

*United States Army
Warrant Officers Association*



ANNUAL MEETING HOST MANUAL

Updated as of 27 February 2010

GUIDE FOR HOSTING THE USAWOA ANNUAL MEETING

Based on Lessons Learned

USAWOA Manual 500-4 governs the planning for and conducting of the Annual Meeting of the Members. This guide will refer to that document and provides additional guidance to Chapters/Regions for both their planning to bid on hosting the meeting and for the actual planning and supporting of the meeting. This guide has been developed over the past 35 plus years and summarizes the experience of numerous individuals as well as the contents of the After Action Reports that were submitted by the hosting Individuals/Chapters/Regions. This is only a guide to assist you and is not intended to limit your creativity while hosting a meeting.

MEETING SITE SELECTION

THE MOTION FOR APPROVAL: When determining where to host a future meeting, approval must first be authorized by a majority vote of the members present, if at all possible. This is usually accomplished two or more years in advance of that year's meeting. It usually takes that much time to ensure a smooth working and well coordinated committee working with attention to all of the necessary details. When obtaining approval from the membership we do not allow them to mandate the exact date or city limits the meeting is to be conducted in. The best opportunities in many locations may provide more advantages or lower costs by starting the meeting on a midweek day or alternate weekend day. Occasionally, a location may be better suited due to historical events starting on a different dates other than what is traditionally been the case. I.E. The Apple Festival, Anniversary of The Historic Battlefield, or The Barn Dance Following The Wheat Harvest, etc, etc.

THE TIME FRAME: The Annual Meeting of the Members usually occurs in mid to late October however; hosting location committee has the latitude to move those dates plus or minus up to 30 days to take advantage of situation unique to particular location or region. Caution is advised to take in consideration federal, social and religious holidays such as Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving, Labor Day, Patriots Day, Halloween, Columbus Day, Yom Kippur, Rosh Hashanah, day light savings and any given Sunday all happen in this time period. Do not allow the members in attendance two or more years in advance of your event to back you in to dates or city/county limits that later put you into a bind by not using an otherwise excellent location because it is not in those city limits. By this it is intended that your motion to host a meeting be only limited to a region(s) and general time windows (even if you think that you truly know what they are).

THE LOCATION: Once a site is approved by the membership, which particular location within that region must be established. Now you have the task of identifying which facility to use. This can be confusing, as many facilities will be vying for your business. Many will try and mix up the bids by offering things that only they can offer or factors that were not offered by some of your previous bids. In annex 5 of this publication, you find a template to will make your task simpler. By asking, each of the facilities to bid **only** on these events it will assist you in standardizing the bids as you and your committee attempt to determine

which facility is best suited to host the Annual Meeting of the Members. Many previous committees have found themselves in trouble as they have over committed to the facilities by estimating many more room nights than became a reality, The rule of thumb is start low with opportunities of increasing your numbers as we get closer to the dates as demonstrated by confirmed registrations.

THE FACILITY: When attracting your bids from the various facilities you have the advantage of placing them in to the bidding scenario and take that advantage by allowing them to give you their best offer. Be sure to include within the contract such things as access to a full service restaurant for three meals a day, rest rooms in or near the meeting facility, etc. as we have had problems with this in the past. The agreement should also provide for floor space that can be secured for corporate members and other organizations to set up a display area. This should be adjacent to or co-located with the main meeting room. A complimentary hospitality suite should be arranged for to be utilized by the host Chapter/region and other regions each evening. After you have signed a contract (with or without a deposit) you no longer have that advantage. Use your advantage while you have it. Get the facility to offer services and amenities with your contract. The intent of this is to get them to offer free/complimentary meeting rooms, refreshments, goods and services with the obligation of hosting the meeting at that given facility. Once a contract is written, this will not be negotiable again. Some locations do not have to do this to get your business however asking will not jeopardize your position. Many locations will do all of this for you if you simply contact the local Better Business Bureau or Chamber of Commerce. Tell them that you are accepting bids to host a meeting of a given size for a given number of days with limited catering requirements. In some locations identifying that the meeting is a sanctioned military service related organizational meeting and you are bound by federal travel per diem rates. Advise them that you would only entertain offers at or below approved governmental per diem limits as published by the current JTR with the best offer for additional amenities works very effectively. Again, it may be to your advantage to include the template in appendix 5 as an example to better your position and standardize the bidding.

