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I. INTRODUCTION

Sons of Norway is divided into individual districts which are each comprised of a distinct geographic area. The purpose of each district is to promote the interest of Sons of Norway within the states, provinces or countries within its borders. The district lodges also cooperate with and assist the International lodge and its officers and directors in their work, both with relation to fraternal activities and organizational matters. Each district is also authorized to establish and maintain its own benevolent and/or fraternal programs

The material and information contained in this section of the Guide for Leadership will help you, as district officers and directors, to achieve these goals and directives. Because each district is unique in terms of committees, programs, policies, etc. you may have district-specific operational guidelines above and beyond those detailed in this section. In addition to being familiar with this section of the Guide for Leadership and your district's supplemental materials, you are advised to become familiar with:

- The most current Sons of Norway Charter and Constitutions
- Other sections of the Guide for Leadership to gain an understanding of lodge positions
- The members section of the Sons of Norway website, specifically those sections that provide information on lodge programming and management
- Viking Resource, an online quarterly publication to help leaders be more effective, which is found in the members section of the website
- Basic benefits of Sons of Norway membership and programs.

II. DISTRICT CONVENTION

District lodges hold regular meetings (*conventions*) every two years. The bid to host a convention is made four years ahead of time so there is adequate time to prepare, raise funds and assign committees. Every convention allows lodges to make bids to host future conventions from the floor. These proposed locations are then voted on by the delegates. The time of the district convention is determined by the District Board of Directors in consultation with the host lodge(s) and shall close "...not less than 45 days prior to the opening of the International Lodge meeting..."

A district lodge is made up of its elected officers and directors, delegates from each local lodge to the biennial convention, and the elected international officers and directors who live within the district. While the district officers and directors need to own a Sons of Norway Financial Product, the delegates from the lodges to the district conventions do not need to be benefit members. The benefit provision for district board members is waived in countries, provinces or states where Sons of Norway is not authorized to sell insurance. The number of delegates per lodge is computed from the total adult membership (*ages 16 and up*) and each delegate is entitled to one vote. See more details in Chapter 1 of the Constitution of District Lodges in the Sons of Norway Charter and Constitutions.

The primary functions of the district convention are to elect new district officers and an international director, pass by-law/constitution changes, which will be presented at the International Convention, and to elect district delegates to the International Convention. Delegates meet in caucus groups by zone to discuss the various issues and office/directorship candidates. Issues are debated on the floor and then a vote is taken. After the issues and candidates have been voted on, delegates to the International Convention are elected.

After the convention business is concluded, installation of district officers takes place followed by a banquet and dance and/or entertainment.

A. DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITY FOR DISTRICT CONVENTIONS

1. Prepares District Convention Report Book. An advance copy should be provided to the Fraternal Director at the Sons of Norway Headquarters.
2. Determines winners for District Lodge and Family Lodge of the Year awards. Provides information to Membership Services so plaques can be ordered for distribution at the convention. Also distributes Gold, Silver and Bronze Merit Awards.
3. Provides for representation by members of central lodge according to Chapter XII, par. 55(d) of the Charter and Constitutions.

B. DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITY FOR INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS

1. District secretary reports to Sons of Norway Headquarters within 10 days of the close of the District Convention:
 - a. District delegates and alternates elected
 - b. Resolutions adopted to be considered by the International Lodge
 - c. By-law changes adopted to be considered by the International Lodge
2. District president, or designee, to take roll of delegation and arrange with convention host committee times and location of district caucus, as necessary.

III. DISTRICT OFFICERS

The officers of the district lodge are president, vice president, secretary and treasurer, and other officers and directors as decided by the district lodge.

The following general list of duties for district officers comes from Chapter VIII in the Constitution of District Lodges. Since each district's needs are different, additional duties may be established within each district.

PRESIDENT:

1. Presides over all meetings of the district lodge and the district board of directors.
2. Is the executive officer of the district and supervises the proper observance of its laws, rules and ceremonies.
3. Appoints committees, unless otherwise determined.
4. Decides all cases appealed to the office of the district president.
5. Submits to the district lodge a complete report of all official acts as well as a report on the condition of the district lodge and its further needs.
6. Assists the Sons of Norway Headquarters in identifying and recruiting financial benefits counselors.
7. Completes the District President Lodge of the Year form and forwards it along with lodge and zone paperwork to Membership Services.
8. Acts in an advisory capacity to the Sons of Norway International Board of Directors as part of the Presidents' Council.

