

CIVIC LEAGUE

DEVELOPMENT

GUIDE



Connecting Citizens to Resources

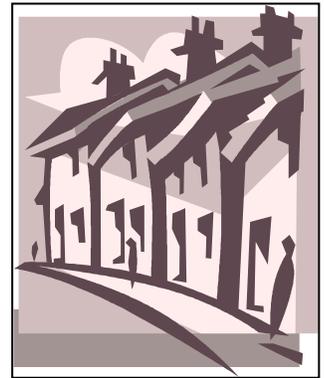
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# FOREWARD

Dear Citizen:

Thank you for your interest in starting a civic league or neighborhood association. Chesapeake is only as strong as its neighborhoods. Throughout Chesapeake, civic leagues help to develop, revitalize, and sustain healthy neighborhoods. If you live in an area without a civic league and would like to start one, we are here to help.



This guide contains useful information on how to: organize a civic league, recruit and retain members, facilitate successful meetings, address concerns to city council, register your organization, and much more.

We are pleased to make this guide available to you with our hope that you will find it useful and functional. When community members work together no issue is too large to tackle.

For additional information, please contact Department of Human Services, Division of Community Programs at (757) 382-2226 or visit us on the City's website [www.cityofchesapeake.net](http://www.cityofchesapeake.net)

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

**Margaret Mead**  
American Anthropologist

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# SECTION ONE: HOW TO DO IT



## **CHAPTER ONE: PURPOSE OF A CIVIC LEAGUE**

Whether a homeowner, a tenant, or a business person in a given community, everyone has something to gain by working together to improve the community. A civic league will provide many benefits:

- Be the unified voice of the community
- Utilize the diversity and differences of the community by involving as many residents as possible
- Educate citizens on the community's unique needs and strengths
- Raise awareness of matters affecting the community and steps to influence the outcome
- Facilitate community volunteer programs
- Educate residents on how to identify community needs and access City services
- Communicate recommendations, suggestions, and/or modifications to City Council to improve the quality of life in the community
- Represent the community and its wishes at meetings and public hearings
- Resolve problems at the community level and when unsuccessful, access City Hall
- Provide a framework in which to work together in prevention of crime and improve the quality of life
- Help neighbors create bonds and work together to enhance what is valued in the neighborhood



## CHAPTER TWO: ORGANIZING YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

A civic league will help accomplish goals, build community unity, and enhance the quality of life. However, civic leagues do not start themselves. Here are some steps to assist in the process:

1. Know what the advantages are to pulling the neighborhood together
2. Know the primary concerns in the neighborhood
3. Define the boundaries of the neighborhood and prepare a map
4. Show enthusiasm when talking to your neighbors and start building strong relationships
5. Organize an initial meeting with likeminded residents who wish to improve the quality of life in the community
6. Establish a consistent meeting place, time, and frequency
7. Name your civic league
8. Create a mission statement, vision statement, and goals

Once meeting dates and times are established, it is important to move forward and engage everyone. At the first meeting:

Determine what officers are needed and hold elections

1. Write description of duties of officers and committee chairpersons
2. Write bylaws that will govern the civic league
3. Determine amount of dues and establish a checking account
4. Establish committees that are needed
5. Complete the Registration of Civic League form
6. Contact Chesapeake Council of Civic Organizations for membership
- 7. Start planning and make a difference!**

**Welcome to the Neighborhood!**



## CHAPTER THREE: RECRUITING AND RETAINING MEMBERS

*"No one has a right to consume happiness without producing it." - Helen Keller*

You have carefully thought through the work that needs to be done. You have organized that work and laid a solid foundation for community engagement. Now you are ready to recruit people for the opportunities that you have created. You recognize that there is power in numbers and a diverse membership will bring fresh ideas to the table.

While there are many ways to promote the benefits of civic league membership, always remember that the number one reason that people participate is because they were asked!

### Why Recruit

- To give your civic league the power to do more work
- To reduce the burden on active members
- To give your group a larger, more diverse membership
- To increase awareness and understanding of the civic league
- To get as much done as possible
- To act together to achieve a shared purpose

### Your Recruitment Message

- The benefits of membership
- The benefits of diverse voices and ideas
- The needs of the community
- The benefits to the community



### Promoting the Opportunity

- Brochures
- Posters
- Speaking to groups
- Notices in appropriate media outlets (Channel 48, The Clipper, etc.)
- Word of Mouth
- Booths at local art fairs, carnivals, etc.
- Face-to-face contact
- Phone calls

### Helpful Hints

- Use a consistent logo or color of paper
- Make certain the main message is clear
- Place publicity materials in a secure location
- Be certain that you do not end up contributing to clutter and debris

**Section Two:**

**How to be Effective**

## **Chapter Four: How to Facilitate Effective Meetings**

Meetings that are well organized can be productive and even fun for the members of the civic league. Start out on the right foot by being well prepared for the first meeting. This will set the stage for future meetings and give people confidence that the group can accomplish good things. Below is a list of objectives to help create successful meetings:

1. The agenda is well planned
2. Officers know their roles at the meeting.
3. Needed equipment is available and operational.
4. Have guests fill out a sign-in sheet with names, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses.
5. Give people nametags.
6. Limit meetings to no more than two hours by imposing time limits on speaking.
7. Stay focused on the agenda. If conversations start to stray, ask that new items be brought up during the open forum portion of the agenda
8. Handle disturbances and disagreements as calmly as possible.
9. Members leave the meeting with a clear idea of what was agreed upon and any action items.
10. The meeting process is evaluated for improvement.

