



Venturer Unit Chairperson's and Executive Guide

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PLUS!**



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Foreword

This booklet is intended for the Venturer Unit Chairperson and also for the members of the Unit Executive committee. It is also used as the handbook for the 'Venturer Chairperson and Unit Executive Training Course'

Hopefully you find it invaluable and dip into it any time you need clarification on matters to do with running meetings and leading the Unit.

If you are looking for guidance on "points of order", or clarification on the technical points of handling meetings then you best look to people who chair the local Lions Club, School Board or Rotary Club meetings.

This is a 'down to earth', practical, hands on guide that will help make the Unit meetings run smoothly and ensure that important matters don't get overlooked.

Brian Corney
National Venturer Leader

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Introduction

This guide is intended to help the Unit Executive Officers carry out their roles effectively. It may also be used as the work book for the "Venturer Chairpersons and Executive Committee" training course.

Critical role

Like all groups of people, the effectiveness of the Venturer Unit as a group or team is entirely dependent on the effectiveness of the Unit Chairperson. The Chairperson's ability to develop sound leadership skills and be able to guide the Unit Executive and gain their support is vital.

Train yourself

The good news of course is that this booklet will help and so will the Venturer Leader, but the fact is that anyone taking on the Chairperson or a Unit Executive role should make every effort to train themselves and carry out the roles to the very best of their ability. So register for a "Venturer Chairpersons and Executive Committee" training course before you put your name forwards for election. Be a true Scout, "Be Prepared".

Executive Committee members

The standard officers on a Venturer Unit Executive committee are:

- The Unit Chairperson
- The Unit Treasurer
- The Unit Communications Officer
- The Unit Membership Officer
- Any Activity Officer with an activity due to be discussed at the meeting.

Some of the bigger Venturer Units add other roles if needed. Examples might be:

- Log Book Keeper and Photographer
- Transport Officer

THE VENTURER UNIT EXECUTIVE

Responsibilities of the Unit Executive

The Unit Executive members under the leadership of the Unit Chairperson and with guidance from the Venturer Leader, are involved in carrying out the following:

- Planning a programme that personifies ADVENTURE PLUS;
- Managing the Unit's finance and maintaining any equipment;
- Recruiting new members to replace those leaving;
- Setting and monitoring standards - safety, conduct and awards;
- Sending representatives to the Zone and/or Regional Venturer Councils;
- Establishing and maintaining good relations within the Unit and Scouting.

Main Tasks of the Unit Executive

1. Plan and develop the Unit programme on a term basis. It must be an interesting and active programme for the Unit members, complying with the theme of the National Programme, but based on members ideas and needs, so that they will feel committed to taking part in the activities.
2. Ensure that the roles of Chairperson, Communication, Treasurer and Membership Officer are understood and carried out to the best of each person's abilities.
3. Appoint and support Activity Leaders for all aspects of the Unit's programme. Remember too, that these Venturers may need training and assistance if the Unit is to get the very best opportunities from each activity. It is important that all activities are positive experiences for all involved, both in the planning and implementation.
4. Actively recruit new members to the Unit, so that the Unit continually grows and the Scouts have an active and effective Unit to join.
5. Set and maintain Unit standards of safety, good conduct and award achievement so that Unit members can take pride in their Unit and its reputation. This includes creating a Code of Conduct for the Unit members that is reviewed and adopted at the first meeting after the AGM.
6. Organise the Unit and Executive to meet regularly on a formal and informal basis. Remember, all Venturers want to:
 - HAVE FUN and make friends, both from within the Unit and other Units as well.
 - Get SATISFACTION from the activities
 - Gain a sense of ACHIEVEMENT from trying ADVENTUROUS new ideas.

MEETINGS VERSUS DISCUSSION GROUPS

There is a difference

There is a significant difference between a 'Discussion Group' and a 'Formal Meeting'. Both are meetings and involve discussion. It's the way the meeting is controlled that is the main difference.

Discussion Groups

This method is best used when:

- looking for new, fresh and off the wall ideas,
- getting a feel for what the Unit Members are thinking,
- brain storming for programme ideas.

