

INTRODUCTION - LOCAL CHAPTER PROCEDURES MANUAL

The enclosed chapter procedures and Bylaws are a step-by-step process for starting and retaining a vibrant local STMA chapter.

The first step is to read the enclosed procedures and Bylaws thoroughly so that you understand not only what a chapter is, but also how it functions. After reading this material, do not hesitate to contact Headquarters if you have any questions or concerns.

The second step is to begin to discuss forming an STMA chapter with other local sports turf professionals. Also, contact local industry friends: your suppliers, local companies with sports turf functions, the colleges and universities, schools, parks, etc. If these people are not familiar with STMA, provide them with one of the brochures (Headquarters will supply copies), which explain the STMA organization and its activities.

You must establish a substantial nucleus of local members, all of whom share your enthusiasm and who want to be involved in the foundation work of this new local STMA chapter to represent their (and your) specific interests.

Everyone may not immediately recognize the value of what you are trying to do and you may have to explain the many opportunities a local STMA chapter provides to learn by each other's experiences, and prosper as a result. Review what you see as the needs of the local STMA members and evaluate future needs for the continued growth of the sports turf management profession. This will demonstrate that belonging to a chapter is not a question of cost, but rather an investment that pays for itself many times over. Local STMA chapter involvement will enable sports turf professionals to develop more professional sports turf operations and contribute to the success of their sports teams.

If a member uses one good idea out of an educational program produced by the local STMA chapter, the meeting costs are paid for by the savings realized by the implementation of that idea. This has been our experience with other STMA chapters and it is repeated on a regular basis.

Finally, don't expect everything to fall into place too quickly. Experience has shown that a group can be formed in a matter of a month or two; however, the rule is that it usually takes approximately six to eight months. It's all dependent upon the people that you contact, their perception of your ideas, their enthusiasm and, most importantly, your enthusiasm and tenacity.

CAUTIONARY NOTE: If more than six months has elapsed and you have followed all of the suggestions mentioned above, but are getting minimal response and support, we strongly suggest that you reevaluate the "need" for a chapter in your area.

Sometimes economic conditions, geographic location, population density, time constraints of potential members, etc. can be an indication that the time is not right to start a chapter in your area.

Our experience has shown that chapters with a very small nucleus to pull from tend to burn out their volunteers in a relatively short time and the chapter becomes weak and inactive. Our intent is not to discourage you. Rather, it is to **encourage** you to build a strong foundation that will support a vibrant, active local STMA chapter.

The STMA Headquarters staff and Chapter Committee Chair will assist you in any way possible to ensure a successful launch of your new local STMA chapter.

BRIEF OUTLINE OF STEPS INVOLVED IN STARTING A NEW STMA CHAPTER

1. Study these procedures and Bylaws so that you fully understand the purpose of a chapter and how it functions.
2. Call STMA Headquarters and express your interest in starting a chapter. They will inform you of other local interest, if any, in starting a new chapter in your area.
3. Form a Steering Committee. Hold a Steering Committee meeting. Headquarters will equip you with the following information:

List of STMA members in your area Membership applications

4. Send initial encouragement letter to STMA members interested in chartering a chapter. (Form A)
5. Publicize formation of the chapter in the STMA Sports Turf Manager Newsletter, SPORTSTURF magazine, and your local papers. (Form B)
6. Arrange with Headquarters for a conference call with the Chapter Committee Chair. Qualify interest and make sure interested sports turf professionals are aware of responsibilities and requirements in running a chapter.
7. Schedule first Chapter meeting. (Forms C & D)
8. Recap Initial Chapter Meeting. (Forms E & F)
9. Have Chapter secretary or dedicated scribe put the STMA Executive Director, STMA Communications Director and Chapter Committee Chair on your mailing list.
10. Continue to recruit sports turf professionals to form a minimum body of 25 active members. Stay in constant contact with Headquarters for assistance.
11. Send a list of all active members you have recruited to STMA Headquarters.
12. Hold conference call training session with Chapter Committee Chair covering Bylaws, requirements, or any questions.
13. Submit to Headquarters the following:
 - A. Petition (Form G)
 - B. Chapter Charter Agreement (Form H)
 - C. Chapter Bylaws (Form I)
 - D. SS-4 Employer ID # Application (Form J)
 - E. Chapter Incorporation Papers or proof of application for Chapter Incorporation – (See Form K for details)
 - F. List of Charter Members
 - G. List of Chapter Officers
 - H. Necessary Fee (\$550 Chapter Affiliation fee)

**BRIEF OUTLINE OF STEPS INVOLVED IN STARTING A NEW STMA CHAPTER
(continued)**

14. Chapter Charter is reviewed by the STMA Executive Director and if everything is in order, it is then voted on during the next STMA Board meeting.
15. New chapter announced and President's gavel presented during annual conference.
16. Set fiscal year as January 1 - December 31.
17. Follow up from Headquarters, Chapter Committee Chair and Executive Board.

CHAPTER COMPLIANCE PROCEDURES

CHECK LIST

To remain in compliance with the STMA chapter procedures and Bylaws, the following applies:

1. Maintain a minimum of 25 active members. (See Chapter Procedures, Section X.)
2. Convert your "guests" to members.
3. Make sure all chapter dues (if any) from active chapter members are collected and remit the Chapter Affiliation fee of \$550.00.
4. Fill out and return your Chapter Registration Form (Form O) each year with the requested attachments including the chapter's financial statement for the previous year.
5. Elect the following officers according to the terms in the Chapter Bylaws under Article VI, Section 2. You can alter the officers to fit your chapter needs.
 - A. President
 - B. President-Elect
 - C. Commercial Vice-President
 - D. Secretary
 - E. Treasurer
 - F. Immediate Past President

Chapter Officers are not limited to the above; additions/subtractions may be made.