Serving food and drinks always helps bring people together and sets them at ease. Don't let refreshments take away from the main objective of the gathering, however.

## **Chapter Five: Robert's Rules of Order**

### **What Is Parliamentary Procedure?**

It is a set of rules for conduct at meetings that allows everyone to be heard and to make decisions without confusion.

### **Why is Parliamentary Procedure important?**

Because it is a time tested method of conducting business at meetings and public gatherings. It can be adapted to fit the needs of any organization. Today, Robert's Rules of Order newly revised is the basic handbook of operation for most clubs, organizations and other groups. So it is important that everyone know these basic rules.

**Organizations using parliamentary procedure usually follow a fixed order of business.**  
(See Sample Agenda, page )

**Moving motions is the method used by members to express themselves. A motion is a proposal on which the entire membership takes action or a stand on an issue.**

### **Individual members can:**

1. Call to order
2. Make motions
3. Second motions
4. Debate motions
5. Vote on motions

### **There are four types of motions:**

- 1. Main Motions:** The purpose of a main motion is to introduce items to the membership for its consideration. They cannot be made when any other motion is on the floor and yield to privileged, subsidiary, and incidental motions.
- 2. Subsidiary Motions:** Their purpose is to change how a main motion is handled, and is voted on before a main motion.
- 3. Privileged Motions:** Their purpose is to bring up items that are urgent about special or important matters unrelated to pending business.
- 4. Incidental Motions:** Their purpose is to provide a means of questioning procedure concerning other motions and must be considered before the other motion.

### **How are Motions Presented?**

#### **1. Obtaining the floor**

- a. Wait until the last speaker has finished.
- b. Rise and address the Chairman by saying, "Mr. Chairman" or "Madam President."
- c. Wait until the Chairman recognizes you.

## **2. Make your motion**

- a. Speak in a clear and concise manner.
- b. Always state a motion affirmatively. Say, "I move that we..." rather than, "I move that we do not..."
- c. Avoid personalities and stay on your subject.

## **3. Wait for someone to second your motion**

- a. Another member will second your motion or the Chairman will call for a second.
- b. If there is no second to your motion it is lost.

## **4. The chairman states your motion**

- a. The Chairman will say, "It has been moved and seconded that we..." thus placing your motion before the membership for consideration and action.
- b. The membership then either debates your motion or may move directly to a vote.
- c. Once the chairman presents your motion to the membership it becomes "assembly property", and cannot be changed by you without the consent of the members.

## **5. Expanding on Your Motion**

- a. The time for you to speak in favor of your motion is here rather than at the time you present it.
- b. The mover is always allowed to speak first.
- c. All comments and debate must be directed to the chairman.
- d. Keep to the time limit for speaking that has been established.
- e. The mover may speak again only after other speakers are finished, unless called upon by the Chairman.

## **6. Putting the question to the membership**

- a. The Chairman asks, "Are you ready to vote on the question?"
- b. If there is no more discussion, a vote is taken.
- c. On a motion to move the previous question may be adapted.

### **Voting on a Motion:**

The method of vote on any motion depends on the situation and the bylaws of your organization. There are five methods used to vote by most organizations, they are:

- 1. By Voice** - The Chairman asks those in favor to say "aye" those opposed to say "no." Any member may move for an exact count.
- 2. By Roll Call**- Each member answers "yes" or "no" as his name is called. This method is used when a record of each person's vote is required.
- 3. By General Consent** - When a motion is not likely to be opposed, the Chairman says, "If there is no objection..." The membership shows agreement by their silence, however if one member says, "I object," the item must be put to a vote.
- 4. By Division** - This is a slight verification of a voice vote. It does not require a count unless the chairman so desires. Members raise their hands or stand.
- 5. By Ballot** - Members write their vote on a slip of paper; this method is used when secrecy is desired.

**Two other motions commonly used that relate to voting are:**

1. **Motion to Table** - This motion often is used in the attempt to "kill" a motion. The option is always present, however, to "take from the table", for reconsideration by the membership.
2. **Motion to Postpone Indefinitely** - This often is used as a means of parliamentary strategy and allows opponents of motion to test their strength without an actual vote being taken. Also, debate is once again open on the main motion.

**Parliamentary Procedure is the best way to get things done at your meetings. But, it will only work if you use it properly.**

1. Allow motions that are in order.
2. Have members obtain the floor properly.
3. Speak clearly and concisely.
4. Obey the rules of debate.
5. Most importantly, **be courteous.**

**Robert's Rules of Order**

Free PDF download. Provides parliamentary procedure of order for meetings.

[www.robertsrules.org](http://www.robertsrules.org)

## **“FOUNDING MEMBER” SYNDROME**

- Set term limits
- Find another role for them and enforce it
- Peer - to - peer counseling utilizing a board member or past member in same generation
- Stay mission focused and avoid personalities
- Set new goals.