The chairperson' role in a discussion group is:

- To study the topic and prepare several questions to get the discussion started.
- To introduce the discussion topic and explain what outcome is desired. ("We have 20 minutes to discuss how we are going to fundraise for the next Venture".)
- To ensure that everyone has an opportunity to speak and not let one or two members dominate discussion. ("Joe, you're looking very thoughtful. What's your opinion?")
- To stop the discussion if it goes off track and bring it back onto the topic.
- To seek a conclusion (if one is required). The decision will need to be reviewed at the next formal meeting and any decision moved and seconded so it is recorded in the minutes.

Formal Meetings

Formal meetings have these characteristics:

- The chairperson firmly controls the meeting and keeps it on track and on time.
- An agenda (list of topics to be discussed) is prepared by the Chairperson before the meeting and he or she follows this closely. Extra topics can be added if time permits.
- Decisions are recorded in the notes taken of the meeting. These are called minutes and are kept for many years.
- Formal reports are received from the Executive Officers and recorded in the minutes.
- The meeting date is set in advance and Secretary or Chairperson sends out reminders together with the agenda, before the meeting.

Can a meeting be both?

Yes it can, but the Chairperson has to state that for a specified period of time, "a free ranging or general discussion will be held". When the time is up, the formal meeting is resumed and decisions are recorded again.

CHAIRPERSON'S ROLE IN THE UNIT

Introduction

The following pages include Job Descriptions for each of the Executive roles. These can seem fairly mind boggling at first, but once you study them and understand what is meant by each 'Main Task', you will find that they are not overwhelming at all. Once you commence employment you will find most jobs will have a Job Description a bit like these that you will need to understand and follow.

On the next page is a copy of the current Job Description for a Unit Chairperson.

Grow into the role

It is not expected, nor intended, that you will be instantly capable of carrying out all the tasks required from the time of appointment. Like any new role, you may have to learn the skills. This is why the Unit has a Venturer Leader to advise and assist you and the Executive until you have developed the skills necessary to carry out the role effectively.

In many instances, the Venturer Leader has to assume the role of Chairperson and make decisions until the Chairperson has grasped the basic skills for leading and manage a meeting.

Training yourself

High on the list of a new Chairperson's priorities must be a commitment to developing leadership skills. Immediate enrolment for the Venturer Leadership Course (J.R.H. Cooksey Course) is essential if the Chairperson is serious about accepting responsibility for running an effective and successful Unit.

Enthusiasm

The importance of ENTHUSIASM cannot be stressed enough. A good Chairperson never has problems, just challenges to be met and overcome. Frequent discussion with the Venturer Leader is essential.

Before every meeting

An effective Chairperson will make sure that before every meeting, the agenda or programme is discussed with the Venturer Leader so that both are informed about developments and can back each other up in a team approach. It is important the Unit realises that the Venturer Leader is responsible to both SCOUTS New Zealand (represented by the Group Leader) and the parents, for the safety and general welfare of Venturers while involved in Unit activities.

Misbehaviour

Misbehaviour, unsafe activities or unlawful actions by the Unit can result in the Venturer Leader losing his or her Leadership warrant. The result can be considerable damage to the Leader's reputation in the community as well as that of SCOUTS NZ in general. Good communications between the Unit Chairperson and the Venturer Leader, and the following of their advice, should mean that the Unit's activities and plans rarely, if ever, get to the stage where the Venturer Leaders have to exercise the authority they hold.

Finally, if circumstances change and you are unable to carry out the duties effectively, you should assist with the appointment and training of a successor.

Unit Chairperson's Job Description

Responsible To:

The Venturer Leader

The Purpose of this Position

To lead the Unit Executive and through them, the Unit members, so that Venturers is an enjoyable and worthwhile experience for all.

Your Main Tasks

1. Work closely and communicate frequently with the Venturer Leaders taking note of their advice and experience, so that the Unit works effectively as a group and enjoys Venturers.
2. Chair meetings of both the Executive and the full Unit, ensuring that the meetings are quick and effective, and decisions are made in a democratic way that allows all members to contribute freely.
3. Delegate or share tasks wherever possible to reduce your workload, gain experience in managing others and to get everyone working as a team by giving them responsibility appropriate to their age and ability.
4. Ensure the Unit is represented at Zone and Regional meetings or Councils so that the Unit benefits from the exchange of ideas and contact with other Units.
5. Lead and support the members of the Unit Executive so they know they can rely on you to assist them when or if needed.
6. Assist the Venturer Leader to train various Unit members as Activity Leaders, so that all Venturers are given the chance to gain Leadership experience.
7. Lead the Unit Executive to plan at least 1 term in advance, produce an interesting and challenging programme that involves and enthuses the Venturers and as a result attracts new recruits.
8. Present certificates as soon as possible after the Unit Executive has approved them. This is a basic part of self motivation. We all like recognition for our efforts and when it comes, it keeps our self motivation levels high. People with high levels of self motivation are the people who make the Unit work effectively.

