

AAZK Chapter Resources: Chapter Function Part 1 - Elections, Officers, Meetings & Equipment

Produced by the AAZK Resource Committee



This document was produced to help answer common questions faced by AAZK Chapters. The goal of this resource is to act as a guideline that completely and systematically answers common chapter questions with the understanding that all chapters are run differently. This information may serve as a companion, but not as an alternative, to the AAZK National Operations Manual.

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How does an AAZK Chapter function?

Elections

Typically, officer elections are held at the end of each calendar year (October-December) with new officers taking over in January, however, each chapter may set its own election process plan as outlined in the Chapter Bylaws.

From AAZK Operations Manual 8.01-3 Chapter Standardization:

“Elections should take place in the last quarter of the calendar year so that all officers are in place for Chapter Re-charter in the 1st quarter of the next fiscal year”

- All chapters must have the following officers: President, VP, Secretary, and Treasurer and all officers shall be National AAZK members ¹
- Some chapters have officers with alternating two-year terms; this makes for an easier transition for new officers ^{2 & 4}
 - President and Treasurer are elected one year, and the Vice President and Secretary are elected in alternating years
- Term limits may be placed into the Chapter Bylaws to encourage new leadership and ideas to enter the chapter ⁴
 - Each officer has a two year term limit and is then eligible again after one year off. Officers can hold a different officer position after a 2 year term which helps the chapter from stagnating⁵

Chapter Executive & Officer Responsibilities

- A chapter shall maintain a minimum of two active chapter officers ¹
- Duties of the officers are outlined in the Chapter Bylaws ¹
- A number of officer titles may be held by the same person with chapter membership approval ¹
 - If the Vice President position vacant, the Treasurer runs meetings in the absences of the President⁵
- Other positions can be added as subordinate officers as necessary ¹
 - Facilities liaison, public relations, social media coordinator, BFR liaison, NZKW coordinator ²
 - Have an event chair or committee for each event held⁵

Chapter Executive Officer Duties

- Oversee and manage all chapter assets and its property ¹
- Formulate rules and regulations of the chapter (in accordance with the National AAZK Constitution and Bylaws) ¹
- Empower Treasurer to make purchases necessary to conduct business ¹
 - Some chapters...
 - Require votes for expenditures over a certain amount (i.e. \$50)
 - Require votes for all event/fundraiser budgets and/or individual expenditures
 - Set annual budgets at the beginning of each year (shortly after annual elections) in order to avoid several small votes for known events/fundraisers ²
 - It can be helpful to plan the year as much as possible in order to efficiently and effectively execute events and professional development plans ³
- Communicate officers' duties to members and potential officers



- Other assigned duties as outlined by the Chapter Bylaws as needed
- Oversee fundraisers and events conducted by the chapter ²
- Specific officer duties

President

- Supervises conduct of chapter and officers
- Runs all meetings and officer meetings ^{3&5}
- Meets with zoo officials and presents ideas to staff at meetings⁵
- Can be a member of all chapter committees or can act as committee/event oversight

Vice President

- Performs all duties of president in the President's absence

Secretary

- Keeps a log of meeting minutes in a format decided by chapter executive officers
- Regularly updates chapter membership list

Treasurer

- Deposit chapter funds into established chapter account(s)
- Disperse chapter funds as decided by chapter officers and/or membership direction
- Tracks chapter transactions and the financial condition of the chapter
- Tracks chapter member dues⁵
- Completes and files Chapter Re-charter annually

Chapter Meetings

- Meetings should abide by "Robert's Rules of Order," by Henry M. Robert III in order to maintain proper parliamentary procedure
- Meeting times and locations should be decided by the chapter officers ¹
 - Setting chapter meeting schedules in advance can improve attendance ³
 - Meetings can be once per month or every other month^{3&5}
 - Meetings can be one hour long over keeper lunch time⁶
 - Rotate the day of the week that meetings are held so everyone can attend^{3&6}
 - Sending out meeting reminders may also help attendance ³
 - Email chapter meeting time, location, and agenda with invitation to request additional topics to president⁶
- Agendas make it easier to keep meetings on track ⁴
 - Can include topics to be discussed, designated speakers, time allowance for each topic or the overall meeting
 - Meeting topics can include updates on future events, postmortem discussions of past events, and votes on fund allocation so long as a quorum is present
 - Keep meetings interesting with special presentations or topics (training discussions, enrichment projects, conversation lectures or trip recaps)^{5&6}
 - Agendas should be sent to officers or designated speakers in advance of the meeting to be reviewed, have topics added/changed, and get approved



- Start meetings with votes (general meetings, reimbursements, approval for events) in case anyone has to leave the meeting early⁶
- The chapter's quorum (the minimum number of members that must be present at meetings to make the proceedings of that meeting valid) shall be designated in the chapter bylaws¹
 - For Example, 10 members make a quorum necessary for officer elections, bylaws changes, and chapter grant approval votes. All other business-related votes at meetings, the majority of members present shall make a quorum⁶
- Putting further discussion (tabling) off for another meeting is always an option
 - Don't get bogged down on a particular topic
 - Setting time limits for topic discussion can help maintain efficient and timely meetings²
- Minutes must be recorded at all chapter meetings and must be kept for three years¹
- Minutes should be emailed no later than one week after the meeting to keep members informed and to catch up those unable to attend
 - It is also important to maintain up to date chapter member lists, with their preferred email address³

Equipment, Storage, & Electronic Media

Equipment, supplies, and/or inventory gifted or purchased by the chapter

- Considered the chapter's "real property"¹
 - Officers assume responsibility for any chapter property once elected¹
- Store chapter property in a secure area¹
 - Restrict the keys to inventory by limiting access to designated chapter members
 - Report suspected theft or loss of property or funds in the amount of \$100.00 or greater to the Administrative office of AAZK¹
 - Keep equipment and inventory organized
 - Label equipment or storage bins appropriately⁶
 - Keep track of inventory
 - This allows the chapter to purchase supplies when necessary

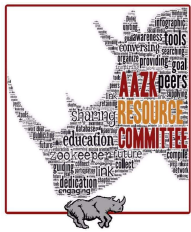
Electronic Media

- A chapter can establish websites, social media, newsletters, or other materials that help promote the chapter¹
 - Communicate this intention with the host facilities and review their policies on social media posting
 - Communicate any established website, social media outlet, or mass media to the AAZK Chief Executive Officer (CEO) by listing sites on the chapter re-charter¹
 - Monitor sites frequently and remove inappropriate comments or offensive content³
 - Limit what your chapter posts on social media to things directly related to your chapter and your chapter's mission³
 - Have a separate chair person or team of non-officers for chapter social media or website^{5&6}

Citations



1. AAZK Operations Manual (8.01-8.05)
2. Greater Baltimore AAZK Chapter
3. Pittsburgh AAZK Chapter
4. National Capital AAZK Chapter
5. New Orleans AAZK Chapter
6. Brookfield AAZK Chapter



The AAZK Resource Committee’s Chapter and Networking Resource Team is responsible for the content and production of this document.

For questions, clarification, or suggestions for future resources, contact: arc@aazk.org.