## **NAY SAYERS AND “YES BUTS”**

- Anticipate and present first alternative
- Bring in an outside person to present alternatives
- Set time limits
- Prepare board prior to meeting if expecting disagreement
- Press for a decision
- Move to committee and present pros and cons there

## **PROBLEM SOLVING**

- Identify and define the problem
- List possible solutions
- Evaluate the alternatives
- Recommend a solution
- Develop an action plan
- Monitor your progress and make necessary changes



## **Chapter Seven: Project Planning/ Goal Setting**

Goals propel an organization forward and give its people purpose. To get the most from their project experience, members need to be actively involved in choosing their projects, setting their project goals, and making decisions about when and what they will do to accomplish those goals. Use your first project meeting as a time for getting acquainted, goal setting, and planning for the new project year. A useful way of making goals more powerful is to use the SMART mnemonic:

- **S** - Specific (or Significant).
- **M** - Measurable (or Meaningful).
- **A** - Attainable (or Action-Oriented).
- **R** - Relevant (or Rewarding).
- **T** - Time-bound (or Trackable).

### **1. Specific:**

In developing any project goal, it is very important to recognize the need for a specific goal over and against a more general one. A specific goal will usually answer the five "W" questions:

**What:** Define the community problem you want to solve that is reflective of the needs and wants of the neighborhood. Describe what you would like to achieve (project goal) in this program over the next year.

**Why:** Describe the people affected by the problem (who, how many) and what is currently being done to address the problem (if anything). Identify specific reasons, purpose or benefits of accomplishing the goal.

**Who:** Identify those who will be involved in the project.

**Where:** Identify a location.

**Which:** Describe the activities you will employ to achieve the project goals over the next year. List what will take place, who will administer it, when will each activity be completed, and how much the activity will cost.

## **2. Measurable:**

Measuring progress helps a team stay on track, reach its target dates, and experience the exhilaration of achievement that spurs it on to continued effort required to reach the ultimate goal. A specific, measurable goal will usually answer questions such as:

- When?
- What can I do 6 months from now?
- What can I do 6 weeks from now?
- What can I do today?
- How will I know when it is accomplished? Be specific.

## **3. Attainable:**

It's important to set goals that you can achieve. If a goal is too large, then it can seem that you are not making progress towards it. When you have several goals, write goals down and give each a priority. When you identify goals that are most important to you, you develop the attitudes, abilities, skills, and financial capacity to reach them. How can this goal be accomplished?

- Research and identify what resources and assets exist in your neighborhood.
- Identify other neighborhood organizations in close proximity and/or with similar goals.
- Learn what worked and did not work for them and choose one as a mentor.
- Determine which government agencies and departments will be most beneficial to you and your cause.
- How much money, if any, is at your disposal? How much can you access?
- List fundraising ideas

## **4. Relevant:**

Many times you will need support to accomplish a goal: resources, a champion voice, someone to knock down obstacles. Goals that are relevant to your organization and community will receive that needed support. Relevant goals (when met) drive the organization forward. Describe how the project meets the Civic League's mission and what will happen if you don't do the project. A relevant goal can answer yes to these questions:

- Does this seem worthwhile?
- How important is the project to the community?
- Is this the right time?
- Does this match our other efforts/needs?
- Are you the right person?

## **5. Time-bound**

It is important to set goals that are achievable in order to avoid negatively impacting the financial restraints and the schedule. Setting up goals that are not achievable can lead to frustrations during the life cycle of the project. Set precise goals, putting in dates, times and amounts so that you can measure achievement. Describe specific, measurable objectives it will take to achieve the goal over the next year.

*Goal setting is an important method of:*

- *Deciding what you want to achieve*
- *Separating what's important from what's irrelevant, or a distraction.*
- *Motivating the community.*
- *Building self-confidence, based on successful achievement of goals.*

*Keep the process going by regularly reviewing and updating goals. And remember to take time to enjoy the satisfaction of achieving goals when you do so.*

## **Chapter Eight: Fundraising Tips**

*Here are some simple steps to get you started toward a successful fundraising plan:*

### **1. Develop your fundraising goals.**

You should have goals for the amount of money you need to raise, plus what the money will be used for. Develop a fundraising plan for each goal.

### **2. Write down your fundraising plan.**

Develop a written plan that states how much you need to raise, from what sources, and how you will do it. The plan can be revised as you proceed. Not all of your ideas will work out, or you may find new sources along the way.

### **3. Estimate how much your fundraising program will cost.**

Be realistic when estimating costs, but plan to use cost-efficient methods so that costs don't eat up all your fundraising proceeds. Most experts recommend that fundraising and overall administrative costs not exceed 25% of your overall operating budget.

### **4. Develop a timeline for your fundraising plan.**

Fill in a year's calendar with specific activities, and identify who will be the lead for each of those projects and the timeline. The timeline may change during the year, but having one to start with will help ensure success.

### **5. Identify funding sources.**

Can current sources be leveraged to produce more income? Are there audiences you are not tapping? Have you considered government or foundation grants? Churches? Local businesses?

### **6. Evaluate your fundraising plan during the year.**

Plan to evaluate what you are doing every few months. Develop what criteria you will use, such as amount raised, number of new donors, how many contacts you've made with foundations, improvement in donor cultivation activities. What accounted for the biggest successes? What were the biggest challenges? What should you change, drop, or add?

