

July 19, 2013

Focus Group: Chapter Secretaries

All 14 Chapter Treasurers and the Guild Secretary were invited to attend and encouraged to send a representative in their place if that was not possible; 7 Chapters were represented.

Introductions

Discussion Guidelines

Objective Guidelines

How did you get your position? Did you volunteer? If so, why?

Much as was reported by Chapter Treasurers, those Chapters with Bylaws have a nominating committee who looked for volunteers to run for office; others simply volunteered as the position was vacated. Older members have already served so newer ones need to step up. One person had experience as a Treasurer so volunteered for Treasurer/Secretary position.

Is there something in your background that prepared you for the job?

- Previous work/job duties
- Had computer skills

Is the Secretary's job what you expected?

Generally, yes. Secretary duties include:

- Taking, publishing (i.e., sending emails) minutes (mostly monthly business meeting)
- Recording charitable donations to report to the Guild Treasurer (annual)
- Responding to member questions; general communicating issues
- Sending special announcements to members
- Creating and maintaining a pictorial directory of Chapter members
- Posting weekly/monthly minutes and calendar on Chapter bulletin board
- Tracking attendance at meetings
- One chapter has created a blog for members

Do you have a job description/specific duties?

Only one or two Chapters seem to have written Bylaws with duties.

What issues/problems do you have as Secretary?

- Chapter minutes are not reviewed by the President or VP prior to being sent out
- One Chapter only emails to the Co-Presidents and maintains copy for members
- One Chapter reported sending out minutes to a Yahoo Group which the President also uses to send information to all members; and members can use this forum, too
- Some members just want to come for the sit and sew aspect; don't really want to participate or volunteer for other activities
- Some members no longer drive at night so they would like to see more afternoon Guild meetings; don't overlook older members

- Members new to quilting are intimidated by experienced members; one new Chapter says only their officers attend the Guild meeting because their members feel they are not knowledgeable enough
- In new Chapters, there are so many members with little to no quilting skills that they are sometimes a “bother” to those with skills who come to meetings to work on projects
[SUGGESTION: Use a Red/Green light system ala/Brazilian Steak House: Anyone who comes to work on a project and doesn't want to be interrupted can place a red disk cut from construction paper to indicate they are in “Please Do Not Disturb” mode for the day.]

Were there any “Ah-ha” moments from today’s meeting?

- Some Chapters have member obligations and these vary. For instance, one requires attendance at three meetings *before* a person can join; members must attend at least six meetings a year or their membership will not be renewed.
- That minutes are emailed to all Chapter members
- Chapters with a blog or Yahoo Group system to send emails to multiple people

Focus Group Feedback Questionnaire: Chapter Secretaries

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
1. The agenda was clear				6*
2. The objectives were appropriate			1	5
3. The location of the meeting				6**
4. The amount of information shared			1	5
5. The opportunities for participation and sharing				6

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*One participant did not complete the rating section.

**One individual added the word DARK at Item 3..

Was the focus group worth your time?

Yes (7)

- I got some good ideas.
- Got a lot of workable information and tips
- Loved the information sharing
- I picked up some good ideas
- General discussion at the end of the meeting the best part

What went well in this focus group?

- Ideas that came out from the mtg.; sharing ideas
- A chance to learn what other Chapters were doing that we could adapt
- I felt it was well organized, open and moved along smoothly
- The exchange of information was all-inclusive. Esther was fabulous as a facilitator
- Good facilitation; good participation
- Group discussion
- Good sharing of individual secretary responsibility

What could have gone better?

- It was very good
- Nothing (2)
- Participation from all Chapters in the Guild. Unfortunate Chapters were missing.
- I thought the meeting went very well.
- I'm not sure how this is entering into long-range planning.