

**Society of American Travel Writers**  
**Western Chapter**  
**Operations Manual**  
*rev June 19, 2018*

These guidelines contain information for the Officers of the Western Chapter of the Society of American Travel Writers. They are meant to provide assistance in the administration of the Chapter and to augment, however, not supersede, the Western Chapter Bylaws.

Modifications and changes may be made at any time by a majority vote of the Chapter's Board of Directors. No Chapter general membership vote is necessary.

Additional information about SATW's membership requirements and general administration is available in the SATW Operations Manual at [satw.org](http://satw.org).

## **MISSION**

Mission Statement as adopted February 1998 at the Western Chapter meeting in Jackson, Wyoming:

To develop opportunities for travel communicators in the Western United States to enhance their professional growth and to expand their body of knowledge regarding the travel experience and business.

## **SECTION 1 – ELECTIONS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

### **Nominating Committee Procedures**

The current Chapter Chair shall appoint one Active Officer and one Associate Officer to serve on the Nominating Committee within 30 days of the close of SATW's annual convention. The Immediate Past Chair shall serve on, but not Chair, the Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall select two candidates for each office. In addition, the membership shall be encouraged to submit nominations to the Committee.

### **Establishing an Elections Calendar**

Working with the Board of Directors, the Chapter Chair shall set specific dates for completion of each step of coming election year. The following calendar is to be considered a strong guideline.

February 1: Slate of nominees selected by the Nominating Committee is completed and submitted to the Board of Directors for approval by majority vote.

March 1: Slate of nominees selected by the Nominating Committee and approved by the Board of Directors is made to members by inclusion in SATW E-Newsletter that nomination by petition is now open and petitions must be submitted to the Chapter Chair no later than May 1.

May 1: Additional nominations by petition, as outlined in the paragraph above, shall be accepted until 11:59 p.m. HST. The final candidate list must be reviewed by the Board of Directors and receive the Chapter Chair's approval. It is understood that positions may be unopposed.

June 1: All candidates are profiled in the SATW E-Newsletter.

June 15: Election opens at 11 a.m. EST.

July 15: At 11:59 p.m. HST, the election closes. A simple majority of returned ballots will be sufficient for election. For additional information, see the Western Chapter Bylaws.

### **Limitations on Number of Offices to be Held**

A member may hold only one elective office at a time within the Society and Chapter.

### **Board of Director Duties**

Officers shall have the following responsibilities in addition to Duties as outlined in the Chapter Bylaws or mutually agreed upon by Chapter Chair and Board of Directors.

The Chair shall represent the Chapter as the on-going liaison with the Society and its Board of Directors and is expected to attend the Society Midyear Board meeting and Pre-Convention Board meeting. The Chair shall prepare agendas for the Chapter Board of Directors and membership meetings. The Chair shall determine the need and appoint members for Chapter committees such as, but not limited to, Nominations, Budget and Finance, Opportunity Budget, Meeting Sites, Clip Folder, The Westerlies newsletter and Awards.

The First Vice-Chair may be called upon to serve as proxy for the Chair at the Society Midyear Board meeting and Pre-Convention Annual Board meeting. The First Vice-Chair shall serve as Professional Development Chair responsible for securing and coordinating presenters at Chapter meetings and other Chapter-related functions. The First Vice-Chair shall also review and provide final approval of The Westerlies e-newsletter prior to distribution.

The Second Vice-Chair shall serve as coordinator of the New Members and First-Timers event at Chapter meetings. The Second Vice-Chair shall act as liaison with the Chapter Writing Awards Chair.

The Secretary shall handle updates of the Chapter Operations Manual.

The Treasurer shall assist the Society's Treasurer in the preparation of the Society's annual financial reports and tax returns. The Treasurer shall provide the latest quarterly financial report to the Chapter Chair for reporting at Chapter Board of Directors and membership meetings. The Treasurer shall serve as the Opportunity Budget Chair.

The Associate Representative shall represent the Chapter at Society Annual Convention Associates Council meetings. The Associate Representative shall serve as Marketplace Chair for Chapter meetings.

The Active-at-Large shall represent the Chapter at Society Annual Convention Freelance and Editors Council meetings. The Active-at-Large shall serve as the Clip Folder Chair, responsible for collecting and maintaining digital copies of all submitted clips to the Chapter.

The Immediate Past Chair shall sit on the Nominating Committee.

## **SECTION 2 – FISCAL**

### **Budget and Finance Committee**

To aid Chapter activities and development, the Chapter Chair may appoint a Budget and Finance Committee to include three Chapter members, one as Chair, with attention to representing the Chapter's geographical diversity. Committee members can be either an Active or Associate member and should be familiar with the areas of finance and investing.

The Budget and Finance Committee's main function is to oversee the investments of the Chapter and to ensure it has a well-balanced portfolio than can continue to provide a steady stream of income. The Chapter Treasurer is the liaison between the Committee and the Board of Directors. Committee members make recommendations concerning changes in investments, investment policies and in allocation of funds. The Committee Chair should receive copies of the financial statements from the brokerage firm on a monthly basis. Any problems or anomalies should be immediately brought to the attention of the Treasurer and then to the Chapter Board.