### **Fundraising sources:**

[www.fundraise.com](http://www.fundraise.com)

Little Caesar's Pizza

[www.pizzakit.com](http://www.pizzakit.com)

Applebee's Restaurants

[www.applecreekusa.com](http://www.applecreekusa.com)

Click on Fundraising Programs on side tab

Food Lion

[www.foodlion.com](http://www.foodlion.com)

Click on Community Outreach top tab

Click on MVP Rewards on side tab

urger King and Krispy Kreme

[www.jancompanies.com](http://www.jancompanies.com)

Click on community tab

Click on fundraising

Both Burger King and Krispy Kreme applications

or

Krispy Kreme

[www.krispykreme.com/fundraising](http://www.krispykreme.com/fundraising)

Autobell Car Wash

[www.autobell.com](http://www.autobell.com)

Click on About Autobell on top tab

Scroll down to Fundraising

## **Chapter Nine: Leadership Roles**

### **EXECUTIVE BOARD**

Any resident, property owner, or business within the neighborhood civic league 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 civic league'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;

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 provides a copy to each board member.

#### **TREASURER**

Has access to the funds of the Civic League. 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 secretary/treasurer.)

### **NEIGHBORHOOD COMMITTEES**

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

#### **Neighborhood committees generally operate under the following two criteria:**

1. All recommendations of the committee are approved by the civic league's board, or
2. The committee may make recommendations on behalf of the civic league and executive board within adopted policies of the civic league (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.*

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 monopolizes the floor or dominates discussions. He/she is also the person whom makes sure that people keep to the agenda both in content and timing.

## **HOW TO RUN AN EFFECTIVE MEETING**

**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.

**Prepare for the Meeting:** Create an organized agenda and other preparations.

**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, and 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. A good chairperson undertakes the following responsibilities:

1. Sorts through your chair's packet to determine which materials are of interest to your league or committee.
2. Understands, promotes, supports, and interprets the overall goals of the league as well as the committee.
3. Consults the executive board and past committee chairperson in choosing members for committees. Asks members to serve. Outlines committee responsibilities clearly.
4. Schedules and conducts meetings. Notifies all members, guests, and key people well in advance of the meeting.
5. Observes correct procedure for corresponding with residents. (i.e., Does the civic league require prior board approval? Letterhead?)
6. Sees that meeting proceedings are recorded.
7. Delegates and divides responsibilities among members. Sees that work gets done. Gives credit and recognition for accomplishment.
8. Welcomes the police officer attending your meeting and make sure he/she understands how much time he/she has on the agenda. Before the meeting, calls the officer if there is a particular incident or topic you want him/her to be prepared to speak about.
9. Maintains a meeting climate which is respectful to all guest speakers and meeting attendees.
10. Attends or sends a representative to any citywide network 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.

## NOTES TO SECRETARY:

### WHY KEEP MINUTES?

1. To record:
  - Decisions
  - Who participated in decisions
  - How many people agreed and disagreed
  - Some of the reasons leading to the decisions
  - 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.

### HOW TO TAKE MINUTES

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

1. Routine matters to record are:
  1. Where and when meeting was held
  2. Who attended (or attach attendance list)
  3. Who presided
  4. Who recorded
2. How to handle reports:
  1. *Summarize briefly* what is reported and by whom. (If a report is written it should also be attached to minutes.)
  2. *Summarize briefly* the discussion if it is important. (Do not include editorial comments or unrelated remarks.)
  3. *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:
  1. *Use subject headings* to separate topics of discussion.
  2. *Summarize the matter* that is presented, including who was the spokesperson.
  3. *Record* important parts of the discussion (as above). (Be brief and do not

include editorial comments or unrelated remarks.

4. How to handle motions:

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. It is optional to include the names of the persons who made and who seconded the motion.
4. 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. Make an available copy of the minutes at each civic league meeting.
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

**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.
3. Write minutes as promptly as possible
4. If your civic league is incorporated, the secretary has responsibilities defined by state law.

## **NOTES TO TREASURERS:**

1. Some civic leagues 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. Banks will report interest earnings to the IRS.
2. 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.
3. If your civic league is not currently recognized by the IRS as a nonprofit organization or is interested in becoming a nonprofit inquire with the City of Chesapeake, Division of Community Programs, Department of Human Services for more information.

## **CHAPTER NINE: CIVIC LEAGUE MEMBERS ROLES**

Leadership is a shared responsibility. Members have certain obligations and responsibilities in addition to the rights and privileges they share as part of a group. Following is a list of suggestions for group members which may serve as guidelines for more effective group membership and participation. The guidelines suggest a pattern of operation for group members before, during and after a meeting.

### **BEFORE THE MEETING – BE PREPARED**

As a committee or group member, it is your responsibility to prepare ahead for the meeting. If you have a definite committee job or responsibility, be sure to take care of your assignment. If you have no specific assignment, be sure you are familiar with the goals and purposes of the organization or committee. Be sure to read the agenda and enclosures so you can formulate questions and be prepared for discussion. By being informed, you are in a better position to stimulate action that may help solve problems or contribute to the success of the organization.

### **DURING THE MEETING**

#### **1. Be On Time**

The sooner the meeting starts, the sooner the business at hand can be finished.

#### **2. Speak Freely**

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

#### **3. Be a Good Listener**

People see things very differently, and the more points of view you are aware of, the better choice you can make.

#### **4. 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 generally hinders the group. Each civic league should establish procedures on matters of process.

#### **5. Give Other an Opportunity**

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

#### **6. 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.

## **7. 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**

### **1. Evaluate the results**

As a group as well as individually, members should evaluate the accomplishments of the discussion in view of what the group sets 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 the 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.