HINTS FOR CHAIRING A MEETING

Openness

This is probably number one of the things the chairperson needs to master. It means:

- To be available to talk to and not ignore or put people off.
- To listen carefully and make sure you understand what is being talked about.
- To be seen to treat people appropriately. Not necessarily all the same way either because people are all different and you are seldom able to communicate the same way with everyone.

Timeliness

Now here's a challenge! If you are to get things done, you need to be organised. If you are to be organised you need to be very aware of time, and how to use it effectively and wisely.

Always start and finish meetings on time. If you are not good at this, appoint a timekeeper to remind you and take notice of their reminders and act on them.

If a discussion is running over time because two members have an issues with it, say something like *"People, we have run out of the time allotted for this topic, Let me meet with the two of you after the meeting, or tomorrow if that's suits you better, to finish the discussion and then we can finalise it at the next meeting"*.

Remember that while two members might be passionate about an issue, you could have another 5 or 6 sitting around the table bored to tears by the whole discussion. Too much of this and some people will leave rather than waste time listening to people trying to make a point the rest have little interest in.

Consistency

A smart Chairperson is consistent. If you say that meetings will start at 7pm then start them at 7pm. After a while, the members will realise that you mean what you say and they will turn up on time.

Remember about a 'quorum' though. A 'quorum' is the minimum number of members that have to be present for a properly constituted meeting. Most Venturer Units would set this at 4 members.

- Once you have a quorum start the meeting.
- If you have to wait, use the time to start one of the discussions. Stop the discussion and start the meeting when you have enough the numbers. Resume the discussion when you get to it in the agenda.

Preparedness

"Be Prepared" is not only the SCOUTS motto, it's also a good motto for all Chairpersons.

A chairperson who is not well prepared for a meeting is going to have a stressful time.

- With the VL's help, draw up an agenda and send it out before the meeting. (More about this on the next few pages).
- Research any discussion topics and prepare a few starter questions. It also helps you readily answer some of the questions put to the meeting by the members.

Firmness and fairness

Don't dither about. That's easy to say, but as Chairperson you need to give a firm lead. If you need to make a decision:

- First of all think quickly and work out what is fair. Consult the VL about it as well.
- Then announce the decision. You might say *"I know you want to make a decision tonight but I think we need more information first so we will postpone it until the next meeting while I find out more"*.
- If you make a decision and after a while realise it is unfair on some, immediately say something like *"I have just realised my decision was unfair to some of those present. Let's discuss the topic again at the end of the meeting"*.

Recording Decisions

There are well known procedures for running formal meetings. Many of these have arisen from disputes and legal issues between adults and seldom have any relevance at a Venturer Meeting. But there is one thing you really do need to follow and that is to record decisions. In the business world these are known as a 'Resolutions'.

At a formal meeting any subject that is to be discussed needs to be '**proposed, moved and seconded**' before being discussed. This is to help keep the meeting in order and on track and not get sidetracked by people wanting to discuss a topic only they are interested in.

- Let's assume James has asked for the next Venture to be on the agenda. The Chairperson will come to that item and speak directly to James and say *"what are you proposing?"*
- James might say, *"I would like to move that the whole Unit fundraises for the fees for the Venturer so we all help each other"*.
- The Chairperson then says: *"James has proposed 'that the whole Unit fundraises for the fees for the Venturer so we all help each other', is anyone prepared to second that?"* If someone says *"I second that"*, the chairperson then says the subject is open for discussion and people take turns speaking to the proposal in an orderly fashion until all have had their say and the topic is ready to be voted on.
- This means that if the topic is of no interest to anyone else, no one will second it and it lapses and is ignored. The meeting moves on to the next subject and less than a minute has been wasted.
- Once the discussion is at an end, the Chairperson says *"you have all heard the proposal, all those in favour say Aye"* and then listens to the response.

