

THE SOUTHERN MARYLAND BUSINESS NETWORK GROUP (SMBN)
Approved 12-15-2015

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

- ❖ Members serve as a sales force for promoting the businesses of fellow members (by) generating business referrals;
- ❖ Members have access to business opportunities that would be unavailable without this network sales force;
- ❖ Exclusivity of classifications allows no overlap or competition for services and/or products represented from other members;
- ❖ SMBN is one of the largest structured business network groups in the tri-county area;
- ❖ New business opportunities for members increase with group size;
- ❖ Members have a voice in the growth and direction of the group;
- ❖ Attendance/alternates policy is generous;
- ❖ Members have the opportunity to give back to the community we serve through participation in the groups fundraising activities;
- ❖ SMBN helps you keep abreast of what's happening in your market area through the collective experience and knowledge of this dynamic group of professionals;
- ❖ New members can expand their networking into the Charles County Chamber of Commerce by utilizing the large number of SMBN members who are also Charles County Chamber of Commerce members
- ❖ A rotating schedule of member 10 minute presentations at membership meetings
- ❖ New members are offered an opportunity to give a 5 minute presentation at a membership meeting.
- ❖ SMBN maintains an active publicity committee. Group and member accomplishments are regularly highlighted in the Maryland Independent

SMBN Bylaws

MEMBERSHIP: A member of SMBN shall be defined as one person per company

NON-COMPETE: Members of SMBN may not be a member of any other group whose primary purpose is to pass referrals to one another

MULTI-LEVEL MARKETING RESTRICTIONS: Business members who subscribe to multi-level marketing recruitment are NOT permitted to discuss such business opportunities as part of their membership. Further, no solicitation of same shall be made to members or referrals unless initiated by the fellow member or referral.

MEMBER CLASSIFICATION: Only one person from each company/profession is allowed to become a member of the group. The Membership Committee shall have the final authority relating to classification conflicts.

Members must never promote services or products that are represented by a fellow member's primary classification. Members and member alternates must not do or say anything that competes with a current member classification within the group.

MEMBER CLASSIFICATION CHANGE: Any member wishing to change their classification must submit a new application to the Membership Committee for review and presentation to the SMBN members..

DUES: \$100 per six month renewal period.

DUES/RENEWAL PERIOD: All memberships will renew on January 1 and July 1st of each year. Payments are due January 1st and July 1st of each year. A late fee of \$25 will be assessed for any renewal payment that is received after the 30th of the due month but prior to the 15th of the following month. The \$25 late fee will be donated to that fiscal year's charity. Any member attempting to make a renewal payment after the 15th of the month following the due month must submit a new application for membership, with all the applicable fees and the normal voting process associated with new membership.

DUES/NEW MEMBER: New member dues will be prorated based on the \$100 per 6 month dues structure in order to allow the renewal date of the new member to coincide with the standard January 1/July 1 renewal dates for all other members.

NEW MEMBER DUES REMMITANCE: New member applications will not be voted upon unless the New Member Processing fee has been paid. Once an application has been approved the new member has a maximum of 30 days to pay their dues or their membership. After 30 days, membership will be terminated and the application fee will be forfeited.

NEW MEMBER PROCESSING FEE: A \$25 processing fee will be assessed to all new members.

CONFIDENTIALITY: All members are expected to maintain the confidentiality of the group discussions of new member applications.

ATTENDANCE: A member may send an alternate who will represent them at the meeting as needed. Each member or alternate is required to report for the meeting on time and remain at the meeting until it is adjourned. In the event a member or alternate is late by greater than 15 minutes or leaves greater than 15 minutes before the end of the meeting it shall count as late and be assessed ½ of an absence A member is allowed six absences within the six month renewal period. If a member exceeds the six (6) absence limit, they have the option to pay an additional amount for up to two (2) additional absences in a six (6) month period. SMBN will donate all funds collected through the absence program to the charity selected for that time period.

A member who exceeds the maximum allowable absence limit within the six month renewal period will forfeit their SMBN membership. A terminated member may reapply for membership by following the standard application process.

SNOW/INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY: There will be no General Membership meeting when Charles County Schools are closed or delayed on a meeting day. It is the responsibility of members to monitor local news outlets for school delay information.

MEDICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE: In the event of a protracted illness for either the SMBN member or a member of his/her immediate family, the SMBN member should contact the SMBN Membership Committee regarding the need to miss multiple meetings. The Membership Committee may grant “leave” to the member for a specified period of time that shall not exceed 8 weeks. Should that leave need to be extended further due to circumstances, the member will again need to contact the Membership Committee for additional leave to be granted. Maternity leave must also be requested and granted by the Membership Committee. The member’s category will be held for them until the end of the granted leave period.