### **2. 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.

**SECTION THREE:  
HOW TO MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD**

## **Chapter Eleven: How to Address City Council**

### **Making Your Voice Heard**

The Mayor and the members of the Chesapeake City Council welcome and encourage all Chesapeake residents to bring issues and concerns before the Council whenever there is a need. The Council members are your elected representatives. It is both your right and your responsibility to make your voice heard.

### **City Council Meetings**

City Council meets at 6:30 p.m. on the second, third and fourth Tuesdays of each month in the Council Chambers on the first floor of City Hall, 306 Cedar Road.

*Citizens wishing to present matters to the Council must register with the City Clerk no later than 6:30 p.m. on the evening of the meeting. You may register earlier by contacting the City Clerk's office at 757-382-6151.*

Specific rules and time limits apply to each speaker, based upon the type of agenda item upon which they are speaking. The basic time allotted is five minutes per speaker, though this may be shortened if there are a large number of speakers. No speaker will have less than three minutes to address Council.

### **Addressing the City Council**

When speaking before Council, there are several things to keep in mind:

- Speakers must speak from the podium in the well of the Council Chamber. Disabled speakers may use the seated microphones just inside the doors to the Chamber, if they choose.
- When you begin your remarks, state your name and address for the record.
- Speak in a normal voice and relax. Council is interested in hearing what you have to say, and will carefully consider your input.
- Address the Council as "Mr./Madam Mayor and Members of Council."
- You must confine your remarks to the topic you signed up to speak about. If you stray into other areas, you may be ruled out of order.
- If you have materials you wish Council to view or consider, please provide these to the City Clerk for distribution to Council.
- Speakers must refrain from making personal verbal attacks on members of Council or other citizens, as well as using vulgar language during remarks.
- Council may, at its option, recall any speaker during Council deliberations on an issue, if there are questions or a need for clarification.

E-mail the Mayor and/or City Council: [council@cityofchesapeake.net](mailto:council@cityofchesapeake.net).  
You may also call the Office of the City Clerk at 757-382-6151.

## **Chapter Twelve: Using the Media**

### **Email Checklist**

Most misunderstandings can be avoided by one side or the other not rushing through their e-mail activities and ensuring your e-mail will be received, read and perceived with the desired meaning by the intended recipient.

Here's a checklist of the items that need to be checked before clicking Send:

1. Make sure your e-mail includes a courteous greeting and closing.
2. Address your contact with the appropriate level of formality and make sure you spelled their name correctly.
3. Spell check. E-mails with typos are simply not taken as seriously.
4. Read your e-mail out loud to ensure the tone is that which you desire. Try to avoid relying on formatting for emphasis; rather choose the words that reflect your meaning instead. **DO NOT TYPE IN ALL CAPITALS.** A few additions of the words "please" and "thank you" go a long way!
5. Be sure you are including all relevant details or information. Generalities can many times cause confusion and unnecessary back and forth.
6. Are you using proper sentence structure? First word capitalized with appropriate punctuation? Multiple instances of !!! or ??? are perceived as rude or condescending.
7. If your e-mail is emotionally charged, walk away from the computer and wait to reply. Review the Sender's e-mail again so that you are sure you are not reading anything into the e-mail that simply isn't there.
8. If sending attachments, did you ask first when would be the best time to send? Did you check file size to make sure you don't fill the other side's inbox causing all subsequent e-mail to bounce?
9. Refrain from using the Reply to All feature or give your opinion to those who may not be interested. In most cases replying to the sender alone is your best course of action.
10. Make one last check that the address or addresses in the To: field are those you wish to send your reply to.
11. When sending group emails, use the bcc: field to hide email addresses. Most senders do not want their email addresses available to other recipients.

*If the above issues are considered in your e-mail activities, misunderstandings will be avoided and you will be known as a pleasure to communicate with. It's a win-win!*

# **APPENDIX**

## **Chesapeake Council of Civic Organizations**

The Chesapeake Council of Civic Organizations (CCCO) is comprised of representatives from many Civic Leagues who work together to present issues and concerns as one voice to City Council.

Over the years, Chesapeake citizens have joined together with their neighbors to improve their neighborhoods, debate with City Hall and build a sense of community spirit. Some have blossomed into civic leagues and flourished, losing a few battles but victorious in many. Others have sprouted for a special struggle and then withered and died. All the struggles seemed to have been uphill.

During the winter and spring of 1987 Gerry Greene, President of Wynngate/Norcova Civic League watched one civic league after another lose to special interest groups on major issues such as budgets, roads and development. A coalition was formed by ten civic leagues in June, 1987 to develop an organization that would address citywide issues that local civic leagues did not have the time or resources to effectively address. For five months the group researched and discussed how other civic and community organizations operated. Council of Civic Organizations meetings in Hampton, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk and Virginia Beach were attended. The group reached consensus, adopted bylaws, a constitution, and formally incorporated November 12, 1987 as the Chesapeake Council of Civic Organizations.

Their purpose was:

- To promote the welfare of all people of the City of Chesapeake, uniting them in bonds of friendship and citizenship.
- To create and foster a spirit of consideration and responsibility among the citizens of the communities.
- To study and assist them in solving their concerns.
- To present their rights and interest to the proper authorities.
- To conduct informational and education programs and forums.
- To help organize civic organizations in the City of Chesapeake.
- To address public issues based on facts.
- To participate in local government.
- To develop good relationships with all involved.

