

State Metal Detecting Association Volunteer Organizations

By Mike Smith

An association's organizational structure is the heartbeat for the group's membership at large and it is entirely made up of volunteers. The elected officers must provide the leadership atmosphere to move the group forward in the fields of hobby education, legislation activity, community involvement, guest speakers and all the other interesting and important aspects of the hobby.

Metal detecting associations vary greatly in size, with some states having well over 16 clubs and other types of memberships that make up the association. This means that some groups have more resources than others but the challenges for each group leadership are much the same.

In the table below you will see some of the resources required for an organization that must meet the needs of the membership and the needs of the hobby. This list of appointee and volunteers should not be considered the only required association resources but a very good starting point.

Elected Officers	President Vice President Secretary Treasurer
Legislation Alliance Newsletter Editor Website Editor Events Coordinator	Membership Chairperson Fundraiser Chairperson Community Liaison Huntmaster

Remember every one that holds a position in the group is a valuable volunteer who provides their time, skill and talents.

What are the roles and responsibilities of the officers and how should they execute those responsibilities?

President and Vice President must set aside their time to provide the necessary leadership for the association. *Leadership* is getting members involved, delegating responsibilities, and requiring general meeting participation by all appointee and volunteers in their respective roles.

Leadership is not being the sole voice at the quarter/semi/annual meeting. However, having many members involved in the association's activities builds organizational strength and centralism. In the future as new officers are needed for vacant positions these positions can be filled from the appointee / volunteer members who have already gained valuable experience in association matters.

Leadership is holding regularly scheduled quarter/semi/annual agenda driven board meetings. The board meeting should include all of the elected, appointed and volunteer positions. The agenda should include a review of association projects, review of open business actions and a discussion about which membership issues or projects should be considered.

The *Secretary* should keep detailed minutes of all board and general meeting for future reference and for board action.

The *Treasurer* must handle all revenues and expenses, provide detailed monthly reports, year end summary statement, handle all tax matters (with the help from the other board members).

Below is a brief definition on the role & responsibilities of each appointed or volunteer position.

- *Hunt Master:* individual responsible for all the association's planted & unplanted hunts.
- *Community Liaison:* person or persons who interface with public officials (Parks, Law Enforcement, News Outlets, etc) on the association's behalf.
- *Legislation Liaison:* an individual that informs the association about any legislation issues either national, state, or at the local level and recommends a form of action for the club.
- *Manufacturers Representative:* interfaces with equipment mfr. and keeps the members informed of new offerings.
- *Membership Chairperson:* handles membership registration.
- *National Organization Liaison:* contact between the state and national hobby association.
- *Newsletter Editor:* generates & distributes the association's quarterly/semi/annual newsletter.
- *Fundraiser/Events Chairperson:* Coordinator of arranging events and set up fundraisers.
- *Website Editor:* designs and maintains the association website.

What should you take away be after reading this article? First of all the officers and others support members in the association are volunteers. The volunteers and specifically the officers must provide leadership so that the association will move forward and that membership feels good and are excited about going to their quarterly/semi/annual meetings.

The Next Step

The next step is using some of the suggested ways mentioned, the assumption is that people with a similar interest have come forward and are interested in the new association. The next step is to hold the first meeting with the interested parties. The suggestion is that this meeting be very informal. The major objective of the first meeting should be to get to know one another. The way to accomplish this is to have each person wear a "stick on" name tag and fill out the sign in sheet before the start of the meeting. Start the meeting by having each person provide a self-introduction. The introduction should reveal some back ground information on themselves (How many years have they metal detected, the club they represent, etc). Once the introductions are over it is time to develop the direction of the association.

The first action: Is there enough interest in the group to develop the association further?

If the answer is yes, with member involvement, set out to identify what the new organizational structure should be like and how the membership would like the association to support the hobby. In future club meetings the more difficult action items and assignments can take place. Remember to keep the first meeting light and friendly and not overburden the new members with responsibilities and duties. The objective is to have fun and establish a rapport with the members.

Here are some first & second meeting topic suggestions:

- Identify and Elect Officials (President, Secretary, Treasurer and Vice President)
- Set future Meeting Dates Identify Future Meeting Place Establish Membership Dues
- Is the Club to have Formal Name tags?
- Establish a Meeting Agenda
- Determine the Meeting Structure and Format

- Is the Club to:
 - have Bylaws?
 - be a Non-profit Organization?
 - have an Annual/Semi Annual Coin Hunt and Raffles to raise funds?
 - have Speakers from Related Hobbies at events?
 - have Refreshments at events?
 - Identify an Outing Chairperson
 - Establish a Date & Place for the Association's first event
 - Determined the Club Objective and Mission Statement
 - Is the Association Involved in the Community? (Evidence Team, non MDing events etc.)
 - Is the Association Involved in both Local & National Metal Detecting Politics?
 - Will the Association use the Internet (Website)
- From this list the group can easily create the next steps for the association. Remember to keep advertising the association to identify more individuals with similar interest. Never lose sight of the need to have fun in the association and have different type of events for the membership.

This is a list of Metal Detecting Forums that should be able to support messages about a new metal detecting association. Many of the forums require a user name and password and I suggest using the same user name and password for all of the forums you join and visit. These forums have many sub-forums specializing in very specific hobby related topics.

- Friendly Metal Detecting <http://metaldetectingforum.com/>
- Treasure Depot <http://www.thetreasuredepot.com/>
- Treasure Digging <http://treasuredigging.com/>
- Treasure Net <http://forum.treasurenet.com/>
- Treasure Quest <http://forum.treasurequest.com>

Low Cost Website Hosting Company

- Go Daddy <http://www.godaddy.com/>