When funds from the reserve are needed for the operations of the Chapter, the Chapter Treasurer requests the funds from the Committee Chair, who either writes a check on the account or makes an electronic transfer to the management company operating account for the Western Chapter. All transfer of funds must have approval from the Chapter Chair and may, at the discretion of the Chapter Chair, require a vote by the Board of Directors. All re-balancing of investment accounts funds and recommendations from the Committee must be voted on by the Board of Directors, either electronically or at a meeting. Proposals for re-balancing will be sent to the Treasurer who will forward to the Board of Directors for quick consideration.

### **Opportunity Budget**

The Chapter may apply for funding from the Society's Opportunity Budget up to the maximum amount noted in the SATW Operations Manual. Projects must benefit membership as outlined in the SATW Operations Manual.

### **Donations**

The Chapter may make a donation equal to matching funds from members to the Lowell Thomas Foundation.

### **Reimbursement of Expenses**

Reasonable and expected business expenses will be reimbursed to members with pre-approval by the Chapter Chair and Treasurer. This includes Chapter-related expenditures such as postage, delivery, office supplies, printing costs, phone calls, meals or other expenses incurred while on approved Chapter business.

All Officers attending Board of Directors meetings at Chapter meetings will pay Active registration fees and be reimbursed up to \$500 for registration fees and airfare expenses. Mileage reimbursement is allowed if driving to the meeting is less expensive than airfare. The Chapter Board may vote to increase the reimbursement up to \$300 more per member if funds exist for such an increase.

Reimbursement claims should be submitted within 30 days of completion of travel to SATW with copy sent to Chapter Chair and Treasurer.

## **SECTION 3 – MEETINGS AND AWARDS**

### **Chapter Meeting Sites Committee**

The Meeting Sites Committee shall research and present potential Chapter meeting sites to the Chapter Board of Directors. The Committee consists of a minimum of two members. The Committee prepares and negotiates the terms of any contracts based on input from the Chapter Board. The Sites Chair must send a signed copy of the contract to the SATW Executive Director in order to secure a date on the Society Master Calendar. The Sites Chair must also send a signed copy of the contract to the Chapter Chair.

### **Meeting Guidelines**

1. The primary purpose of the Chapter meeting is education/skills development, story gathering and networking.
2. The meeting host generally provides ground transportation, lodging and meals for one 24-hour period for the Board of Directors prior to the start of the meeting.
3. All guests and presenters must be pre-approved by the Chapter Chair.
4. For all presenters, the Chapter generally pays transportation reimbursement, program fees/honorariums and other related expenses. No transportation reimbursement will be made for Chapter members already attending the meeting. The Chapter pays rental fees for required equipment. Presenters should be encouraged to attend the full meeting for networking and to encourage prospective membership.
5. Joint Chapter meetings will be determined by majority vote by the Chapter Board.
6. Meeting attendance by individual members of other Chapters is subject to approval by the Chapter Chair.
7. Members may bring children who share a guest room, however, children may not attend any meeting functions unless specifically authorized in the program. Children must have independent supervision. Any additional fees incurred as a result of bringing children are the responsibility of the registered attendee.
8. Meetings cannot be held within 30 days of the Society Annual Convention.

### **Meeting Planning**

1. The Chapter Chair will assign a Meeting Chair to act as the meeting planner and oversee all logistics with a committee of members who handle specific functions such as Marketplace, Photo Shoot-Out, awards and tours.
2. The Meeting Chair or a designee may visit the meeting host destination at their own expenses, to physically run through the facilities and program.
3. The Meeting Chair will pay the Active registration fee and be reimbursed up to \$500 for registration fees and airfare expenses. Mileage reimbursement is allowed if driving to the meeting is less expensive than airfare.

4. Registration Fees: Chapter members and spouse/partners attending a Chapter meeting are charged registration fees specific to their membership categories, the amounts to be set by the Board of Directors for each meeting.

### **Regional Meetings**

Regionals meetings such as GLAM, BANG and RATS, are considered social gatherings, and therefore, the Chapter has no fiscal responsibility. The Federal ID number of SATW must be used if the organization name is used to announce a function or perform separate bank accounting to protect non-profit status. The Chapter is authorized to seek authorization for funds used in education or recruitment on a case-by-case basis from the Society, with a application submitted at least three months in advance.

### **Frank Riley Award**

The Frank Riley Award encourages the production of travel stories around past Western Chapter meetings. Attendees have two years to submit published clips for consideration. Clips are sent directly to the meeting host, who selects the winner and provides the award.

### **Chapter Awards**

The mission of the Annual Writing Awards is to further inspire excellence in travel writing by rewarding those journalists whose efforts excel in this area. Categories are reviewed and revised each year to encompass writing and photography. All Chapter members may apply.

Call for entries is issued in January inclusive for the previous calendar year and will be collected by a Chapter Awards Chair designated by the Chapter Chair. Judging is handled by a third party with winners announced during the next Chapter meeting. Prizes are a combination of cash and certificates. Entry fees must afford the Annual Writing Awards to be self-supporting.