The Board of Directors proudly introduced their selves to the City Council on Tuesday, November 17, 1987 as a united voice, whose purpose is working towards continued quality of life and fairness in the business and neighborhood communities. The rest is history.

Won't you join us and other civic leagues as *one voice* in our efforts to improve the quality of life in our Great City of Chesapeake?

**Membership Application**  
**Chesapeake Council of Civic Organizations Inc.**  
**1144 Virginia Avenue**  
**Chesapeake, VA 23324**  
**Phone 545-4961**

---

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Voting Representative and Alternate:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date and Place of Applicants Meetings:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

DUES ARE \$25.00/YR  
MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO CCCO

---

- Would like additional information.
  - Would like speaker to attend a meeting.
  - Would like to be on mailing list only. (\$10.00/yr)
  - Would like to make a donation only. (\$\_\_\_\_\_)
- 

**Thank you for your interest in joining the C.C.C.O.**

**Rev 02/12      Approved \_\_\_\_\_      Date \_\_\_\_\_**



12. Is the membership to your organization open to anyone who lives or owns property in the neighborhood regardless of race, creed, color, sex, age, national origin or physical and mental disability?  Yes  No

13. Are you beginning a new neighborhood association?  Yes  No

14. If not, how many years have you been in existence? \_\_\_\_\_

15. Brief statement of objectives and goals reflecting the interest of your neighborhood:

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16. What are the major activities of your organization?

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17. Do you have a block watch or community watch program in your neighborhood?  Yes  No

18. Is a copy of your Constitution/bylaws/principals of operation attached?  Yes  No

Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please print)

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return application to:**

Department of Human Services  
Division of Community Programs  
100 Outlaw Street  
Chesapeake, VA 23320

**Contacts:**

Telephone: (757) 382-2226  
Fax: (757) 382-2354

**NOTE:** As a public record, the information contained on this form is subject to the Public Records Law regarding access.

# **National Civic League Community Services**

## **Proven Solutions for Today's Community Challenges**

*The Community Services Program is dedicated to helping communities and the organizations build collaborative, inclusive, and participatory solutions to the most pressing challenges they face. We use a range of proven approaches to help communities and their diverse stakeholders build new partnerships and strengthen local capacity to create positive, enduring change.*

Community Services Can Specifically Help Your Community or Organization to...

- Address the most complex issues in a positive and constructive manner
- Prepare for public meetings on the toughest of issues to ensure quality engagement with a focus on problem solving
- Build a shared vision and strategic plan to become the community they want to be
- Incorporate the structures and practices necessary for moving plans to action and achieving desired results
- Assess and use that information to produce positive change
- Build capacity and teamwork as a part the process of addressing pressing issues (learning by doing)
- Overcome turf battles to build likely and unlikely partnerships and alliances to create meaningful community impacts
- Awaken the human potential within the community and help build a mindset that any community issue can be addressed when addressed properly

### **Who Do I Call?**

Community Services staff are located in our national headquarters in Denver, Colorado. For more information, contact **Derek Okubo, Senior Vice President at (303) 571-4343 or [dereko@ncl.org](mailto:dereko@ncl.org)**

**National Civic League**  
1889 York Street  
Denver, Colorado 80206  
(303) 571-4343  
(303) 571-4404  
Web: [www.ncl.org](http://www.ncl.org)  
Email: [ncl@ncl.org](mailto:ncl@ncl.org)

Source: National Civic League

# Mission, Values, and Vision Worksheet

## **Mission (What we do/why we exist)**

- Defines what the organization or group does and doesn't do
- Differentiates the organization from others
- Serves as a 30 second introduction to outsiders
- Consists of about 2 to 4 sentences
- Is more than a slogan or motto
- Is actionable and believable

Similar to the vision statement, the mission is an action statement telling how everyday actions will impact the vision statement. For example: "To work together to improve upon and maintain the quality of life enjoyed by residents of this community."

## **Values (What we believe in)**

- Identify ten values important to this organization
- Define what they mean
- Discuss which ones are important
- Identify the top three.

## **Vision (What we want to be)**

- What will be different in the world in three to five years because we exist?
- What role will our organization play in creating that difference?

What do you want your neighborhood to look like in five years? The vision statement should state your primary objective in forming the organization, and should be brief and broad. For example: "To provide a safe, clean neighborhood to be proud to live in and raise our families."

Source: VOLUNTEER Hampton Roads

# **Constitution and By-Laws Example**

## **ARTICLE I – NAME**

The name of this organization shall be the Example Civic League.

## **ARTICLE II – OBJECT**

The object of the Example Civic League shall be to promote the principle of good citizenship among the residents, property owners and proprietors or representatives of business establishments in this section of the City of Chesapeake as defined by the Board of Directors; to unite for cooperation and interchange of idea in the best interest of this section towards beautification, recreation, the safety of its residents and the protection of their property investments; and to cooperate with the organizations for the best interest of this section in particular and the City in general.

## **ARTICLE III – OPERATING YEAR**

The operating year of this League shall be from July first through June thirtieth.

## **ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP**

Any resident, property owner, or proprietor or representative of a business establishment in this section of the City of Chesapeake or residents of adjoining neighborhoods in which an effective civic league does not exist shall be eligible for membership upon payment of the annual dues.

Every member who has paid his current dues shall be entitled to one vote on any issue before the league provided they were a member in good standing at the time of the previous meeting date.