Members on a leave of absence must continue to pay dues in order to maintain membership and protect their classification.

COMMITTEE INVOLVEMENT: All members of the Southern Maryland Business Network are expected to join at least one committee.

GROUP/MEMBER PRESENTATIONS: With exception of invited special guest presenters, no person other than a group member may be scheduled as a speaker or presenter to the group. Member presenters are to keep presentations within the allotted time frame. A fine of \$25.00 will be charged to a member who is scheduled to be the 10 minute speaker and fails to give their presentation on the scheduled date. The fine will go toward(s) our Charity Fund. If the speaker finds a replacement to fill their spot, he/she will not be charged the fine.

NEW MEMBER PRESENTATIONS: New members will be given the opportunity to do a 5 minute presentation at a membership meeting. The presentation will be scheduled as soon as is convenient to the new member following the acceptance of the new member’s application.

UNRELATED ACTIVITIES: During the weekly membership meeting, members are to refrain from distributing handouts or announcing items that do not pertain to official SMBN business or items that are unrelated to the member’s business category.

SMBN WEBSITE: Members are responsible to access the group website, www.smbn.org, to keep abreast of the group’s membership roster and information pertinent to the group’s activity.

GENERAL POLICY CHANGES/UPDATES: While amendments to the SMBN Bylaws may be proposed to membership for a vote at any time during the year, a formal request for amendments to and review of the Bylaws must be made at least annually. The period for the review shall be January. Requests for change must be submitted in writing by a member in good standing and be presented to the group no later than the first business meeting of January. All proposed changes must have a two third’s acceptance vote by members to be adopted as part of the SMBN By-laws. A voting quorum shall consist of 50% member attendance. All adopted changes are to be binding on all members.

OFFICERS/ELECTIONS: Elected Officers and Membership Committee positions shall be for a period of one year with an effective date of July 1 of each year. The terms of the officers shall be renewable.

OFFICER/COMMITTEE RESIGNATION: Any officer or committee chairperson who cannot complete his/her term must submit an official resignation to the President.

OFFICER/COMMITTEE VACANCY: In the event that the Vice President, Secretary, Sergeant at Arms of a committee chair position becomes vacant, the President will appoint a current SMBN member to fill the vacated position for the remainder of the term.

PRESIDENCY VACANCY: Should the President be unable to complete the term of office, the Vice President will assume the roles and duties of President. The new President will appoint a current SMBN member to fill the vacated position of Vice President for the remainder of the term.

MEMBER PROBATION/REMOVAL: The Membership Committee can put a member on probation if it is determined that the member's business practices or commitment to the group is not in keeping with the SMBN Bylaws. Such action shall be in writing to the member stating any infractions and required improvement necessary to be taken off of probation. Membership to the group may be revoked for failure to comply with SMBN Bylaws. Only the Membership Committee has authority to take such action and their decision is final and binding on the group.

MEMBER RECRUITMENT: ALL members are responsible for the growth of the group and are to actively recruit business members whose services and/or products are not represented within membership.

VISITOR STATUS: A non-member may attend two meetings as a Visitor prior to joining SMBN. After two meetings, the Visitor must submit a Membership Application or cease attending meetings.

BUDGET: The finance committee, which must include the Treasurer, will be responsible for the creation of an annual budget. That budget will be a calendar year budget starting January 1 of each year.

WITHDRAWAL OR DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS: Funds of SMBN will be withdrawn or disbursed by check, and the checks can be signed either by the Treasurer, the President, or Vice President. For checks that exceed \$250, the signature of 2 officers will be required.

Disbursements that exceed or are outside of the approved annual budget must be approved as follows:

- a. The President can approve an obligation for a single purpose that was not included in the approved budget up to \$100 annually.
- b. The Executive Committee, by a majority vote, may approve without a vote of membership for obligations that are necessary to maintain the ongoing operations of SMBN. This authority has a limit of \$500. Amounts above \$500 must be presented to the full membership for approval. All transactions approved by the Executive committee, regardless of amount, must be reported to SMBN membership at the next regularly scheduled meeting,
- c. A majority vote of the membership in a general membership meeting.

Approvals for withdrawals and disbursements will indicate the date and time of approval, if oral, or the initials of the approving officers on the vouchers, invoices, bills, statements, or other memoranda evidencing the debt to be paid or withdrawals to be made; where disbursements are

approved by the membership or Executive Committee, said approvals shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which such approval was voted.