6. If at all possible, please hold officer elections prior to the National Conference (each January). Otherwise, please complete officer elections by February 1st of each year. Submit new officer contact information to national annually.
7. Appoint standing committee chairs. (See Chapter Bylaws, Article VII, Section 1.)
8. Only officers are authorized to enter into any contracts on behalf of the chapter.
9. Send updated membership rosters to Headquarters as requested. Roster will be checked against membership records at Headquarters. You will receive a confirmation list of paid STMA members within one month of receipt of list at Headquarters.
10. Send Headquarters 1 copy of your chapter newsletter each time it is published. Put STMA Headquarters on the Chapter mailing list so all mailings are received.

CHAPTER COMPLIANCE PROCEDURES – CHECK LIST (continued)

11. Hold a minimum of four chapter meetings per year. A meeting is a gathering of members, beyond the board of directors, for educational purposes i.e. workshop, seminar, etc.
12. Take minutes at all board and membership meetings and send copies of each to Headquarters within 3 weeks of each meeting.
13. Get approval from the STMA Headquarters in advance of sponsoring any joint programs with commercial organizations or when using the STMA logo, name or trademark. Allow time for request to be taken to the STMA Board if necessary.
14. Be sure that your chapter has been incorporated. (See Chapter Procedures, Section VI, A.)
15. File necessary reports each year with your Secretary of State to maintain your incorporation status as required in your state. (See Procedures, Section VI, A.)
16. File any required State Tax reports each year (See Form L).
17. Be sure to inform Headquarters of your Federal Employer ID Number when you receive it from the IRS. Use this number on your chapter checking account.
18. It is recommended that financial reports be audited annually or at a minimum, every 2 years, with the audit committee composed of at least 2 board members and an outside financial person.

PROCEDURES OUTLINE

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PROCEDURES OUTLINE

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- C. Sample Initial Meeting Announcement
- D. Sample Meeting Structure Survey
- E. Sample Meeting Summary
- F. Sample Participation Survey
- G. Chapter Petition
- H. Chapter Charter Agreement
- I. Chapter Bylaws
- J. SS-4 Employer ID# Application
- K. Sample Articles of Incorporation Wording
- L. Federal and State Tax Information
- M. Complimentary STMA Membership Form
- N. Sample Letter of Invitation
- O. STMA Chapter Registration Form

STMA PROCEDURES FOR FORMING A LOCAL CHAPTER

I. EXPLANATION OF A CHAPTER

A. WHAT IS AN STMA CHAPTER?

STMA chapters have been established as a vehicle for sports turf professionals to network with their peers and to meet regularly for educational opportunities.

B. WHEN TO ESTABLISH AN STMA CHAPTER

The time to start an STMA chapter is when a local group of 25 or more sports turf professionals who are dedicated to the ideals and professional goals of STMA have expressed a desire to meet regularly on a local level to further these goals.

C. THE PURPOSE OF AN STMA CHAPTER

STMA's mission statement is "...To be the recognized leader in strengthening the sports turf industry and enhancing members' competence and acknowledgement of their professionalism." Goals of a chapter are:

- i. To serve the sports turf profession locally
- ii. To promote the art of managing sports turf fields and venues
- iii. To encourage professional dialogue and development in sports turf management
- iv. To encourage and develop membership in the STMA

STMA chapters provide STMA members the opportunity to meet regularly to discuss and develop the various aspects of sports turf at all levels.

A minimum of four chapter meetings must be held per year to maintain active chapter status. A meeting is a gathering of members, beyond the board of directors, for educational purposes i.e. workshop, seminar, etc.

Your regular chapter meetings must be directed to your membership – any person at any level of sports turf management.

STMA PROCEDURES FOR FORMING A LOCAL CHAPTER

II. STARTING UP A CHAPTER

A. THE FIRST FEW STEPS

1. Discuss your idea of starting a Chapter with STMA's Executive Director.
2. Discuss logistics and needs with Headquarters Chapter Relations Coordinator and Chair of Chapter Relations Committee.

STMA Headquarters staff will assist you in establishing a new chapter. One of the first steps is to obtain a listing of STMA members in your area to determine if there is a significant nucleus for chapter formation.

This list can be obtained from Headquarters by calling 800/323-3875. Allow about one week. By contacting STMA members in writing, an early determination can be made as to whether or not there is enough interest in a local chapter. (see Form A)

3. Discuss Bylaws and requirements of a chapter with Chapter Relations Committee Chair and Headquarters Chapter Relations Coordinator.
4. A simple but effective way to reach sports turf management professionals in your surrounding area is to send a press release (see Form B) to local papers, radio, and TV stations announcing the formation of an STMA chapter in your area.

B. CHAPTER STEERING COMMITTEE

Once you are sure that there is sufficient interest, organize a steering committee of 5-6 selected sports turf professionals with the following strengths:

Commitment to STMA and its mission
Resourcefulness
Commitment to the sports turf management profession
Leadership abilities and the time to devote to the project of establishing a successful chapter

The importance of careful selection of steering committee members cannot be over-emphasized, as this group will set the framework and tone for the chapter.