COMMUNICATIONS: Once your facility is identified, ensure that you get a contract signed with the facility staff to ensure excellent communication and coordination between your committee and the facilities staff. It needs to be clear what the facility is providing and what the association, region, chapter and individuals are providing. Anything else will usually result in an additional fee charged by the facility. From experience, this means that normally one of two people need to be the only ones to request services from the facility. Those individuals are the most familiar with what is in the agreed upon contract and can be requested without additional financial obligations from the facility staff. Remember, the financial liability lies between the facility and the individual(s) that sign the contract.

REGISTRATION: It is highly encouraged that every attempt is made to attract as many members to attend the meeting as possible. Ease of registering is a factor. On-line registration with credit card payments is encouraged. In many cases if your budget can

afford it, try offering the members an opportunity to received reduced registration fees by registering by a particular date. This can give you advanced notice of registration and can be to your advantage. The ability to sign up for activities will also give the members the advanced knowledge of major events that you plan during the meeting. A significant highlight of this are the social opportunities that you are planning and the spouse and family activates. It highly encouraged that for events that require advanced commitment of funds that members be charged all or part of the expenses when they sign up for the event, to ensure the total financial burden is not on the hosting organization. Experience has shown that if you pay for it up front you will go. Some will change their minds if they have not paid in advance. The optimal time to get monies for these events is during registration.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: Usually there is a speaker at the President's Reception, the Awards Banquet and all day during the Officer Professional Development (OPD) day. Meetings are most attractive to members when they have the opportunity of getting this kind of exposure at the event. In addition commanders are more inclined to approve authorized temporary duty trips with a well publicized and rounded Professional Development Day scheduled post well in advance. Though the OPD is usually organized by the National Headquarters, the hosting committee normally negotiates the speaker for the other two events. If you need help, communicate the need to the national office staff as this is a two way street.

FINANCES: This is quite possibly the most difficult part of your job. Every committee sets out to the make their meeting the best one that the Association has ever experienced. You are only limited by your own creativity on how you establish the costs for your meeting event. You want to attract as many members as possible by offering as much in the limited time that we have. You must also make it affordable to both the host organization and the attendees. To do this you will need to ask for a registration fee to attend. This fee normally covers any overhead expenses incurred by the facilities. Additional costs might be covered by asking for a pay-as-you-go cost for attending other activities. These costs should cover the cost of transportation and admission to events. Bottom line to all of this is to not surprise people with hidden fees, be up front on costs. If we know about costs going into something, we are much more likely to accept it as a part of participation.

Corporate members are provided a table area at each AMM as part of their corporate membership. Their dues pay for this opportunity. Others may request table space, if available to display their products. This can be organizations (chapters, regions, outside associations), companies or individuals who offer a product or service of value to the membership. There is a national rate card for this opportunity (see appendix six). Should the hosting organization be queried regarding this it must be remembered that the approval rests with National and the funds are to be submitted to the National Treasurer.

SOCIAL NETWORKING: Hospitality events have been a real tradition to the meeting and offers an optimal opportunity where true mentorship and bonding can take place. As

activities are added to the social agenda for the meeting, thought must be given to the transportation requirements to the getting all of the meeting participants to and from locations. Even when this is given advanced consideration it can get quite expensive. Many times if a hosting chapter or region asks other chapters or regions to sponsor the costs of hosting an event there will be volunteers and this allows the hosting chapter/region to reduce expenses and administration energies of putting social events together. In fact, regional directors and **regional and chapter** presidents frequently arrive at a meeting with authority to fund social events only to be put off by the local hosting individuals due to the lack of willingness to do the event. While prior planning is better, take every opportunity to get assistance asking for it.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MEMBERS ELECTION YEARS

PRE-MEETING PERIOD: This period runs from the awarding of the meeting site, usually at the annual meeting preceding the election year, until the day the meeting starts. During this period, the host of the meeting must make all plans for all levels of support and make available to the National Headquarters information to be printed in the NEWSLINER. This information should contain at a minimum, but not be limited to, travel information, lodging information (types and cost), all official activities planned as well as activities in and around the meeting site during both day and night, and registrations fees. The host will also have to provide, at the earliest, a schedule of events that may need to be integrated into the annual meeting such as guest speakers they may want to address the meeting either as lead off, or during the meeting or as a banquet guest speaker.

The host organization is responsible for providing the following required committees. They are normally appointed by the host president from the hosting organization to facilitate planning, etc. during the pre-meeting period.

Meeting Arrangements Committee (See appendix two)

Credentials Committee (See appendix three)

Teller Committee (See appendix four)

The Nominating Committee, appointed by The National President

Proposals (Resolutions) Committee appointed by the National President

in accordance with current administrative directives of the Association.