VOTING: During the course of normal business operations, the membership may be asked to approve or deny a proposal. Examples include, but are not limited to, new member application approval, officer elections, budget authority and by law changes.

Prior to the vote a motion of the item to be voted upon must be made, seconded and discussed. Additionally, the method of the vote, a show of hands or ballot, shall be announced prior to the vote.

Each member in good standing is entitled to one vote. A majority of the eligible members in attendance will constitute a successful vote.

GIFTS: Gifts provided by SMBN should not exceed a cost of \$50 per occurrence. The gift may be approved by either a majority of the membership in attendance at a standard membership meeting or by a majority of the Executive Committee.

Proposed By-Law Amendment: Charity

CHARITY: SMBN will select one charity to support per calendar year via a majority vote of membership. The basic requirements for the charity are:

1. Must be located or predominately serve the Southern Maryland community or its residents.
2. Must be a 501(c)3 tax exempt non-profit

The Fund Raising Committee will oversee the annual charity selection process. The selection of the charity that SMBN will support for a given calendar year should be completed as soon as possible after January 1 of each calendar year.

Any charity that has been selected as SMBN's charity for a calendar year will be ineligible for selection for three calendar years. (Ex. If Charity A is selected as SMBN's charity for calendar year 2016, then Charity A may not apply to be SMBN's supported charity again until 2019.)

SMBN LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW

ELECTED OFFICERS/COMMITTEEMEMBERS: The officers shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary, Sergeant at Arms and a Treasurer who shall be the chief financial officer of the corporation. SMBN also may have such other officers with such titles and duties as shall be determined by the membership. SMBN has authorized standing committees, each consisting of two or more members to serve at the direction of the membership. Vacancies on committees may be filled by appointment by the President.

COMMITMENT TO GROUP

- ❖ Must be thoroughly familiar with and support the SMBN Bylaws, structured business network philosophies, and support the continued growth and success of the group.
- ❖ Perform their designated duties as reflected in their position description or be subject to removal from their position by the Membership Committee.
- ❖ Meet together with the elected officers and chairpersons of each committee at least quarterly to evaluate the group and plan for the future growth and development of the group.
- ❖ Maintain an historical file of reports and relative information to pass to their successor.
- ❖ Bring required materials to each meeting. If an Officer can not attend a meeting, it is their responsibility to pass the material to another Officer who can bring it to the meeting.
- ❖ Arrive at every meeting on time.
- ❖ Officers must return all non-consumable materials to the group at the end of their term.

PRESIDENT

- ❖ Report on time prepared to lead the meeting each week.
- ❖ If unable to attend a meeting, arrange for the Vice President or in their absence another designated Officer to lead the meeting. Deliver the group materials to the Officer designated to lead the meeting.
- ❖ Ensure that officers are meeting the responsibilities of their position.
- ❖ Oversee ordering of all supplies for other officers and group members.
- ❖ Coordinate a quarterly meeting with the Officers and Committee Chairpersons to discuss success/challenges of the group, ongoing compliance with the Bylaws, activities, progress, and ideas for future group activities/effectiveness and progress of ongoing efforts for the group.

VICE PRESIDENT

- ❖ In the absence of the President, lead the group meeting.
- ❖ Maintain attendance records and enforce the attendance policy by advising the Membership Committee on members in violation of attendance guidelines.
- ❖ Maintain weekly records on the number of business referrals generated and received by members. .
- ❖ Prepare a monthly report reflecting a cumulative account of the number of referrals given and received by each member, the number of absences of each member.
- ❖ Vice President will serve on the Membership Committee.

SECRETARY

- ❖ Maintains the member presenter schedule. It is imperative that emphasis be given to fitting in new members allowing them the opportunity to be a presenter.
- ❖ Keep members informed on when they are scheduled to be the 10 minute presenter.
- ❖ Maintains minutes of each meeting and records all votes and adopted policies of the group. Provides a special report in January and July that reflects all policy changes and adopted by-laws of the group.
- ❖ Email meeting minutes to the SMBN membership, by Thursday following each meeting.
- ❖ Keep an ongoing calendar of SMBN events.

TREASURER

- ❖ Keep accurate current and historical records relating to income and expenses.
- ❖ Oversee accountant/bookkeeper duties:
 - Review and verify monthly bank, budget and/or expenditure reports.
- ❖ Confirm/follow up on the semi-annual dues renewal notices.
- ❖ Maintains group checking account and balances monthly statements.
- ❖ Prepare quarterly financial report for review by membership.
- ❖ Assist with the preparation of the annual budget

SERGEANT At ARMS

- ❖ Promotes and sells 50/50 tickets for the group.
- ❖ Enforces allotted time frames when members are giving infomercials and presentations
- ❖ Assists in recruiting visitors.