A member may hold office only after he has been a paid member in good standing for at least six months of the current League year and has attended 50% of meetings held during the current year.

## **ARTICLE VIII – FINANCE**

The annual dues of the league shall be \$\$. \$\$ per member, payable to the Example Civic League. Honorary members shall not be required to pay annual dues. The Treasurer shall receive and disburse the funds of the League upon approval of the membership or authorization of the Board of Directors.

The Treasurer's Books shall be audited annually in the month following the close of the operating year by a committee of three members; the Chairman to be appointed

by the President and the other two to be elected from the floor. In the event the Treasurer vacates the position prior to the annual election, the Treasurer's books will be audited by a committee of three members appointed by the president prior to the new Treasurer taking office.

#### **ARTICLE IX – MEETINGS AND QUORUM**

The regular meeting of the Example Civic League shall be held on the second Tuesday of SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH, APRIL, MAY and JUNE. Special meetings may be called at the discretion of the President or by submission of a petition of ten or more members. Ten members in person including at least two officers shall constitute a quorum.

#### **ARTICLE X - ELECTIONS AND VOTING**

A Nominating Committee shall be appointed at the April meeting, the President to appoint two (one designated as Chairperson) and the membership to elect three. It shall be the duty of the Nominating Committee to recommend candidates at the May meeting, a slate consisting of one nominee for each elective office. Nomination may be made from the floor at this time. The elections and installation of officers shall take place at the June meeting.

#### **ARTICLE XI – PROCEDURE**

Roberts Rules of Order shall apply in all cases except where said rules are not consistent with the existing Constitution and By – Laws of the Example Civic League.

#### **DESCRIPTION OF COMMITTEES**

(Examples follow)

#### **STANDING COMMITTEES**

#### **BLOCK SECURITY**

This committee shall be responsible for the administration and development of the Block Security Program. Duties includes necessary communication with the Crime Prevention Division of the Chesapeake Police Department, recruitment and training of Area Coordinators and Block Captains, provision of printed material and engraving tools, maintenances of appropriate records and development of a telephone warning network.

## **AREA PRESERVATION AND IMPROVEMENT**

This committee is responsible for monitoring the condition of area infrastructure, (streets, gutters, curbs and sidewalks), facilities, businesses, and residences to determine if deteriorating symptoms appear and making recommendations to the membership to ensure neighborhood standards are maintained. This includes review of applicability of existing ordinances, reporting violations to the President for presentation to the appropriate authorities for action.

## **SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

### **NEWSLETTER**

This committee is responsible for the publishing and distribution of a Civic League newsletter, obtaining funds from advertisers and ensuring the newsletter, is a self supporting venture not requiring Civic League funds. The Editor shall exercise full editorial authority and be responsible for the content and layout of the newsletter. The Editor will include a disclaimer notice in each issue absolving the league and advertisers of legal responsibility for content. The newsletter shall include broad areas of general information not limited to the City of Chesapeake. A special mailing list of the newsletter distribution shall be maintained by the Corresponding Secretary. Committee chairpersons shall, when appropriate, prepare monthly articles for publication on a space available basis.

### **REFRESHMENTS**

This committee is responsible for obtaining donations of various types including refreshments and conducting the social aspects of each general meeting. Volunteers as required shall be recruited at each general membership meeting. This committee is exempt from the 3 member general rule.

### **SUNSHINE**

This committee is responsible for communicating the leagues concern for the welfare and health of our membership. Duties include sending get-well cards and gifts, condolence and sympathy cards and others as deemed appropriate upon notification of an existing situation by any member of the league. **Necessary** information for personal contact and visits by members will be made available when known. The Chairperson shall submit receipts for expenditures in connection with committee functions for reimbursement as required. This committee is exempt from the 3 member general rule.

## OATH OF OFFICE EXAMPLE

Do you (Name) \_\_\_\_\_ promise to execute the duties of the Office of (state office) \_\_\_\_\_ in accordance with the By-Laws of the Example Civic League and the established procedures thereof?

(Oath taker responds: I will)

Do you swear and affirm that you will support the decisions of the General Membership and the Board of Directors in matters associated with the operation of League affairs once those decisions have been legally made?

(Oath taker responds: I will)

Do you all promise to fully support the President of the Example Civic League in carrying out the implementation of all legally made decisions?

(Oath taker responds: I will)

(Oath giver states: Repeat after me)

I, (state name) do swear and affirm that I will do my best to serve the Example Civic League for the greater benefit of the Chesapeake Community and the City of Chesapeake, Virginia.



**Agenda**  
**The Example Civic League**  
**Wednesday, November 14, 2012**  
**Neighborhood Community Center**

- |                                       |                  |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>I. Welcome</b>                     | <b>7:00 p.m.</b> |
| <b>II. Review of Minutes</b>          | <b>7:05 p.m.</b> |
| <b>III. Guest Speaker:</b>            |                  |
| a. Sue Smith, VOLUNTEER Hampton Roads | <b>7:10 p.m.</b> |
| <b>IV. President's Report</b>         | <b>7:25 p.m.</b> |
| <b>V. Board Report</b>                | <b>7:30 p.m.</b> |
| <b>VI. Committee Report</b>           | <b>7:35 p.m.</b> |
| a. Hospitality                        |                  |
| b. Membership                         |                  |
| c. Neighborhood Watch                 |                  |
| <b>VII. Announcements</b>             | <b>7:50 p.m.</b> |
| a. Lark Lane Residents                |                  |
| b. Veteran's Day flags                |                  |
| <b>VIII. Old/New Business</b>         | <b>7:55 p.m.</b> |
| <b>IX. Adjourn</b>                    | <b>8:10 p.m.</b> |