It is also likely that your first officers will come from this group. Therefore, it is recommended but not mandatory that your steering committee be made up of people who have been national STMA members. This is recommended for two very important reasons:

1. A chapter must be organized by sports turf management professionals who are knowledgeable about STMA, its programs and focus; and
2. It is suggested that one be a member of STMA or a member of the Chapter for a minimum of one full year just prior to election/appointment. (See Chapter Bylaws, Article V and VI.)

STMA PROCEDURES FOR FORMING A LOCAL CHAPTER

The initial meeting of the steering group should probably be devoted to exploring mutual areas of interest and to determine if they meet all the qualifications and have the cohesive qualities that will get a chapter off on the right foot.

Remember -- the main purpose of an STMA Chapter is to give sports turf professionals in the surrounding area the opportunity to meet on a frequent basis to encourage the healthy exchange of management ideas, experiences and expertise. In other words, the opportunity to network.

Agenda for Steering Committee Meeting

1. Have everyone introduce themselves, tell a little about themselves and why they are attending (or else some variation of this to get acquainted).
2. Discuss need for chapter in area.
3. Discuss each individual's willingness to serve in which areas.
4. Choose a date, time and place for your first chapter meeting.
5. Review chapter Bylaws completely to be sure your chapter activities are in complete compliance with the Bylaws. Copy the Bylaws for all present and read each point. Discuss as needed.
6. Designate specific assignments to individual steering committee members for the first chapter meeting -- i.e., generating attendance, arranging for location, budgeting, etc. (Do not schedule a speaker for the first Steering Committee meeting. Use the time to discuss **STMA and the benefits of joining the** association and chapter.)
7. Set a timetable for doing things like setting dues, electing officers, initiating the process of incorporation, scheduling programs for the year, etc.
8. Review general goals, objectives and potential of the chapter.

Mail announcement of initial meeting (see Form C).

Keep Headquarters abreast of all plans and activities every step of the way so they can assist you in your implementation process.

STMA PROCEDURES FOR FORMING A LOCAL CHAPTER

C. FIRST CHAPTER MEETINGS

This is an important step in the organizing process. Enthusiasm generated here will determine the future success of your efforts. Be sure to have ample supplies of membership brochures (available from Headquarters) for those who might attend your first few meetings but who are not yet members.

1. It is suggested that all prospective chapter members are welcomed as they arrive at each meeting. Nametags for all participants will help everyone get acquainted.
2. Explain the purpose of the meetings, general purpose and background of STMA and steps in organizing a chapter, and review Bylaws with attendees. Hold a question and answer period.
3. You may have to have four or five meetings to gain momentum and interest.
4. When you have the commitment from the minimum required 25 active professionals, invite a motion that a chapter be formed and that the group will abide by the STMA Bylaws. Explain that a petition to charter the chapter will need to be prepared and all legal steps taken to form a chapter completed. Upon completion, these materials will be reviewed by STMA's Board at their next meeting at which time a motion will be made to officially recognize a chapter.
5. If the motion is adopted; at your next few meetings:
 - a) Choose a chapter name and logo (some chapters run contests for this purpose)
 - b) Have members sign the chapter petition (Form G)
 - c) Finalize the Chapter Bylaws form and Chapter Charter Agreement (Forms H & I)
 - d) Conduct election of officers –
 - 1) Official election should be held in the fourth quarter of each year so the officers take office for the following fiscal year Jan. 1 – Dec. 31 and so they can attend the Chapter Officers Training Session (COTS) held at the annual conference.
 - 2) If your Chapter is chartering in mid-year, elect your first officers for a 1–1/2 year term for continuity.
 - e) Decide on yearly dues -- see Section V. Finance.
6. Decide on a Charter Membership cutoff date.
7. Decide on frequency of meetings, pattern, etc. -- see Section IV. Meeting Structure.

STMA PROCEDURES FOR FORMING A LOCAL CHAPTER

8. Have the chapter secretary mail the following to Headquarters:
 - a. Petition - signed by a minimum of 25 active members (Form G)
 - b. Chapter Charter Agreement (Form H)
 - c. Chapter Bylaws (Form I)
 - d. SS-4 Employer I D # Application (Form J)
 - e. Chapter Incorporation Papers or proof of application for incorporation
 - f. List of names & addresses of all Charter Members
 - g. List of names & addresses of Chapter Officers
 - h. Necessary Fees

When the above material is received at Headquarters, it will be presented to the STMA Board for approval. The Board meets four times per year.

9. Set a date for your next meeting and suggest everyone bring another sports turf management professional as a guest.
10. After each meeting, to help keep the momentum going, write a short meeting summary in memorandum format and send it the next day to all attendees (Form E). This might also be an appropriate time to send them a short survey to get them to commit to active participation (Form F).

STMA PROCEDURES FOR FORMING A LOCAL CHAPTER

III. CHAPTER STRUCTURE

NOTE: No more than one office shall be held by the same person at any one time.

No company or organization can have more than one member/employee serving as an officer at the same time.

A. OFFICERS - January to December Term

Chapter officers shall consist of the following: President, President-Elect, Commercial Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and Immediate Past President. Basic duties of each officer are described in the chapter Bylaws. Additional duties are listed below.

Officer Responsibilities
(in addition to those listed in the chapter Bylaws)

Immediate Past President

The Immediate Past President position is assumed by the past year's President. The Immediate Past President chairs the nominating committee. The role of the Immediate Past President is to ensure the goals and objectives set during the past year are reached and the vision of the chapter remains strong.