COMMITTEES

Executive committee

The Executive Committee is charged with the responsibility of running the day-to-day affairs of SMBN. Assures membership is advised of significant issues. A quorum of the Executive Committee will be three members of whom must be President or Vice President, one must be the Secretary or Treasurer, and the third will be any of the other elected officers. The President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Sergeant at Arms are permanent members of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee may request the presence of other officers or committee members when necessary to receive reports on the status of their efforts. These members attend in an advisory capacity and are not eligible to vote on the Executive Committee.

Standing Committees:

Social Committee:

The Social Committee will plan and oversee social events that are designed to create a sense of community amongst members of SMBN. Social events should be held outside of the normal SMBN business meeting. Under normal circumstances, it is anticipated that the committee will hold two such events per calendar year. In order to carry out their mission, the Social Committee will:

1. Obtain required permissions and permits.
2. Reserve a location for the activity.
3. Maintain liaison with the Publicity Committee for announcements.
4. Purchase all necessary paraphernalia.
5. Prepare a "sign-up" roster that includes name, phone number and e-mail address.
6. Set deadlines for sign-up.

7. Collect fees.
8. Keep an accounting of revenues and disbursements.
9. Give all bills and money to the Treasurer.
10. Restore the event location to its proper condition.
11. Send "thank you" letters to the appropriate individuals.

Fund Raising Committee:

The Fundraising Committee is responsible for planning, coordinating, and implementing all fundraising activities in support of SMBN's member selected charitable organization. It is anticipated that three (3) such events will be held each calendar year. Historically, these events have included: a bowl-a-thon, a seafood feast raffle, and a basket bingo.

In order to carry out their mission the Fundraising Committee will:

1. Develop a strategy for each fundraising event.
2. Obtain permits or permissions as needed.
3. Reserve locations as needed.
4. Identify and maintain a list of potential and past sponsors/donors.
5. Annually solicit sponsors for specific events.
6. Coordinate with the Publicity Committee for creation/distribution of advertising material
7. Collect and submit all monetary donations to the Treasurer.
8. Maintain a record of all charitable donations collected.
9. Thank donors/sponsors in writing and acknowledging the donor/sponsors at the event.

Finance Committee:

The Finance Committee is responsible for preparation of SMBN's annual operating budget. The operating budget should be submitted to the Executive Committee for approval. The Finance Committee will provide a copy of the approved annual operating budget to each member upon request.

The Finance Committee will arrange an audit of the financial records. The report of the findings of the committee shall be disclosed to the Executive Committee, and to the members.

Membership/Orientation Committee:

The Membership Committee is responsible for promoting membership growth and retention. In order to carry out this mission the Membership Committee shall:

1. Develop a membership recruitment strategy.
2. Carry on organized membership drives.
3. Develop a publicity campaign in conjunction with the Publicity Committee as needed.
4. Screen applications for conflicts with current members. Should a conflict exist, the committee should work with the existing member to see if a solution exists.
5. Present applications to the general membership for a vote.
6. Organize new member orientation meeting as needed.
7. Maintain a sufficient supply of and distribute membership application packages
8. Collect application forms and fees.

9. Maintain a complete file of current members that includes membership category and contact information. Submit the membership listing to the general membership no less than semi annually.
10. Maintain an up-to-date list of open categories.

Publicity Committee:

The Publicity Committee is responsible for creating and maintaining a positive public image for SMBN.

In order to carry out this mission, the Publicity Committee shall:

1. Inform the public of newsworthy events at SMBN. Such events include, but are not limited to:
2. Acceptance of a new member
3. Professional accomplishments of a member
4. Charitable events hosted or sponsored by SMBN.
5. Maintain a copy of any publicity announcements for future reference.

As part of its function, the Publicity Committee is also charged with ensuring that information on SMBN's website is current.

In order to meet this mission, the Publicity Committee shall:

1. Contact the chairs of the other standing committees to confirm that information on the website is current.
2. Primary emphasis should be placed upon ensuring that the membership section of the website contains only members in good standing.
3. Forward any updates to SMBN's website provider.

Ad Hoc Committees:

The Executive Committee may appoint additional committees as required to accomplish specific functions. These are committees that are formed for temporary needs. i.e. Nominating Committee, Web Site Review Committee, By law Committee.