Then the Chairperson says *"All those against the proposal say No"*. The chairperson judges by the number of voices and says the proposal is passed or not as the case may be. If the numbers are close, the Chairperson may choose to ask for a show of hands to decide the vote.

Check and double check

In the nicest way possible, check that the people you have delegated responsibility to have actually done the task. Don't assume they have. You might say *"do you mind if I have a quick glance at the quotes for the bus please?"* so you know that a quote exists. Some people will tell you what you want to hear and not admit they haven't got around to it yet.

AGENDA

So what is an agenda?

It's a list of the subjects that need to be discussed at the meeting and the order in which they are intended to be discussed. It is the responsibility of the Unit Chairperson to assemble the agenda and this is always done in partnership with the VL so he or she knows what is intended and is prepared with answers or information should it be needed.

Don't run a meeting without an agenda

We're really serious about this. A meeting without an agenda will seldom achieve anything except make those members who like a good chat happy. But those who want to make things happen and enjoy some adventurous activities might vote with their feet by walking right out the door and will probably keep going.

Having assembled an agenda, send it out at least 3 days before the meeting. It will serve as a reminder for the meeting and it will also give the members time to think about some of the topics. It could be sent by text or by email, but have a few spare printed copies handy at the meeting.

What does an agenda look like

Here is an option for setting out an agenda.

Agenda
Welcome
Apologies
Previous minutes confirmed
Matters requiring action
<i>Decision on funds for next Venture</i>
<i>Appoint reps for Zone Council Meeting</i>
<i>Ruapehu tramp - Bus or Train?</i>
Matters requiring discussion
<i>Offer to Help with Zone campfire?</i>
<i>Proposal for a Unit camp</i>
<i>Raft race query from other Unit</i>
Matters for information
Finance Report
Correspondence
Zone calendar
Other activity progress reports.
Next meeting date

This agenda lists all the important decision type topics early in the meeting. Members will soon realise that if they want to have a say in the decision making they need to be on time for the meetings.

Note that 'Matters arising from the previous minutes' are slotted into the various headings in the agenda. 'Matters arising from the previous minutes' is the follow-up mechanism that ensures actions are taken to make activities happen.

THE UNIT TREASURER

Job Description

Responsible To:

The Venturer Leader, through the Unit Chairperson.

The Purpose of this Position:

Ensure that all Unit and Activity funds are accounted for by keeping a complete and accurate record of all the financial transactions of the Unit.

Your Main Tasks

1. Receipt, record, and bank immediately all money paid to the Unit so that there is no possibility of it being lost or misused. Missing money or even the suspicion of money going missing will cause a Venturer Unit to fall apart quicker than anything else because trust between the members has been broken. The records need to be always up to date and open to scrutiny by all the Unit members should they wish to check for themselves.
2. Arrange payment of all accounts by cheque or direct transfer, as soon as the Unit Executive has approved payment. Never ever pay any account out of cash received because it will not leave an audit trail. People need to be able to see where the money came into the bank account and where it went out again.
3. Keep an accurate record of all transactions and present these to the Unit meetings on a monthly basis. Include an up to date report on the Unit's financial state, and a current bank statement verifying your report.

If you can, try and get 'view only' access to the Units bank account via the internet. This way you can print off a copy of the bank statement for each meeting. Your VL should be able to help arrange this.

4. Assist Activity Leaders budget for Unit activities. Always ask to see the Activity Budget and check it thoroughly before the activity fees are set. Ensure that the activity fee set will cover all costs likely and always collect the fees in advance from the members attending the activity.
5. An 'Activity Cash Summary' should be completed for each individual activity. It should detail all money received for the activity from each person, and all payments made for the activity. It should also show any allowances for fundraising or transfers from a separate 'Fundraising Account'. The summary should be presented to the next formal unit meeting, and kept on file to assist in the preparation of the financial statement for the AGM.
6. Collect from the Unit members any fees or subs set by the Unit Executive or Group and advise the Unit Chairperson of fees unpaid at the due date.

Never disclose at the Unit meetings the names of those who have not paid. Be conscious of your Unit members' ability to pay and discuss the matter with the Venturer Leader. It's up to the Venturer Leader and Chairperson to collect any outstanding fees.

FINANCIAL RECORDS AND PROCEDURES

Bank Account

SCOUTS New Zealand recommends that the Unit's bank account is a sub account of the Scout Group Account.