The host should set up the various committees that will be necessary to;

Counting the ballots and count all votes taken on the floor and reporting the results

Count proxies, verify quorum and report same

Welcoming attendees/registration,

Setting up the banquet

Recommendations for potential guest speakers (keynote and banquet)

Escorting speakers to the banquet and other scheduled sessions,

Hosting the President's Reception

Day-to-day meeting facilities, coffee, pastries for the morning session and coffee, soda and possibly cookies for afternoon sessions (starting at first afternoon break)

Meet arriving personal at airport

Providing transportations to and from the airport

Confirmation letters to all of the attendees, who register

Set up and control audio-visual equipment, screens, etc.

A POC that the attendees can call upon in case there is a problem, and providing

Administrative supplies/equipment and support (see appendix one).

Information should also be made available regarding spouses programs, any after hour activities that the host plans on having such as dinners at local restaurants or specialty houses.

National Headquarters will publish and distribute proxies and ballots a maximum of 50 days prior to the start of the annual meeting and will send to the host a draft copy of the official Business Meeting Agenda, PD Day Agenda, Spouse Agenda and General Schedule about 60 days prior to the meeting. Once the schedule is published it should serve as a guideline as to how the meeting will flow. That is why separate arrangements on the part of the host must be processed through National Headquarters.

Whatever the first day of the meeting is you must allow travelers to arrive on the previous day(s) in preparation for the meeting. At a minimum registration should begin around noon on that day attendees to be registered, obtain information regarding the schedule for the evening President's Reception, etc. Registration should continue to be available until at least COB, the second day of the meeting. The hosts should arrange to insure that attendees arriving on previous days have a way to obtain meals, etc. if they arrive by commercial transportation.

At all sessions where a guest speaker is invited (reception, first day session, banquet, etc.) arrangements should be made to have an escort ready and waiting at the entrance to greet the guest and accompany them to the proper location. If the guest is a general grade officer or civilian equivalent arrangements should be made to have the appropriate flag(s) available for that session.

On the evening prior to the beginning of the annual meeting, the President's Reception will be held. It is for all the attendees to meet, in a cordial and relaxed atmosphere prior to the beginning of the business meeting. It usually consists of a pay as you go bar, some snacks (chips, pretzels, dips, meatballs, etc). It will usually last about 3 hours. The cost for this reception may be included in the registration fee or can be paid for separately by each attendee, or it can be at the expense of the host or other sponsoring organization.

MEETING DAY: The start of the meeting day is governed by the amount of business scheduled to be conducted. Meetings with a demanding schedule should start no later than 0830 and end a 1700 or sooner later. Years with a light schedule could start at 0900

and end at 1630. The official agenda will reflect the time, locations, and activities for all official and unofficial events during the meeting week.

Normally the host schedules some event for each evening of the meeting week. This can be as simple as a barbecue, a function in the hospitality suite at the meeting place, an evening at a local entertainment spot, or an elaborate dinner in one of the better restaurants. In most cases these must be announced well in advance, include transportation arrangements and be optional for all members and their guests. It is recommended that these type events be included on the registration form and require payment be included with the registration to avoid individuals signing up for but not attending the event.

Day tours for spouses and guests are normally scheduled. While this aspect of the meeting is equally important since the spouses provide much support to the association, they should not be made so appealing that they attract attendees from the meeting floor. Should an attraction be so worthwhile for all those present that the host feels it should be included during the meeting week it should be nominated to National Headquarters for daytime travel so that the agenda may be altered if the workload of association business will permit. Non-election years are particularly appropriate for full or half day tours.

During the election year meeting (even numbered years, every two years), on the last day of the meeting the election results will be announced and but the new officers will not take their places until that evening.

The official swearing in ceremony will take place for all elected officials present at the banquet that evening or the following night depending on what has been worked out between the host and National Headquarters. That evening should be devoted to the guest speaker, the swearing in of officials, speeches, and the presentation of annual higher level awards to individuals, Chapters and Regions.

The banquet is also the site of the annual fund raising raffle drawings. A master of ceremonies and a guest speaker of suitable appeal should be programmed for the banquet.

AFTER ACTION: Within 60 days of the close of the annual meeting an after action report (AAR) will be sent to National Headquarters by the host, outlining the support needed to accommodate the meeting. This should include copies of Comment sheet included in each registration package so National can review and update procedures and documentation based on members input. It should cover support of the meeting including planning, financial results, and the areas that needed more detailed attention on the part of the host. It should also cover lessons learned, the activities that were enjoyed after the business sessions. Any suggested changes to this host manual should also be included.