**The Example Civic League  
Meeting Minutes  
November 14, 2012  
Neighborhood Community Center**

**Attendance: 24**

**Board Members Present: John Doe, Sue Smith, Charley Parker, Donna Jones, Paul Miller, Mike Brown**

**Board Members Absent: Joe Camp**

**Meeting Called to Order: 7:05p.m.**

**I. Welcome**

**II. Minutes**

February minutes approved

**III. Guest Speaker**

Sue Smith of VOLUNTEER Hampton Roads presented information about volunteer opportunities in the community. Volunteers are helping to solve many issues facing the community. VOLUNTEER Hampton Roads is the region's nonprofit resource center and is available to connect residents to hundreds of volunteer opportunities. For information, call Sue at 555-0000.

**IV. President's Report**

President Doe reported that membership in the Neighborhood Civic League has declined. President Doe proposed that the league host a neighborhood function to recruit members. The motion was seconded and approved. The Board will select a date and the Hospitality and Membership Committees will work together to coordinate refreshments, invitations and entertainment.

**V. Board Report**

The Executive Board met on November 2 and approved releasing funds in the amount of \$100 to landscape the entrance to the neighborhood.

**VI. Committee Reports**

- a. Hospitality Committee—no report.
- b. Membership Committee—as reflected in the President's Report, Membership is down. Members are asked to be proactive and invite neighbors to upcoming meetings.
- c. Neighborhood Watch— six new households have joined the Neighborhood Watch. An attempted vandalism by adolescents was reported to the police and prevented.

**VII. Announcements**

- a. Lark Lane residents will meet at 10:00 on Saturday, November 21 to clean debris and leaves along the street.
- b. Residents are encouraged to fly American flags on Veteran's Day.

**VIII. Old/New Business**

No business was reported.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

## Useful Resources and Readings for Civic Leaders

Krile, James F., Curphy, Gordy, & Lund, Duane R. (2006) **Community Leadership Handbook: Framing Ideas, Building Relationships, and Mobilizing Resources.** St. Paul, MN: Fieldstone Alliance Publishing Center

Johnson, S. M.D. (1998) **Who Moved My Cheese?** NY: G.P. Putnam's Sons.

Kotter, John & Rathgeber, Holger (2005) **Our Iceberg Is Melting.** NY: St. Martin's Press

Smith, Bud E. (2009) **Creating Web Pages for Dummies, 9<sup>th</sup> Edition.** Indianapolis, IN: Wiley Publishing, Inc.

Schmitz, Paul (2012) **Everyone Leads: Building Leadership from the Community Up.** San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass

National Civic League (2000) **The Community Visioning and Strategic Planning Handbook, Third Printing.** Denver, CO: National Civic League Press. Free PDF download: [www.ncl.org](http://www.ncl.org) Click on Publications tab. Scroll to Handbook.

Bacon, Jono (2012) **The Art of Community: Building the New Age of Participation, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition.** Boston, MA: O'Reilly.

Campbell, John H. (2003) **Solving Chronic Nuisances: A Nuisance Abatement Guide for Neighborhood Leaders.** Campbell DeLong Resources, Inc., in partnership with the Enterprise Foundation: Portland, OR. Free PDF download: [www.cdri.com](http://www.cdri.com) Click on Community Problem Solving tab. Recommended Reading tab on side.

Gladwell, M. (2000) **The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big**

**Difference.** NY: Little, Brown and Company.

Covey, Stephen R. (1992) **Principle-Centered Leadership.** NY: Simon & Schuster, Inc.

Mutz, John & Murray, Katherine (2000) **Fundraising for Dummies.** Foster City, CA: IDG Books Worldwide, Inc..

**Internal Revenue Publications**  
501 (c) (3) forms and information.

[www.irs.gov/publications](http://www.irs.gov/publications)

**National Civic League**

Provides technical assistance, training and tools.

[www.ncl.org](http://www.ncl.org)

**The ARISE Foundation**

Provides time tested, evidence based staff training and life skills curricula for those working with at-risk youth.

[www.at-riskyouth.org](http://www.at-riskyouth.org)

**League of Women Voters**

A nonpartisan political organization which encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government .

[www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)

**Project Vote Smart**

Non-partisan information on U.S. federal and state candidates, ballot measures, issues and legislation.

[www.votesmart.org](http://www.votesmart.org)

**Shareware Sites:** *Stick with reputable sites.*

*Read the user reviews and do some online research. Check the comments section on the download page and other online forums.*

[www.gimp.org](http://www.gimp.org)

A free program for photo retouching, image composition and image authoring.

[www.download.com](http://www.download.com)

Provides free software, online programs, and evaluations of new software.

[www.sites.google.com](http://www.sites.google.com)

A free and easy way to create and share webpages.

[www.javascriptkit.com](http://www.javascriptkit.com)

A comprehensive resource for JavaScript tutorials, scripts, and more.

[www.livejournal.com](http://www.livejournal.com)

A global social media platform where users share common passions and interests.

[www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com)

Create a free blogger account.

[www.tucows.com](http://www.tucows.com)

Download freeware, shareware, and demos.