- The cheque account for the Unit is named like this:
"**The Scout Association of New Zealand Mangawhau Group**"
In this case the Unit authorises the payments but the Scout Group bank account signatories have to sign the cheques or make the online transfer.
- There must be three people authorised by the Unit Executive to approve payments. One of the three must be the Venturer Leader who advises the Group Treasurer who the three are and that any two can approve payments.

Do not pre-sign blank cheques

This situation should not arise in Venturers as the cheques are written or payments made by the Scout Group signatories, however it's worth knowing that a blank cheque is one where the value of the transaction has not been written on the cheque.

Do not under any circumstances pre-sign any blank cheques. Doing so is contrary to SCOUTS New Zealand Policy. Experience has shown that many people are unable to resist the temptation and may help themselves to the Unit's funds. Don't put people in this situation, follow the rules.

Approving Invoices for Payment

The Treasurer must submit a list of invoices requiring payment at each meeting and ensure that a resolution authorising the payments is recorded in the minute book. The 'minute' must include the name of the supplier on each invoice and the amount so there is a trail for the person reviewing the accounts at year end.

Buying on the Internet

It is not easy for Clubs and organisation like Scouts to buy items on the internet because two signatures are needed to make any payments.

If paying on receipt of or before the goods are purchased, then the value needs to be determined beforehand and a properly completed cheque collected from the Group Treasurer.

Alternatively an arrangement can be made with the Group Treasurer to transfer the funds online, directly to the supplier's bank account.

Keeping a Cash Book

A cash book is simply a document that records the money received and the money paid out. It can be kept in a multi column school exercise book, or on an Excel Spreadsheet on your computer. If using a spreadsheet, make sure you give an up to date copy of the file to the Chairperson or the VL at each meeting so that if your computer fails, there is a reasonably up to date copy on another PC.

If the Unit doesn't already have a cash book that can continue to be used, then make an appointment with the Scout Group Treasurer and ask for help to set a Cash Book up.

If any of the Unit members are studying accountancy at school, they will also be able to teach you how to set a cash book up.

A simple spreadsheet version of a cashbook is shown below.

Sample Cash Book (Suggested spreadsheet version)

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	CASH BOOK FOR THE ABC VENTURER UNIT												
2	Analysis >>												
3	2014 DATE	ITEM	RECPT OR CHEQ NUMBER	AMOUNT RECEIVED	AMOUNT PAID	TOTAL	UNIT FEES RECEIVED	FUND RAISING	GRANTS	ADMIN EXES	CAVING	RAFTING	TRAINING FEES PAID
4	1-Oct	Bank balance from last yr				\$500.00							
5	5-Oct	Fees James C	123	\$50.00		\$550.00					\$50.00		
6	7-Oct	Fees Joe S	124	\$50.00		\$600.00					\$50.00		
7	8-Oct	Fees William B	125	\$50.00		\$650.00					\$50.00		
8	8-Oct	Fees Jane H	126	\$50.00		\$700.00					\$50.00		
9	10-Oct	Waitomo Caves Ltd	31224		\$80.00	\$620.00					\$80.00		
10	20-Oct	Fees Michael B	31225	\$30.00		\$650.00						\$30.00	
11	30-Oct	Exec course - Region	31226		\$120.00	\$530.00							\$120.00
12	31-Oct	Fees Harry S	127	\$30.00		\$560.00						\$30.00	
13	1-Nov	Unit fee Carrina H	128	\$45.00		\$595.00	\$45.00						
14	3-Nov	Unit fee William B	129	\$45.00		\$640.00	\$45.00						
15	4-Nov	Food and gas for Caving	33227		\$120.00	\$520.00					\$120.00		
16	5-Nov	Ring Binder - Warehouse	33258		\$14.00	\$506.00			\$14.00				
17	6-Nov	Bank fee from statement			\$20.00	\$486.00			\$20.00				
18													

Black figures are receipts and are added to the total column

Red figures are payments and are deducted from the total column

The 'Total' column balance should be the same as the total on the bank statement.

Filing the Financial Records

Purchase a ring binder and a set of cardboard dividers and set up sections for filing the following:

- Bank Statements
- Invoices for payment
- Quotes from suppliers
- A copy of the cashbook presented at the meeting

If you are using a paper based cash book, it would be useful if it can be punched so it can be kept in the ring binder as well.