All AARs will be kept on file at the National Headquarters and sent to the next organization that will host future meetings so that they will be able to have some type of advanced

knowledge of what to expect when hosting meetings. This detailed report is essential to assist the National Headquarters and future hosts in planning and conducting future annual meeting of the members.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MEMBERS NON-ELECTION YEARS

The requirements during non-elections years are identical except:

The Teller Committee is required to handle votes but the Credentials Committee may be able to handle those duties.

The length of the meeting may be shorter, unless a large amount of business is anticipated.

Whole day or half day (preferred) tours may be conducted for members, spouses and guest as anticipated business permits.

Banquet may be conducted during the week verses the end of the week.

Attached as appendix one is a copy of an administrative checklist which lists the minimum support and equipment essential to a smooth running meeting. The lists indicate which items are normally provided by National Headquarters and which are the responsibility of the host. The listing indicates only the minimum support and equipment. The host should anticipate and provide for any special requirements.

Your comments, suggestions, and recommendations are solicited and will be used to expand and improve on the planning package provided to future hosts.

Appendix One

ANNUAL MEETING SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT

HOST CHAPTER OR REGION

Podium
Photo copying machine access
Computer with printer access
Laptop computer and printer access for Credential and Teller Committees
Lapel mike and transmitter for speakers who do not stay near the podium
Audience microphone(s) [so their questions can be heard by all present]
Projection Screen(s)
High power projector with laptop for briefings
United States Flag
General Officer/MACOM Flag(s) [as necessary]
Poles and stands for above flags (Be sure they fit based on ceiling height)
Small tape recorder and blank tapes
Extension cords (4 to 6 each)
Easel, markers and paper (butcher board)
Nametags [which will become the member's credentials]
Registration forms [for last minute registrants]
Welcome letter for packets
Signs for study groups
5" x 8" cards (for proxy voting)
Camera, digital with adequate memory and spare batteries
Photographer
Seating and head table arrangements
Tables for memorabilia
Administrative assistance for registration, staffing tables for raffle, sale of
 memorabilia, etc.
Registration Packets

Appendix One (cont)

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

USAWOA Flag

Table cover (National emblem)

Gavel

Alpha and Chapter Rosters both paper and electronic copies (provided to the host organization effective 30 days in advance of the start meeting date)

Listing of Active and Inactive Chapters

Ballots and Proxies Pre-mailed to membership

Certificates of Appreciation suitable for presentation

Letterhead Stationary

Laptop computer

Focus Group Report Presentation Format (Power Point)

Focus Group Assignment Format (Word)

Vote Tallying Spreadsheet (Excel)

Teller Committee Report format for the Teller Committee (Word)

Credentials Committee Report format for the Credential Committee (Word)

Hosting Organization Planning and Procedures Handbook provided immediately after organization and location selection (Word)

Appendix Two

MEETING ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

It shall be the function of this committee to affect the complete arrangements, less the program, for the annual meeting. Arrangements shall include but not be limited:

(1) Meeting hall with head table, PA system and recording devices; designated seating area for official visitors, other visitors, members and their guests.

(2) Entertainment for banquet and cocktail hour and schedule of events for spouses and dependents during meeting hours.

(3) Office space for Association and various committee administrative staff; computer(s), printers, modem access and secretarial support; telephones; reproduction equipment and ability to secure these items.

(4) Billeting for visiting members and their families and visiting dignitaries.

(5) Transportation for visiting members and dignitaries to include those arriving by commercial modes.

(6) Escorts for visiting dignitaries as required.

(7) Advertisement of meeting; decorations; photographic coverage; preparation and distribution of registration/reservation forms (USAWOA Form 500-3) to regions/chapters; advance registration of members and registration of members upon arrival at meeting location.

The final arrangements packet shall be prepared for submission to the National Board of Directors for approval during the annual COP/BOD meeting.

b. Composition: The Meeting Arrangements Committee shall normally be composed of members from the Annual Meeting of the Members host region/chapter.

(1) Total Members: Maximum of nine (9).

(2) Chairperson: President of host region/chapter.

(3) Appointed Members: Eight (8) members of the general membership shall be appointed by the National President on the advice of the chairperson.

c. Staff Liaison Representative: National Headquarters Staff.

See Appendix Five for a Planning Calendar.

Appendix Three

CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

The Credentials Committee is to ensure that the USAWOA membership is legally represented by the members attending the meetings. It shall be the duty of this committee to verify membership in the association and to determine the eligibility of each member to vote and/or participate in debate.

