

CLUB ORGANIZATION & ADMINISTRATION

Your community has identified a need to form a new sport club. To be a successful well-run sport club you need a clear understanding of your organizations mandate, goals and objectives.

Club Structure

A club must establish guidelines, which are set out by the membership. These guidelines are referred to as the **Constitution/Bylaws or Terms of Reference**.

A community organization can also choose whether or not they wish to become incorporated as a not for profit group. The benefits of becoming incorporated include:

- Limiting the liability of members from various debts and obligations for which the organization may become responsible
- Giving the organization permanency even though the members may change
- Incorporation structures the affairs and activities of the organization
- Funders often require that the organization be incorporated in order to be eligible for funding

A smaller sport club may wish to simply develop a Terms of Reference or Policy Statement outlining their club's structure, however to be eligible for some grants and funding formal Bylaws are required.

Finances

Keeping track of a club's finances is critical to the ongoing success of a program. Areas that will need to be addressed include:

- Developing a draft budget
- Determine sources of income (membership fees, grants, sponsorship, fundraising etc)
- Determine expenses (facilities, equipment, training, travel etc)
- Developing an accounting system, whether through a software program or other
- Developing financial policies for the club

Club Membership

Making new members aware of the benefits, rules and responsibilities when joining your club is critical. The following should be considered:

- What services will the sport club provide and what will be the cost of these services to participants?
- What are the benefits of being a member?
- What education/training opportunities exist and in what format?
- What participation opportunities are there, including social/competitive/non-competitive?
- What skill development opportunities are there? How can they be accessed?
- How wide-ranging are the activities? Do they cater for children, older adults, able body and what range of mobility/impairment? How do they cater for each of the groups?
- What resources are available? Does the club have any access to books, videos, kits or pamphlets? What equipment/facilities exist?
- What support services are available (i.e. is there a sport chair rental program, or rent to own equipment)?
- What social events/opportunities does the organization offer?
- Voting (define members, including voting members...)

Executive Positions

The number of executive positions required to form a board will be determined by the size of the sport club. In an incorporated club, the number of positions will be identified in the Constitution or Bylaws. In a smaller organization, these positions will be identified in the Terms of Reference.

Board positions are defined by job descriptions. A well-written job description gives direction to the officer. Job descriptions are also useful tools for the initial orientation and as a reference throughout the officer's commitment. Members of the nominating committee should provide the organizations job descriptions to interested volunteers

Election of Officers

The method of how an organization elects their officers is determined in the Constitution or Bylaws. Normally a Nominating Committee is formed to ensure that volunteers are recruited to fill vacant board positions and that a slate of nominees of those who are willing to run for a position is presented at the AGM.

Organizations may want to consider staggering the terms of office to ensure that not all positions come forward for re-election the same year.

NEXT STEPS

Inaugural general meeting

At least two weeks prior to the intended date, the interim committee should circulate to potential members the proposed constitution or charter, and notice of when this first general meeting will be held. Again, there needs to be an attempt to use a wide variety of sources and types of media to promote awareness.