Reviewing the Unit's Annual Accounts

A review is where a suitably qualified accounting person checks the accounts to verify that:

1. The cash book has been kept correctly.
2. All the money listed as received has been accounted for and a receipt made out.
3. All payments have been authorised by the Unit and are in a file ready for inspection.
4. The bank account is reporting the same balance as the cash book.

It would be appropriate that the Group Treasurer be the person asked to review the accounts as the Scout Group is required to include them in the Group's annual report at the financial year end which is the 30th September.

The Annual Accounts are presented to the Annual General Meeting of the Unit, usually held in November each year and then filed with the Unit Chairperson's Annual report.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Job Description

Responsible To:

The Venturer Leader, through the Unit Chairperson.

The Purpose of this Position:

To attend to the communications and administrative tasks for the Unit Executive and the Venturer Unit.

Your Main Tasks:

1. You will need to keep brief notes (minutes) of each meeting held by the Executive and the Unit in Council so that there is a permanent record of decisions made. The minutes must also record matters that are to be brought up at subsequent meetings for further discussion.
2. Receive all correspondence on behalf of the Unit, present it at the first available meeting. Attend promptly to any outgoing correspondence so that there are no unnecessary delays in communication.
3. Maintain a register of Unit members, record their attendance at meetings and bring any continual absences to the Membership Officer's attention. This is so members do not drop out of the Unit through lack of attention or communication.
4. Publish the Unit programme as soon as it is finalised and send copies to all Unit members, Venturer Leaders and Group Leader. This is so all concerned are aware of forthcoming activities and can plan around them.
5. Create, maintain and distribute a contact list of Unit members. This is so the Unit has a means of communicating information about activities and meetings.
6. Maintain sufficient stocks of certificates, the various forms required and personal award record cards.

Remember, this is an important role. Keep the Unit members in touch with each other, and include their parents and other members of the Scout Movement.

Files and Documents

The Minute Book

This is usually but not always a hard covered exercise book. Minutes can also be kept on a computer but must be printed and a copy kept in a ring binder.

Minutes are usually brief and serve as a written record of decisions and actions taken at a meeting. The minutes of the previous meeting are always read out at the beginning of the next meeting and those present will be asked to approve them as being true and correct. If approved by the meeting, the Chairperson then signs them as being a true and accurate record. If they are not correct, you make the corrections required and initial them before the Chairperson signs them.

The Chairperson then checks the minutes to see if there are any matters needing discussion. This is really a 'bring up' system so that matters people were to attend to since the last meeting can be checked on to see that the requested actions have been taken.

Copies of the minutes of each meeting are emailed or given to the members several days before each meeting as a reminder in case they need to have done certain tasks.

This applies to activities in particular. Each Activity Leader should report on progress made on the plans since the last meeting. The sample set of minutes overleaf may be helpful. This would be the minimum standard to aim for.

Letterheads

Units often create their own letterheads and are encouraged to do so, providing they do not bring discredit to the Unit or the Scout Movement. The Regional Service Centre staff will be able to provide you with the official SCOUTS, and Venturer ADVENTURE PLUS logos.

When writing letters it is important that you:

- Find out and use a person's correct name and role;
- Where necessary, draft and then finally write or type the letter.
- Acknowledge correspondence promptly,
- Send letters of thanks promptly.

Documents File

One good quality ring binder and a two-hole paper punch will last the Unit for many years. A set of alphabetical cardboard dividers will be needed as well.

Create an alphabetical index for correspondence, e.g.:

- a) Minutes
- b) Regional Venturer Leader's letters
- b) Caving weekend
- c) Easter tramp
- d) Finance matters
- e) Group newsletters and correspondence
- f) General correspondence
- g) National Activities / Newsletters

Award Scheme Certificates

Write out the Award certificates and get the Venturer Leader or Assessor (where appropriate) and Unit Chairperson to sign them for the Unit Chairperson to present at the earliest opportunity.

Note who receives what certificates in the Unit's Minutes so a permanent record is kept in one place. A quick read through the minutes of past meetings would soon allow the Unit to present replacement certificates if a member loses them and needs copies.

Contact List

This is an important task for the Communications Officer as a 'Contact List' is a vital tool for any Unit. Issue a copy of the 'Contact List' to every Unit member. Include a physical street address, an email address if any, a landline and cell phone number if any.

