Staff Committee Support Function

Basic Function

Serve as an informed resource person to the chair and members of the committee. Assist the chair in facilitating committee discussion and activities that address the committee’s charge as delineated in the Society’s Bylaws and Strategic Plan. Work with the chair to ensure that all committee work is consistent with the Society’s goals and objectives.

Responsibilities

- Provide thorough orientation for each new committee chair and assist the chair in providing orientation for new and continuing committee members each year
- Work with the chair to develop a workplan that will allow the committee to effectively and efficiently discharge its responsibilities for the year
- Work with the chair to develop agendas and conduct effective meetings
- Provide administrative support for planning and execution of all committee meetings
- Draft reports of committee meetings for review and approval by the committee chair
- Work with the chair, other committee members and the Executive Director to ensure that the work of the committee is carried forth between meetings
- Facilitate communication of committee activities, including requests for action and/or proposed policies, to the executive director
- Report to the committee chair and committee as a whole on decisions of the board of directors, executive committee, or other Society committees which impact the committee’s activities
- Where appropriate, assist the committee in proposing products and services that will further the goals and objectives of the Society.

Role

- Be a valuable resource to the committee, not simply a recording secretary. Too small a staff role often results in the committee’s drifting aimlessly and operating ineffectively, but also outside of the scope of their charge.
- Be thoroughly familiar with all aspects of the committee’s work, including the scope of work, subjects under discussion, and association policies related to the committee’s work
- Answer questions, offer suggestions, and raise questions, but always do so by working through the chair.
- Provide administrative support to facilitate the work of the chair and the committee members
**Working with the Committee Chair**

- Make regular contact with the committee chair. If the chair does not quickly respond to email, pick up the phone and call the chair.
- Ensure the chair executes his/her administrative duties.
- Maintain regular contact with the chair throughout the year, not only just before meetings.
- Help the chair prepare and distribute meeting agendas prior to meetings.
- Help the chair prepare and distribute reports and minutes immediately following meetings.
- Provide on-site support for committee meetings to include: room layout, food, beverages, etc. Creature comforts are very important—good lighting, room temperature, lack of noise.
- Go over all agenda items on final time before the meeting begins so that you minimize surprises during the meeting.
- Help prepare committee reports to the board.
- Staff should sit next to the committee chair so that it is easy for him/her to discretely community with the chair as the meeting proceeds. The staff person should monitor participation by committee members and keep track of time to ensure that the meeting stays on schedule, that breaks are taken, that all members participate in the discussion, and the meeting adjourns on time. Short, hand-written notes for the chair to view during discussions are invaluable tools that assist the cahir in conducing the meeting effectively.
- Immediately after the meeting, the chair and staff liaison should meeting briefly (preferably before leaving the meeting room) to agree on what follow-up actions are required, timelines, and who is responsible for each action (chair, which committee member, and if staff, review with the executive director before committing).

**Minutes:**

- Include date, time and place of meeting. Note the chair’s name, members present and other key people in attendance.
- Note all formal motions and passage or defeat.
- Note all decisions reached, including motions passed and follow-up actions to be taken, with deadlines for implementation.
- Include only very brief summary of discussions. Do not attribute comments to members. Meeting reports are not intended to document the discussion process, only the actions taken.
- Provide information on the time and place of the next meeting.
- Where there are antitrust concerns, executive director review of the meeting report is required before distribution to committee members.
- Distribute the minutes to all committee members, including those who did not attend, immediately after them meeting, but certainly no later than two-three weeks after the meeting.
- In most instances, meeting reports do not require formal approval by the committee. The exception is formal meetings of the Society’s governing committees (i.e. executive, governance or finance committees).
Committee Work-plan/Focus for the Year

Effective committees are those that focus on achieving a limited number of outcomes directly linked to and supportive of achieving the association’s strategic plan. To assist in assuring that the Committee remains focused, it is imperative that the Committee Chair and Staff Liaison agree to the key outcomes which the committee is pursuing through its work, and this form is intended to assist in that process:

Committee ___________________________________________________________

Committee Chair ___________________________________________________________

Staff Liaison ___________________________________________________________

Board Liaison ___________________________________________________________

List all objectives in the strategic plan that the committee’s work is tied to.

List key outcomes the committee’s work should focus on achieving this year

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 

List other committees, if any, in the Society that are working in areas closely aligned with the work of this committee, and thus require coordination of work.

Workplan/Follow-up Between Meetings

- The committee work-plan will incorporate goal/program/project tracking, documenting the work to be done, by whom, and by what date. Periodically, update it and send out between meetings.
- The chair should not take on tasks. Instead, he or she should delegate to others on the committee, and then spend time coordinating and tracking progress.