



Chapter Handbook Committees April 2009

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Introduction

Active committees are essential to our chapter's success. Committee activities provide an excellent conduit for communicating with chapter members and implementing strategic direction. Committee meetings and sponsored activities are the medium in which strategic initiatives take shape, ideas become real and through which members receive value. Committee activities can help to shape and define our interaction with other professional and trade organizations, government entities and the public.

Functions of a Committee

The primary function of a committee is to contribute to the efficient operation of the Chapter. In most cases, committees are concerned with communicating information and assisting Chapter leaders in the decision making process. The findings of a committee have a direct impact on the decisions made by the Executive Committee. Committee work can directly influence the direction of the Chapter. In the cases of subcommittees, the committee chair shall be responsible for monitoring and reporting on the activities of the subcommittee.

Committee Chairs

Even with capable members, a committee without strong leadership is at a disadvantage. Responsibilities of committee chairs are defined in relation to each specific committee. The chair's role will normally change (typically change) as the work of the committee develops. However, there are general responsibilities that are common and should apply to most committee chairs, including:

- Developing the committee organization and structure
- Scheduling meetings

- Preparing and/or approving agendas
- Presiding at meetings
- Making committee and individual task/work assignments
- Assuring that meeting minutes/notes are taken, reviewed, and approved
- Overseeing the activities of the committee
- Preparing the committee's budget
- Preparing applicable financial reports at the conclusion of each event
- Identifying potential insurance needs for each event
- Responsible for Committee Webpage
- Assisting with the Chapter Magazine content

The success achieved as a committee chair will depend largely upon that person's ability to preside over meetings and guide the committee toward its defined goal. When the Chapter President is selecting committee chairs he/she should clearly discuss expectations for the committee, the time commitment necessary to achieve success and execute the specific duties required during the year. To assist with achieving success the committee chair should:

- Establish goals and schedules and monitor these throughout the year
- Always begin meetings on time
- Conduct meetings from an agenda
- Briefly and clearly state the reason for the meeting at the beginning
- Review the committee's objectives relative to the Chapter's objectives
- Assure that adequate notes/minutes are maintained and distributed
- Report the activities of the committee to the Chapter

Committee Members

The composition of each committee is specific to the needs of the committee. It is likely that the incoming Chapter President will work with the selected committee chair to appoint committee members. Some members of each committee will automatically be members as a result of their position on the Executive Committee.

When selecting members it is important to find individuals that are willing to serve and clearly understand what is expected of them. Filling committees with individuals who do not clearly understand their role or the expectations of their role and commitment they are making will only result in a lack of success of the committee. To provide for continuity and for the development of future leaders it is important that committees are made up of a balance of successful, experienced members, and members that are new to the Chapter. New members provide a fresh outside perspective, while experienced members provide guidance and history. It is always to the committee's benefit to appoint members who are knowledgeable and interested in the committee's area of activity. It is expected that the chair and the main leadership of a committee are members of the Chapter, the inclusion of non-members in some circumstances may be appropriate. The chair shall provide the committee with background and leadership to help the committee function successfully and shall retain effective control of the committee.

Chapter Committees

▪ Categories

Our chapter has many committees, divided into four categories:

1. **Technical Committees,**
2. **Standing Committees,**
3. **Contact Person in Specialty Area, and**
4. **Event Planning Committees**

that serve a variety of purposes. The reason behind the categories is to recognize that requirements and expectations for all committees may not be the same. For example, the “Committee Requirements” are only applicable to Technical and Standing Committees. The category “Contact Person in Specialty Area” was created for areas where our chapter doesn’t have an active committee. There may be another organization that serves a specialty area very well, so it doesn’t make sense for our chapter to have its own committee, but to serve our members in all areas of Public Works, we are providing an active APWA member in the specialty area as a resource. This person is the chapter “clearing house” for the specialty area and is expected to brief the membership on what is going on in the specialty area. This can be accomplished in various ways: by organizing technical sessions at conferences, giving a briefing at a membership meeting, or providing an article for our Magazine.

▪ **Committees**

1. **Technical Committees**

- Construction Management
- Construction Standards
- Transportation
- Management and Public Administration
- Maintenance
- Stormwater Management
- Technology Solutions
- Wastewater
- Sustainability

2. **Standing Committees**

- Scholarship
- Education
- Governmental Affairs
- Membership
- Washington State History
- Nominating

3. **Contact Person in Specialty Area**

- Solid Waste
- Security/Emergency Management
- Safety
- National Diversity Liaison
- International Coordination

4. **Event Planning Committees**

- Awards
- Conference Programs
- National Public Works Week and Area Meeting West
- APWA/AGC Golf Tournaments
- Annual Ski Day

Structure of Committees

Unless otherwise noted in the Chapter Bylaws or Committee organization, committee chairs and members are appointed for a term of at least two (2) years. Appointments are made by the incoming President generally in October for the following calendar year(s). The incoming committee chairs shall develop a work plan for the activities of their committee for consideration at the annual meeting of Committee chairs. The annual meeting will be called by the Vice President and will typically take place in February or in conjunction with the Chapter Spring Conference. Work Plans shall be based on achieving the goals of the Chapter and its strategic plan. Committee chairs shall submit a written report summarizing the activities of the committee every year. The report, or “Year-end Summary of Activities”, is due to the Vice President by January 10 of each year – for the previous calendar year.

Inactive Committees and Chairs

If a chair fails to comply/full-fill basic committee requirements during the two (2) year term, the Vice President may choose to remove the chair and appoint a new chair. A committee may also be suspended – should there be no need for the committee.

Board Liaison

Each committee will be assigned a board liaison. The board will review liaison assignments at the first board meeting of each year, and make adjustments as required. Duties of the liaison are as follows:

- Connection between the Board and the Committee
- Assist the Committee w/APWA matters
- Report on Committee activities at Board Meetings

The intent for the liaison is to be just that, a liaison, how the liaisons interact with the committees (as in how often, when, if they attend committee meetings etc.) is up to each liaison and the committee. The expectation is that issues, needs of the committee, are brought to the board via the liaison.

Committee Work Plan

Each committee chair is asked to lead their committee in a planning exercise to determine goals and timelines for accomplishing plans throughout the year. The chair shall submit to the Vice President two (2) weeks prior to the annual meeting of Committee chairs.

The work plan may include the following elements as applicable:

- Committee officers
- Meetings dates
- Goals for the year
- Activities planned
- Financial needs/request from Vice President fund
- Plans for Technical Sessions at Chapter Conferences

Committee Organization

The Following elements shall be included for each Committee:

- Mission/Visions/Purpose Statement
- Duties