When phoning, the Venturer Leader would ring the Unit Chairperson who would, in turn, ring the two Unit Executive contact people. They in turn would ring the three members on their list and then ring the Unit Chairperson back to confirm they have contacted everyone.

If using text or email, the Venturer Leader will still notify the Chairperson who then contacts everyone.

Contact lists come in many forms. Examples might be:

- Cell phone contact list for texts and voice calls.
- An Excel type spreadsheet kept on member's personal computers or tablets etc.
- A spreadsheet kept on a secure internet storage site such as 'Google Docs' or 'Dropbox' and accessible to Unit members VL and GL as 'view only'.
- A printed list kept in a personal diary or somewhere handy where it can be readily referred to.

Here is a suggested list of the information needed

The information that needs to be kept is not only for making contact with the Unit members, but also for making contact with their families in emergencies etc.

- *Name and possibly nickname*
- *Cell phone and or landline number*
- *Physical address*
- Parents or care givers names
- Brothers or sisters names if at the same address
- Mailing address if different from the physical address
- Email address

The Communications Officer will need to share the first three items (in italics) with all members so they can keep their personal contact list up to date.

Social Websites

Care should be taken with any information published on social or other websites. It would be wise not to publish:

1. Names of any people appearing in photos on the site.
2. Photos that ridicule people, or show them or SCOUTS in less than a good light.

There are many examples of people being denied employment because prospective employers have found photos of the applicant on FaceBook and similar sites that suggest that just maybe the person could be irresponsible. The fact that the person was young at the time will not be considered.

Units with "FaceBook" or similar pages MUST make sure that the site is restricted to Unit Members plus the Venturer Leader and Group Leader. Do not take risks with your members' good name, or that of SCOUTS.

Example set of Minutes

Minutes of the ABC Venturer Unit, held at the ABC Scout Hall Meeting Room, 21 Jones Crescent, Mangahau on the 20th October 2012 commencing at 7pm.

Present

James Smith (Chair), Heather Brown (Sec), Jim Brown (Treasurer), Haley Cousins, Harry Chittock, Kevin James, Joe Ryan, Mary Jones (VL)

Apologies

Michael Jamieson

Previous minutes

Read and confirmed as true and correct.

Matters Requiring Action

Venture: It was resolved *"that the Unit works as a team and everyone helps to raise the funds for those attending the Venture"*.

Council Reps: It was resolved *"that James and Kevin attend the next Regional Venturer Council as the Unit's representatives."*

Ruapehu Tramp: It was resolved that *"The Unit hire a mini bus driven by the Venturer Leader to take them to Mt Ruapehu on the 15 November for a Summer Tramp."*

Matters Requiring Discussion

Zone campfire: It was agreed that due to conflict with Mt Ruapehu Tramp the Unit is unable to help with the Zone campfire.

Unit camp: It was agreed that the Unit hold a camp at Camp Kilsby on the 14th December commencing on Friday evening and that the Activity Leader be Michael.

Raft Race: It was agreed that The Unit accept the challenge to a raft race from the Hawkesbury Venturers and that James organise it and advise Hawesbury that the 5th December at 10am is OK.

Matters for information

Finance Report: The treasurer reported that the Unit has \$486 in the bank. The following accounts were approved for payment.

- Scouts Direct for certificates \$21.00
- Map and Compass Ltd for Ruapehu Maps. \$34.00

Correspondence: National Programmes were received for Term 1 next year.

Zone Calendar: It was noted that the Zone AGM is scheduled for the 8th December. The Chairman and the VL volunteered to attend.

The meeting closed at 8:00pm.

Next meeting date is 3rd November at 7pm.

When creating the agenda for the next meeting, go through the resolutions above and list any that need follow-up or reporting on, in the new agenda.

MEMBERSHIP OFFICER

Job Description

Responsible To

The Unit Executive through the Unit Chairperson.

The Purpose of this Position

To promote the Unit and its activities enthusiastically to Scouts and other teenagers of Venturer age so that the Unit has a constant flow of new members.