President

The position of the President is assumed by the past year's President-Elect.

Contact point for Headquarters and Chapter Committee Chair.
Shares all correspondence from Headquarters with Board and general membership as needed.
Oversees long range planning for local STMA Chapter.
Directs and controls the activities of the local STMA Chapter.
Opens each meeting and welcomes attendees.
Calls Chapter Board meetings as needed and chairs those meetings.
Serves as a member of Publicity Committee and the Programs Committee.
Performs any needed communications or coordination with the STMA Board.
Sends official letter of welcome to any new STMA members to outline the aims and the objectives of the chapter.

President-Elect - Elected Each Year

In the absence of the President:

Directs and controls the activities of the local STMA Chapter.
Opens the meeting and welcomes attendees.
Serves as a member of both the Arrangements and the Membership Committee.

STMA PROCEDURES FOR FORMING A LOCAL CHAPTER

Commercial Vice President - Elected Each Year

The Commercial Vice President shall represent the interests of the commercial members and affiliates to the Chapter Board.

Secretary - Elected Each Year

Keeps the minutes of each membership meeting and each Board meeting and sends a copy to STMA Headquarters no more than three weeks following each meeting.

Performs any needed correspondence with STMA Headquarters.

Keeps a list of STMA members from the local area and makes the list available to the Membership Committee for recruitment purposes.

Sends Headquarters a roster of chapter members twice a year when requested or sends all new member information to Headquarters as it is received.

Maintains current Chapter Officers roster with company name, phone number.

Fills out a chapter registration form each year (will be mailed to each chapter by Headquarters).

Treasurer - Elected Each Year

Keeps the financial records of the local STMA Chapter up to date.

Deposits the funds resulting from payments for the meeting charges into the general fund and pays the debt incurred by the speaker and dinner expenses from that fund.

Sends Headquarters the annual affiliation fee, non-National member dues and a copy of the chapter financials as prepared.

Produces receipt concerning the meeting cost for any attendee needing one.

Arranges for annual report of chapter financial records. This report must be filed with Headquarters no later than April 1.

FOLLOWING ARE SUGGESTIONS FOR CHAPTER COMMITTEES AND THEIR DUTIES

B. STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Each standing committee must have a chairperson who is appointed by the President. Chairpersons are active PROFESSIONAL or COMMERCIAL members. The chairpersons of these standing committees serve as members of the Chapter Executive Board (see Chapter Bylaws, Article VII).

Arrangements Chair - Appointed Each Year

Reserves a meeting room for each meeting which will most advantageously support the program and generate continued interest among the attendees.

Arranges a social time before each meeting to further the networking opportunities.

Produces name tags for those attending each meeting.

Pursues various locations as potential meeting sites.

Keeps a record of attendance for each meeting and notifies the Membership Committee during committee meetings.

Submits attendance record of all STMA members to the Chapter Board during committee meetings.

Takes reservations for each meeting and transfers prepaid funds to the Treasurer of the local STMA Chapter.

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Membership Chair - Appointed Each Year

Updates meeting attendee list regularly.
Furnishes list to the Publicity Committee.
Coordinates recruitment of new members to the STMA and attends local chapter meetings.
Greet any new attendees at meetings and introduces them to other attendees.
Implements calling programs to any new or absent STMA members to encourage their attendance at the meetings.
Stimulates attendance through door prizes and special prize incentives.
Secures door prizes for meetings.
Maintains or facilitates the current chapter membership roster and gives to secretary to mail to Headquarters when requested.
Monitors attendance of guests and promotes STMA membership to those guests.

Programs Chair - Appointed Each Year

Plans topics and method of presentation for each meeting.
Delivers topic and method of presentation to Communications Committee in a timely manner so that each program can be announced in the chapter newsletter.
Announces speaker and/or program at each meeting.
Solicits ideas from STMA members on the type of meetings and topics in which they would be interested.
Stimulates continued interest by varying types of meetings.
Plans local chapter election process.
Is responsible for monitoring proper "mix" of meetings. (See Chapter Procedures, Section IV, Meeting Structure.)

Communications/Publicity Chair - Appointed Each Year

Coordinates all communication to chapter members.
Produces chapter newsletter on a regular basis.
Works with Publicity Committee to include appropriate articles and timely chapter information.
Promotes chapter activities to the members and general public.
Sends out press releases when applicable (variations of Form B).
Creates articles for the newsletter to promote chapter activities.
Creates promotional material to advertise chapter activities.

Finance & Audit Chair – Appointed Each Year

It is suggested that this person not be a current officer or board member. The committee may consist of one or two additional people. The primary duty of this committee shall be to review the chapter's financial records. This review should take place as soon as all the financial data is available in January. Chapters are not legally required to have an audit or review every year. At times when the chapter is especially concerned about financial management, particularly when a new treasurer takes office, an audit provides greater assurance. Other years, a review may suffice. Your chapter should perform a cost/benefit analysis to determine whether an independent CPA should review the financial statements or if an internal review will suffice. The suggested review process is as follows:

STMA PROCEDURES FOR FORMING A LOCAL CHAPTER

Prior to the financial review the committee should obtain:

- Preceding year's treasurer's records
- Cash receipts and cash disbursements
- Supporting documents for receipts and disbursements
- Bank statements, checkbook, savings and loans statements, certificates of deposits, etc.
- Minutes of meetings for the period of the financial review plus any previous minutes which may have a bearing on any cash disbursement authorizations
- Copy of budget for the year under financial review
- Chapter Statements of Policy
- Any and all of the above as they may pertain to separate funds (workshops, convention funds, special events, etc.)

