICER

The chapter preservation officer should have knowledge of regional trails and experience working with governmental groups and individuals. Preservation activity is based on the preservation officer's knowledge of trail segments, as well as the officer's ability to recognize private or public threats to the region's trails and organize methods to deal with them.

The chapter preservation officer assists, supports, and coordinates with the National Trails Preservation Officer in all ways possible. See <http://www.octa-trails.org/preserve/training.php>.

The preservation officer ensures oversight of the areas of concern along the regional trails, to provide for the highest likelihood of trail preservation and protection. The preservation officer finds individuals to be local trail monitors of the defined regional trail segments where none currently serves, coordinates the activities of the local trail monitors in dealing with local and regional governmental agencies, and works with them to watch over the trail segments.

The preservation officer reports on chapter preservation activities at the yearly March General OCTA meetings, and provides a written report to the secretary.

LOCAL TRAIL MONITORS

Billy Symms, chapter preservation, is currently working to re-establish the trail monitor system in NWOCTA 5-2011.

<http://www.octa-trails.org/preserve/training.php>

The local trail monitor should have knowledge of the local trails and experience working with governmental groups and individuals. Preservation activity is based on the local trail monitor's knowledge of local trail segments and the ability to recognize private or public threats to them.

The local trail monitor assists the chapter preservation officer and the national preservation officer in all ways possible, and supports their activities within the region.

The monitor performs the following duties related to the local trail segment:

- Coordinates in a timely manner with the chapter preservation officer, reporting areas of concern, upcoming meetings, and other pertinent information.
- Maintains a list of the landowners for their segment.
- Maintains contact with local agencies and media that may have knowledge of activities that affect the trail.
- Attends meetings that affect their trail segment.
- Works with the local governments and landowners to monitor and preserve the trail.
- Visits the assigned trail segment assigned at least once per year and watches for areas of concern.

Each monitor submits a written previous calendar year report on local preservation activities to the Chapter Preservation Officer no later than January 31st.

TRAIL MAPPING AND MARKING LEADERS

Henry Pittock is the chapter mapping and marking chair. He also maintains the chapter equipment inventory.

<http://www.octa-trails.org/preserve/training.php>

The trail mapping or marking leader obtains Executive Committee/Board authorization for all trail mapping and trail marking plans for the coming year(s).

For any proposed mid-year trail marking activities not identified in the chapter's initial budget or calendar, the leader obtains executive/executive committee approval to proceed.

At the executive committee's direction, the leader coordinates with other chapters on shared trail mapping or trail marking responsibilities.

The leader performs the following duties related to the mapping or marking activity:

- Contacts public or private landowners for permission to map or mark. As representatives of OCTA, the marking leader must obtain landowner approval to mark, whether the owner is public or private. (1996) The authority for OCTA to mark trails on public and private lands comes through the Congressional legislation requiring the National Park Service to seek citizen involvement.
- Arranges for GPS system, Carsonite markers, and installation equipment.
- Recruits chapter members for participation in trail marking through e-mail reminders, the chapter newsletter, and meeting announcements.
- Provides an approved certificate of thanks to landowners who allow marking. (See “Certificates” section.) (2000)
- Provides the names of any private landowners who allow mapping or marking to the membership chair who arranges for them to receive a one-year distribution of the newsletter. (2000)
- Provide the names of any landowners who allow marking to the President, who sends them a letter of thanks. (2000)

The trail mapping or marking leader may report on activities at the yearly March general meetings, if requested, and may provide a written report to the secretary, if necessary.

HANDBOOK/COMMUNICATIONS CHAIR

Chapter Email list Policy

NW OCTA shall not make the member e-mail list available to anyone who is not a chapter member. No person with any access to the list, authorized or otherwise, shall use the information for their own or anyone else's profit or gain. The list shall not be sold or given away to anyone for the purposes of profit, gain or any illegal or illicit activity. A note warning that NW OCTA member e-mail addresses are not available for public use shall be posted on the NW OCTA web site in a prominent location. The exact wording of the warning is to be determined by the NW OCTA web master, with guidance as necessary from the executive committee. (March 26, 2002)

1. The Handbook and Communications (H&C) Chair keeps, maintains, and archives records of pertinent information, such as bylaws, the chapter handbook for officers and committee chairs, and rosters, unless otherwise directed by the members of the executive committee.
2. The H&C Chair prepares and maintains electronic e-mail membership lists, and distributes the chapter newsletter and other items of general membership interest via e-mail.
3. The H&C Chair may assist with preparing the ballots for chapter elections.
4. The H&C Chair may convert MS Word files using Adobe© Acrobat© to create PDFs to ensure that information distributed by e-mail is readable by everyone who receives it. The Handbook and Communications Chair may prepare PDFs of the newsletter for distribution via e-mail or for delivery to copy centers for printing.
5. The H&C Chair is the liaison between the chapter members and the individual hired as the chapter webmaster.

The H&C Chair obtains and arranges for the posting of

- Activity summaries, pictures, maps and other graphical materials from membership.
- The latest version of the chapter newsletter on the site. In addition, the H&C may have the web master post a condensed summary of the “actions taken by the board,” but does not post meeting minutes until they are approved.
- The chapter handbook.

Also, the H&C chair ensures that links to other locations are kept current, that old material is removed from the site, and that NW OCTA member e-mail addresses are not available for public use from the website.

The webmaster costs are covered as a budget line item.

The H&C chair may report on web site activities at the yearly March general meetings, if requested, and may provide a written report to the secretary, if necessary.

CHAPTER HISTORIAN

Historian responsibilities may require redefinition and updating by the board.

Former responsibilities: The historian maintains scrapbooks of Chapter activities by contacting individuals who lead outings or other activities to obtain information about the activities from them. The historian presents the scrapbooks for inspection at the general meeting each year.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

The editor solicits articles from the membership. The newsletter may include articles on upcoming events, reports on past events, “letters to the editor,” and any trail-related items wanted or for sale, such as books. Only approved minutes may be published in the newsletter.

The newsletter editor prepares the newsletter for mailing/e-mailing quarterly, in January, April, July and October, ensuring that it is completed in time to be mailed to the membership as close as is possible to the 15th of the designated month. The editor may prepare an additional “convention” newsletter to be sent out in August/ September. The editor works with the chapter secretary and membership chairman to ensure that the newsletter is provided to the membership on schedule.

Using approved software, the editor formats an eight-page newsletter to be printed on two (2) 11 X 17 pages for distribution. A single 8 ½ X 11 page may be added without increasing mailing costs. All-color printed copies of the newsletter are considered to be too expensive for the chapter to authorize, and are not provided for in the budget. However, if all color pictures are arranged to fall on one 11 X 17 printed page to minimize printing costs, that fits within budgetary restrictions.

The editor prepares Adobe© Acrobat© PDFs of electronic files to obtain a special file that can be sent to both PC and Mac users. This file is sent to the secretary who provides immediate distribution to members requesting e-mail versions, and also delivers a copy on disk to the membership chair who arranges printing of copies for members requesting paper distribution.

Reimbursement will be treated as a budget line item. The editor bills the chapter for any costs incurred in preparing the newsletter.

The editor may report on activities at the yearly March general meetings, if requested, and may provide a written report to the secretary, if necessary.