Your Main Tasks

1. Plan and hold a 'Venturing Explained' session for each of the Scout Troops that send members to the Unit. The booklet "Venturing Explained – how to run a Venturing Explained session" is available from the SCOUTS National Website in the Venturer Resources section.
2. Regularly encourage your Unit members to invite friends and acquaintances to "join in" your Venturers activities. This is a great way to recruit them into the Unit.
3. Welcome new members, introduce them to everyone and look after them for the first few weeks. Provide transport if necessary to ensure their full involvement until they get comfortable and want to stay with the Unit.
4. Organise the Unit Chairperson and or Venturer Leader to take the new members through the requirements of the Venturer badge and the Unit Code of Conduct so they can be invested as soon as practicable.

Hints for the Membership Officer

It is not intended that the Membership Officer go out and single-handedly capture new recruits for the Unit. The role is to enthuse the Unit members and make them conscious of the need for all members to constantly recruit new members. This is to ensure the growth of the Unit and especially the replacement of older members who are due to leave.

You are expected to organise, but not necessarily run, a 'Venturing Explained' session and so Scouts and their parents can gain some idea of the Unit's purpose and activities.

Posters drawn up by the Unit and personally put up in the Scout halls, school notice boards, etc will also increase awareness of the Unit, but do change them frequently. It is important to have contact names and telephone numbers displayed clearly on any posters and fliers produced.

Remember that it is the EXCITING AND INTERESTING ACTIVITIES that encourage people to join the Unit.

- Do not invite them to a quiet weeknight meeting to start with. They will not understand the jokes and comments and will feel left out.
- Ask them along to outdoor activities first and get them involved, then bring them along to your weeknight meetings.

IN FACT, IF THE MEMBERSHIP OFFICER CONCENTRATES ON HELPING THE UNIT EXECUTIVE RUN WORTHWHILE AND EXCITING ACTIVITIES, KEEPS REMINDING THE UNIT MEMBERS TO INVITE A FRIEND AND THEN MAKES SURE THEY ARE OFFICIALLY WELCOMED AND LOOKED AFTER, HE OR SHE WILL HAVE SUCCEEDED.

ACTIVITY LEADER

Job Description

Responsible To

The Unit Executive

The Purpose of this Position

To plan and run a particular activity for the Unit.

Note: The Activity Leader's position is not a permanent or long term one. For a major expedition it could last for say, six months, but for most Unit activities the position would be expected to last no more than two or three months. If you have an active Unit you could be one of several Activity Leaders on the Executive at the same time.

Your Main Tasks:

1. Establish a plan to ensure all aspects of the proposed activity are carefully thought through.
2. Delegate responsibility for key aspects of the activity to be prepared by other members of the Unit and to follow up on their progress. Such aspects would depend on the activity but could be:
 - The venue or route of the activity
 - The financial requirements
 - Equipment
 - Catering
 - Transport
 - Risk Management
3. Communicate with the Unit Executive as the plan develops so they can approve the key aspects well ahead of the activity.
4. Complete the 'Activity Intention' and the 'RAMS' forms and get them to the Group Leader at least 7 days before the event.
5. Communicate with your Unit members and any prospective or new Venturers who may be involved. Enthuse them all to participate and assist in the planning of the activity to make it a success. Remember to advise the parents so they know what is being planned and in doing so gain their support.
6. Brief the contact person listed on the Activity Intention Sheet so they know where you are and who to contact should the necessity arise. If it becomes apparent the trip is going to be late home, the Activity Leader should immediately phone the contact person so that parents and caregivers can be kept fully informed of:
 - the reason;
 - the circumstances for the lateness;
 - the new arrival time.

The booklet "Programme Planning – a guide for Venturer Units" provides a sample activity checklist, activity budget planner, and information on risk management.

Hints for the Activity Leader

It is not intended that you as Activity Leader should organize the entire activity on your own. It is very much a shared experience using the skills of several unit members co-ordinated by the Activity Leader. Do not forget that your Venturer Leader will give support when you need it, and if you ask for it.

Older more experienced members of the unit may organize major activities while younger members in the unit can gain valuable experience by planning the minor activities.

SHARE THE TASK – A Team Effort Achieves More.

Remember a well-planned activity that involves the whole Unit in the decision making has a much greater chance of being a success – this will encourage the Venturers to plan and participate in more activities.

Remember: to be successful, you need to have a plan to follow.

Finally: Write up the activity in the Unit Log Book after the event so the Unit has an accurate record of who was involved and what was achieved. A few photos also help. You may not do that activity again, but the Unit might in a few years time.

NATIONAL OFFICE

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