When conducting the financial review, note any approval authorization given by the chapter board, compliance with budget and a statement of policy which may be applicable to the treasurer's function.

The financial review committee prepares a financial review report. (See Exhibits A&B for suggested format.) The committee should note in the report any transfer of funds which may occur during the year due to a change in chapter treasurer. Also, the report may include comments such as recognition of good work, constructive suggestions, etc. The chapter does not need an independent auditor to do this report. A past treasurer or anyone with accounting experience may prepare the report.

This committee may also help set financial policy and assist with the budget process.

EXHIBIT A

TO CHAPTER:

The Financial Review Committee has reviewed the monthly statements of receipts and disbursements and supporting documents, vouchers, and invoices evidencing the recorded receipts and disbursements of the chapter for the year ended 20xx. The financial statements, reconciliations and summary of funds for the year ended 20xx are fairly presented and documented.

XXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXX – Chairman
Financial Review Committee
Date

or,

The Finance Committee has reviewed the annual chapter financial review for the year ended 20xx and submits a copy for inclusion in the chapter minutes and a copy approved to be forwarded to the Headquarters office by April 1.

XXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXX – Chairman
Finance Committee
Date

Annual Report for _____

Reconciliation of receipts and expenditures

1/1 Balance – checkbook stub no. _____ \$ _____

Plus receipts for the year \$ _____

Total funds available \$ _____

Less disbursements for the year \$ _____

12/31 Balance – checkbook stub no. _____ \$ _____

Reconciliation of year-end bank statement

12/31 Balance per bank \$ _____

Plus deposits in transit:

Date	Amount
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Total deposits in transit: \$ _____

Less outstanding checks:

Number	Amount
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Total outstanding checks: \$ _____

12/31/xx Balance – checkbook stub no. _____ \$ _____

Summary of funds

Checking account (account number _____)

Certificate of deposit

Location: _____, No. _____, Interest rate _____, Maturity _____

Location: _____, No. _____, Interest rate _____, Maturity _____

Location: _____, No. _____, Interest rate _____, Maturity _____

Location: _____, No. _____, Interest rate _____, Maturity _____

Savings account (passbook number _____)

Other funds:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Total funds available to the chapter \$ _____

STMA PROCEDURES FOR FORMING A LOCAL CHAPTER

IV. MEETING STRUCTURE

A. MEETING REQUIREMENTS

Each chapter is required to hold a minimum of **four** chapter meetings per year. A meeting is a gathering of members, beyond the board of directors, for educational purposes i.e. workshop, seminar, etc. Additional meetings may be held if desired which would be geared to STMA members -- sports turf management personnel at all levels. Topics for such meetings could include:

- How to motivate your staff and keep them motivated
- Technical advances within sports turf
- Awards and recognition programs
- Field maintenance techniques
- Field marking
- Managing multi-use fields, etc.

Here are patterns of meetings you might consider:

Pattern A - The chapter holds an evening meeting in a central location. At each meeting, there is a theme, snacks may be served, a speaker or roundtable discussion or panel discussion on a topic of interest.

Pattern B - The chapter holds a luncheon meeting in a central location with a one-hour program. To participate, members have to be away from their jobs about 2-1/2 hours per meeting.

Pattern C - The chapter meets for breakfast at a central location. This format often works well if limited to an occasional meeting.

Pattern D - Day-long educational session.

Pattern E - Day-long seminar on wheels.

If you are uncertain about members' preferences, conduct a short written survey at one of your chapter meetings or through the mail and find out how members feel about issues like meeting times, locations, speakers, etc. (See Form D) You should expect a 25% return on your survey to gain an adequate sampling of your chapter's opinion.

The key to good attendance at chapter meetings is consistency. Plan your meetings on the same day and time of the month so members can plan ahead and reserve that time for STMA.

Special events like Patterns D or E can be scheduled any time facilities are available. They should be planned well in advance to encourage best possible attendance and to avoid conflict with other area events. You will also want to maximize publicity in trade magazines. These may require a lead time of 60 to 90 days.

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B. PROGRAM PLANNING & FOLLOW-UP

The subject matter of your programs is one of the keys to your success as a chapter. To score well in this area, your program planners must know your members and the issues important to them as management professionals.

Here are some ways to keep the chapter "on-track":

1. Take an annual survey of members and draw a ranking of preferred topics. (Form D)
2. Get several key members together for a brainstorming session on topics.
3. Use critique sheets at every meeting so members can evaluate that meeting's program and also suggest future topics. (Variation of Form D specifically geared to a particular meeting.)
4. Keep your chapter business meeting brief and precise -- conduct major business at board meetings.
5. Plan programs well in advance - publish the entire year's schedule at the very beginning of the year.
6. Give your next program a "plug" at the end of each meeting.
7. Allow for a question and answer period whenever appropriate.
8. To aid in chapter networking, you must put Headquarters on your mailing list (Secretary's responsibility). Offer to exchange materials with as many other chapters as practical, thus giving you another resource for ideas.
9. Keep regular programs at the management level and the topics varied to make the chapter appealing to a broad spectrum of STMA members, and balance the technical with the non-technical.
10. Plan management and non-management level programming to give your chapter members a chance to introduce all levels of sports turf personnel to STMA. (See Chapter Procedures, Section I, C.)