(1) The Credentials Committee chairperson, directly after the opening ceremonies of the first business meeting, shall report the number of members registered as present in person or by proxy, with certified membership, and shall make a supplementary report after the opening exercise at the beginning of each session that business continues. These reports must be in writing and once announced passed to the National Secretary for archive purposes.

A typical report will include: (formatted copies are available)

- Total number of members eligible to vote
- Total number of votes necessary for quorum
- Total number of votes on the floor
- Total number of valid proxies
- Total number of invalid proxies
- Any other relevant issues important to the voting population
- If a quorum is present per Roberts Rules of Order and our by laws

(2) The Credentials Committee chairperson is responsible for insuring that a quorum is present prior to any vote taken. The committee chairperson will also ensure that each proxy holder has a count of his/her valid proxies and that each meeting official has a list of all members attending the meeting, and the total number of proxies for each.

(3) The Credentials Committee shall devise and furnish appropriate membership identification pins, badges, or stickers.

(4) The committee will monitor the voting floor to ensure an accurate count is maintained at all times, as valid voting members leave and return to the voting floor during the procedures.. If at any time the floor loses a quorum a committee representative must identify this to the presiding official and all voting must stop until a quorum is reestablished.

b. Composition: The Credentials Committee shall normally be composed of members from the Meeting of the Members host region/chapter.

(1) Total Members: Five (5).

(2) Chairperson: (Appointed by National President).

(3) Appointed Members: Four (4) members of the general membership shall be appointed by the National President on the advice of the chairperson.

c. Staff Liaison Representative: National Headquarters Staff.

Appendix Four

TELLER COMMITTEE

The Teller Committee has been formed to ensure that the receipt, handling, security, and tabulation of all ballots are conducted in the manner required by regulations and law. It shall be the duty of this committee to tabulate and report the results of voting by the Association membership on annual elections of the Association officers and any other matters which requires mail voting. A ballot clerk will be appointed by the National President with advise from the host President or Director and charged with the handling, verifying and securing of all mailed ballots received by the Association. The committee chairperson, upon appointment, is authorized to establish a post office mailing address if such does not exist at the host region/chapter location. Funding for this post office box rental will be provided from the meeting fund.

Mail ballots will be counted during the meeting by the Teller Committee. Results of the election will be reported by the Teller Committee chairperson during the last day of the meeting.

The Teller Committee will receive, open, verify actual membership, separate ballots from proxies and deliver the proxies to the Credential Committee for processing.

Appendix Five

USAWOA Annual Meeting of the Members Planning Calendar

- Be able to accommodate at least 50 hotel rooms (with more, if at all possible).
- Business room to accommodate 100 persons with tables and chairs.
- Room large enough to accommodate 150 guests for a formal dinner ball and awards banquet.
- Securable room or area for corporate members displays and those to other organizations wishing to display material during the AMM
- Hospitality Suite for the use of meeting attendees round the clock (WHAT?)
- Coffee and light pastry service in the mornings. Iced Tea and/or soda service in the afternoon.
- Administrative (securable) room near by the general meeting room. Storage of audio/visual equipment and other handout materials.
- Offer the best room rates for those that choose to arrive/stay on either or both weekend.

| Generic Annual Meeting of the Members Planning Calendar | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|---|--|--|
| Day | Day #1 | Day #2 | Day #3 | Day #4 | Day #5 | Day #6 |
| AM | 1200-1800 Travel/ Welcome/ Registration (table for three hosts in a common area) | 0700-0830 Presidents Meeting 0900 Business Meeting | 0700-0830 Retirees Breakfast 0900 Business Meeting (100 guests) | 0700-0830 Retirees Breakfast 0900 Business Meeting and Focus Groups Breakout (areas for 6 groups to get together) | 0830 Professional Development Day | 0830 Board of Directors Meeting (10 plus Guests) |
| PM | 1800-2100 President's Reception (100 guests) (light finger foods/snacks) | Business Meeting (100 guests) | Business Meeting and Focus Groups Breakout (areas for 6 groups to get together) | Business Meeting (100 guests) | Professional Development Day | Depart/Travel Day |
| | | Evening Event | Evening Event | Evening Event | Formal Ball/Awards Banquet (150 Guests) | |

Appendix Six
AMM Vendor Participation Program

Booth space up to 8 x 5

Two admissions to the exhibit area during the AMM sessions and events

Half page ad in the Pre and Post AMM edition of the Newsliner (normally Oct and Nov)

Cost: \$600.00

Note: 8 x 10 booth Cost: \$1,000.00