C. SPEAKERS/SITE VISITS/PANELS

Chapters generally use "volunteer" speakers, from the local community, a nearby college, etc. who do not charge an honorarium. In many cases, the members of the chapter are the most frequent speakers. Remember, they are sports turf management professionals. Instead of holding all your meetings at a facility, schedule one at a member's company in a conference room. Follow your meeting with a site visit of a member's sports turf facility - an excellent way to see how others do things first hand.

You can also vary your programs from time to time by scheduling a roundtable discussion or panel group to discuss a particular subject in lieu of a speaker. A "demonstration" meeting is another program possibility.

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D. CHOOSING MEETING TIMES

As stated earlier, select the same day and time (second Tuesday, for example) as this will help attendees remember the meeting.

Select your meeting dates as far in advance as possible to help your members plan their participation. The early selection of dates will also allow your program chair some latitude when approaching a speaker.

E. CHOOSING A LOCATION

The best site would be a centrally located restaurant, hotel, college or university, or member's business. Investigate several possibilities; being sure to choose a location which enhances the image of STMA as a professional organization and that has adequate meeting space and audio-visual capabilities.

Because of logistic problems, some chapters may have to move their meetings from location to location. This adds the extra burden of overnight reservations to some; but if meetings are publicized early enough, members can arrange their schedules to attend.

F. CHARGING FOR PROGRAMS

The cost of your meetings normally will not be an issue for your members as long as you keep things reasonable and the programs worthwhile. Your objective should be to cover all out-of-pocket costs, at a minimum. A well-managed program series should certainly not drain the chapter treasury, and should in fact contribute to the treasury. Do remember, however, that as **STMA is a non-profit organization, so is the chapter**. Concentrate on quality networking and programs rather than on building up a large treasury.

These are the costs you should try to cover in fees for a given meeting:

1. Meals and beverage (or charge based on consumption)
2. Meeting space fees (if any)
3. Audio-visual rentals
4. Speaker fees (if any)
5. Cost of advance promotion for meeting

It is wise to request registration and payment be made before the event. It lets you plan more accurately for the number of meals, etc. Most hotels/restaurants require a guarantee figure at least 48 hours in advance. If you guarantee 50 attendees and only 30 people show up, you must still pay for the 20 no-shows. Your chapter should establish, and publicize to the general membership, an invoicing policy for no-shows if you do not collect fees in advance.

It is a good idea to have a member charge and a higher non-member charge. This allows non-members the opportunity to see what you're all about, and at the same time gives an added value to membership.

STMA PROCEDURES FOR FORMING A LOCAL CHAPTER

Advance payment simplifies your bookkeeping and keeps the chapter out of the receivable business. You may also want to set a lower fee to those who sign up and pay (maybe 2 weeks) ahead of the event. This encourages early payment and helps you plan more accurately.

You may also offset costs by getting commercial vendors to sponsor parts of the meeting. When doing this be sure to establish policies that are fair to your vendors.

G. ANNOUNCING YOUR MEETING

An annual schedule of your meetings should be sent out at the beginning of each year to your chapter members and Headquarters. This will enable your attendees to plan ahead and mark their calendars accordingly. A reminder announcement should be sent out at least three weeks prior to the meeting. Publicity will be given to your event in the STMA Sports Turf Manager Newsletter and SPORTSTURF magazine if information is received at Headquarters in time for inclusion. Other national and regional media will also be sent releases and may publicize your event. Copy deadlines can be obtained by contacting the Communications Director at Headquarters. Your meeting information also can be posted on the STMA Website.

Try to submit your meeting information in advance to local newspapers, radio and TV stations for inclusion in community service calendar announcements. Utilize Commercial Member offerings and University/College extension and outreach for publicity.

A follow-up article in SPORTSTURF magazine after a meeting or special event is also encouraged. You can arrange this through the STMA Communications Director. The more publicity and exposure your chapter receives, the more likely you are to attract new members. Your chapter articles also promote the chapter network system and give other chapters the opportunity to see and learn from your success.

H. MANAGING YOUR MEETING

Planning and organizing a meeting is nothing more than coordinating the details. But, the details make the meeting! Here are some guidelines to a successful meeting:

1. Be sure that no more than one person is assigned to deal with the facility where the meeting will be held. One person should coordinate the efforts of all other individuals involved in the planning of the meeting.
2. Delegate responsibility -- have one person in charge of mailing and taking registration fees. Have others call members to boost attendance. Have one or two people in charge of registration at the door, a few in charge of welcoming attendees, etc.
3. It is a good policy to have all meeting details in writing from your committee members and the facility where your meeting will be held.
4. Make your Membership Committee responsible for welcoming guests, and providing guests with the necessary information and applications to become active chapter and/or National STMA members.

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V. FINANCE

Here are a few suggestions to enhance your chapter treasury:

- A. MEMBERSHIP DUES - Set your annual chapter dues amount to cover the cost of maintaining that member for one year.
- B. MEETING CHARGES - Charge attendees a nominal fee over and above the cost of their meal to help cover speaker fees, mailings, etc.
- C. DONATIONS - Solicit donations from companies of chapter commercial members.
- D. COTS SESSION - Consider reserving enough money in the chapter treasury to support your chapter officers financially for one night's stay at the annual STMA conference.
- E. NEWSLETTER - Develop a newsletter that is self supporting through advertising and/or sponsorships to cover the costs of production and distribution.
- F. RESERVES – It is a good idea to build reserves of up to one year's budgeted expenses in case of unforeseen circumstances that would adversely affect income.

Note: Remember that as a 501(c)(6) Association, no part of the net earnings may inure to the benefit of any private individual and

A 501(c)(6) chapter is not eligible to receive charitable contributions. It is required to expressly and conspicuously disclose to donors in fund-raising solicitations (whether in written or printed form, by television, radio, or telephone) that contributions to it are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes.

VI. LEGAL MATTERS

A. TWO KEY STEPS

There are two key legal steps your chapter needs to take before it can operate as an official non-profit organization and will be in compliance with STMA's Chapter Bylaws and procedures:

1. File Articles of Incorporation within the state where your chapter is based. You can obtain the necessary forms by writing to your Secretary of State. Filing fees may range from \$25-\$75.

After receiving the forms, follow the sample "Articles of Incorporation" form in these guidelines. (See Form K)

STMA PROCEDURES FOR FORMING A LOCAL CHAPTER

(Chapters in Kentucky, Arizona and New York should contact Headquarters before writing for forms since filing in these states is more involved and you will need assistance.) It is recommended you check with an attorney in your state. You may find someone willing to do the work pro-bono or one of your potential members may offer the service of their attorney.

Chapter incorporation protects your officers, committees and other individuals working on behalf of a chapter from being held personally liable and/or sued in the event of a chapter-related incident. This is why chapter incorporation is so important.

Because incorporation is a legal process regulated by individual states, it is highly recommended that you retain an attorney licensed in your chapter's state to help with the process. Chapters may be able to negotiate legal assistance for free or for a modest fee. Many states for example, require attorneys to provide a minimum number of hours of pro-bono (free) service to not-for-profit organizations as a requirement for licensure.

A chapter's charter and certificate of incorporation document its legal existence. Keep these documents in the chapters permanent files, and send copies to STMA Headquarters.

Additionally, many states require an Annual Report be filed (available from your Secretary of State) each year to maintain incorporation status. Please check with your state for its requirements.

2. Obtain an IRS Employer ID# by filling out the SS-4 Employer ID# Application (Form Q) and returning it to STMA Headquarters for processing. Even though you don't intend to have employees, this Employer ID# will be necessary for opening checking and/or savings accounts in the name of the chapter and it is usually required for incorporation.

B. CONTRACTS

The Chapter Bylaws state:

The Chapter Executive Board shall authorize only officers or appointed staff of the Chapter to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the Chapter and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances. (Article VIII, Sec. 1)

Because a Chapter is liable for all contracts executed on its behalf, authorization to sign contracts must be limited to Chapter officers or appointed staff.

C. INSURANCE

As a chapter, you are an extension of the STMA and are, therefore, covered under the Association insurance umbrella -- provided you are in compliance with the Bylaws of the Association.

STMA's insurance provides liability coverage for your officers, board and committee members, 100% indemnification, and general liability for your meetings. If purchased individually, chapter insurance could cost you at least \$2,000 - \$3,000 a year.

STMA PROCEDURES FOR FORMING A LOCAL CHAPTER

D. UNRELATED BUSINESS INCOME

As a not-for-profit, tax exempt entity, a chapter must be extremely careful when dealing with unrelated business income (i.e., advertising income, funds raised from raffles, bake sales, yard sales, royalties, etc.) A chapter that generates more than \$1,000 of unrelated business income per year is subject to tax on that income and puts the Association at risk of losing its not-for-profit status. Proceeds of all such activities must be utilized for the express purposes under which STMA and the chapter have been formed under IRS regulations.

That is why the STMA Board requires all profit-making chapter activities be reviewed and approved in advance by the Association.

Note: Your tax exempt status means that as long as your activities further the mission of the Association no income taxes are due. In almost all cases this exemption does not apply to sales and use taxes. This will depend on your respective state laws.

E. FISCAL YEAR

All chapters must have a January to December fiscal year. An IRS Form #990 must be filed by May 15 of each year ONLY if your chapter's income is over \$25,000 during a fiscal year.

IMPORTANT: Unless your Chapter has earned MORE than \$25,000 during a fiscal year, DO NOT send any tax forms to the IRS. Your Chapter is automatically covered under the STMA tax-exempt umbrella.

F. STATE AND FEDERAL TAX REPORTING

Please review Form L for important tax reporting information.

STMA PROCEDURES FOR FORMING A LOCAL CHAPTER

VII. AFFILIATION WITH THE Sports Turf Managers Association

A. STMA LOGO & SYMBOLS

As a chartered chapter, you represent STMA and may utilize the STMA logo, stationery and other identifiable STMA symbols in advertising your own specific meetings and activities. It is recommended the STMA logo be used in the following manner: _____ Chapter: STMA logo.

Any joint sponsorship of a function with another organization must be preapproved by the STMA Executive Director.

As a chartered chapter, you may also have your own logo BUT it must be used in conjunction with the STMA logo to signify that you are affiliated with the STMA.

When printing newsletters, meeting announcements, asking people to make checks out to your chapter ... be sure to indicate your chapter name along with STMA (i.e., the North Fork Chapter of STMA is sponsoring ...) This is necessary so that your local chapter activities are not confused with the Association's programs.

B. CHAPTER NAME

Your chapter must be identified in the following way:
_____ Chapter,
Sports Turf Managers Association (or STMA).

C. CHAPTER CORRESPONDENCE

Have your chapter secretary put the STMA Communications Director and STMA Chapter Relations Committee Chair on your mailing list.

Each year, your chapter secretary will be required to fill out the Chapter Registration Form (furnished by Headquarters) and return with all additional required materials. This must be done in order to remain in total compliance with STMA Chapter Bylaws.

STMA PROCEDURES FOR FORMING A LOCAL CHAPTER

VIII. STMA SERVICES

1. Chapter officers and directors liability insurance covered fully by STMA.
2. Meeting general liability insurance covered fully by STMA.
3. Chapter Column in STMA.Sports Turf Manager newsletter and listing chapter section of our National publication, SPORTSTURF magazine.
4. STMA Bi-annual mailing from Headquarters including new-member listing, to facilitate chapter growth, samples of other chapter newsletters, etc.
5. Access to all educational resources and program support materials offered by STMA Chapter Relations Committee and approved by STMA Board.
6. President's Gavel presented to each new chapter during the annual STMA conference.
7. Chapter Procedures Manual.
8. Group Tax Exemption Status.
9. Help from STMA Public Relations Department with regard to press releases, newsletter articles, etc. Contact Suz or Stephanie at Headquarters for Assistance.
10. Opportunity for Local Career Advancement - when a company contacts Headquarters for resumes, Headquarters will automatically put them in touch with the local chapter president to give those chapter members an opportunity to respond to the local search.
11. Chapter Officers Training Session (COTS) and Luncheon held at the STMA annual conference each year.
12. One, 1-Year Complimentary STMA Membership - available to each chapter each year to use as chapters see fit. (Can be awarded to the chapter president, a chapter member who has contributed greatly to the chapter, etc.). Fill out form O and return it to STMA Headquarters along with a current STMA membership application.
13. Direct access to Headquarters and Chapter Chair for assistance.
14. Individual Chapter section on STMA website with direct link to those chapters with their own website.
15. Biennial Regional Conference calls with chapter Presidents, Regional contact, Chapter Relations Committee Chair, STMA Board member contact and Headquarters to discuss questions, concerns and issues.

STMA PROCEDURES FOR FORMING A LOCAL CHAPTER

IX. RECRUITING CHAPTER MEMBERS

STMA provides you with new member listings for your area so that you can put them on your mailing list. It is a good idea to promote national STMA membership as well as local membership in order to make the chapter affiliation fee as low as possible.

Local papers, particularly business periodicals, should be willing to run your press release announcing the chapter formation. Future press releases on actual chapter programs, in advance, can also attract interest in the chapter.

It is a good idea to form a Membership Committee to take leadership in this area. A letter of invitation (Form P) can be mailed to prospective members on a periodic basis to generate interest in the chapter.

STMA CHAPTER PROCEDURES

X. RETENTION OF MEMBERS

STMA members join local chapters with the following expectations:

- a) networking with their peers
- b) focusing on sports turf management topics
- c) freely discussing concerns and/or challenges

To interest STMA members in your chapter and to then retain them as active chapter members, your meetings must meet or exceed their expectations.

Since the STMA Board is committed to providing STMA members with strong, vibrant, active chapters, the Board will monitor very closely your retention of members.

The following attendance requirements have been established to help you maintain the appropriate membership base.

A. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

It takes a minimum of twenty-five active members to start up a new chapter. A larger base of fifty is recommended for stability.

Also, to continue to function as an STMA chapter, you must **maintain** a minimum membership base of twenty-five active members.

Directing the content of your programs to all levels of sports turf is the best way to maintain members in your chapter and can also be an excellent way to attract new sports turf professionals to join the Association and your chapter.

Your Membership Committee should also play an active role in the physical maintenance of active chapter members.

Have your committee keep a record of attendance at meetings -- if a member has missed more than two consecutive meetings, have a committee member call him to find out why.

Assign another committee member to contact non-renewed members for personal follow-up within two months after dues statements have been sent out.

Assign each committee member approximately 5-10 chapter members' names to contact approximately one week before your meeting to remind them and encourage them to attend.

STMA CHAPTER PROCEDURES (continued)

XI. CHAPTER COMPLIANCE

Since a chapter represents STMA and is an "extension" of the Association, not a completely separate entity, it is extremely important that a chapter is in complete compliance with the Bylaws and procedures.

Chapters are monitored carefully by the STMA Board.

A chapter found to be operating in conflict with the chapter procedures or Bylaws will be notified in writing of its specific areas of non-compliance and will have a 90-day probationary period to come into compliance.

A. PROBATION

If a chapter meets the compliance requirement within the 90-day period, it will receive written notice that the probationary status has been terminated.

B. REVOCATION

If a chapter does not come into compliance within the 90-day period, its charter will automatically be revoked.

Additionally, if a chapter falls out of compliance for any reason within twelve months immediately following a probationary termination, the chapter charter will automatically be revoked.

Once a chapter charter is revoked, it cannot be re-activated for any reason. In the best interest of the Association, the STMA Executive Board reserves the right to review in depth and approve or reject any petition to charter in the same jurisdiction of a revoked chapter.

If a chapter is dissolved for any reason, all remaining funds must be turned over to STMA or to another non-profit entity approved in advance by the STMA Board to assure compliance with IRS regulations.

XII. FORMS

The following forms are for your convenience in establishing and maintaining an active STMA chapter.

Suggestion: When you need a form, make a copy so that you always maintain the original form in your procedures binder.

These procedures have been prepared for you to make your job easier in forming and maintaining a local STMA chapter. If you have any questions or need any assistance at all, please do not hesitate to call STMA Headquarters 800/323-3875, or the current STMA Chapter Committee Chair.