VICE PRESIDENT:

1. Presides over meetings in the president's absence. In the case where the president is prevented from acting, performs all the president's duties.
2. Chairs the district membership recruitment and retention committee.

SECRETARY:

1. Keeps a correct record of all the meetings of the district lodge and the board of directors.
2. Carries on all correspondence that has not been expressly delegated to other officers.
3. Provides a complete copy of the minutes of the district lodge meeting to Sons of Norway Headquarters within 45 days of its occurrence.
4. Assists Sons of Norway Membership Services with the yearly gathering of new lodge officer data in preparation for district and international lodge directories.
5. Sends to Sons of Norway Headquarters the names of the international delegates and their alternates, and copies of proposed resolutions and constitution and bylaw changes that must be considered by the International Lodge within 10 days after a district lodge meeting.
6. Prepares and sends required reports to Sons of Norway Headquarters.

TREASURER:

1. Is the custodian of all money belonging to the district lodge.
2. Receives and promptly deposits monies in a bank selected by the board of directors.
3. Makes all payments by check or comparable banking transfer, issued by the treasurer and countersigned by the president or secretary, as determined by the board of directors.
4. Receives the yearly Fraternal Funds from Sons of Norway Headquarters and completes the District Program Fraternal Fund report.
5. Gives complete financial report at the district lodge meeting.

SOCIAL DIRECTOR:

1. Communicates with local lodge social directors and assists them in their duties.
2. Plans programs for local lodge use.
3. Plans and directs district-wide social functions with the consent of the district board of directors.

CULTURAL DIRECTOR:

1. Communicates with local lodge cultural directors and assists them in their duties.
2. Plans, directs or assists with district-wide cultural functions based on the consent of the district board of directors.

SPORTS AND RECREATION DIRECTOR:

1. Plans and promotes an active program of sports and recreation.
2. Works closely with all local sports and recreation directors.

YOUTH & UNGE VENNER DIRECTOR

1. Develops a program of activities for youth and assists in the implementation of those programs.
2. Works in cooperation with local lodge youth and unge venner directors.

PUBLICITY DIRECTOR:

1. Compiles photos and district news sent in from the local lodges for monthly submission to *Viking*.
2. Sends guidelines on submitting news items, publicity, photos, etc. for the *Viking* following the election of local lodge officers.
3. Acts as editor of the district newsletter.
4. Coordinates with district vice president for promotion of the membership drive programs.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

1. Meets as required.
2. Performs routine duties between district lodge meetings
3. Aids, assists and counsels local lodges in their work.
4. Between meetings, the president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and one additional officer, if desired, may form an executive body to perform such duties as charged with by the board, reporting actions to the full district board at the next meeting.

ZONE DIRECTOR:

1. Acts as liaison between district lodge and local lodges. Keeps the local lodge aware of district projects, sporting events, language and heritage camps, scholarships and Sons of Norway programs.
2. Acts under direction of vice president in regards to membership recruitment and retention programs.
3. Visits each local lodge in assigned area at least once a year or as directed by the district lodge.
4. Completes the Zone Director Lodge of the Year forms and forwards them to the district president along with the lodge's paperwork.
5. May help with new lodge starts.
6. Installs local lodge officers when requested.
7. Organizes zone seminars.
8. Is caucus chair of their zone at district conventions.
9. Keeps a record of activities and reports on them to the district secretary.
10. Sees that by-law/resolution recommendations made by local lodges are submitted on time.

COMMITTEES:

1. Laws - Studies proposed laws and amendments.
2. Reports - Studies all reports submitted to District Lodge meeting.
3. Resolutions - Considers proposed resolutions submitted to district lodge meeting.
4. Finances - Studies and reports on the financial statements of the district.
5. Publicity - Ensures that the district lodge meeting is given the best possible publicity.
6. Special Committees - Appointed by district president as needed.

IV. INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR DISTRICTS

FRATERNAL FUNDS

Each district receives International Lodge District Fraternal Program funds each year to support cultural, youth and sports related programs and leadership seminars.

The process for receiving and reporting district fraternal funds is as follows:

- Sons of Norway Headquarter computes the amount due each district based on the following formula: \$1.00 per adult member from whom international dues are collected based on the District Membership Report as of December 31 of the previous year. No district board will receive less than \$4,500.
- Sons of Norway Headquarters mails a District Fraternal Fund payment and program details to each district treasurer by the end of February each year, along with a District Fraternal Program Board Report form.
- The district treasurer completes the form and makes a copy to file it in their records for use in the upcoming District Convention Report Book.
- The district treasurer mails a copy of the completed form to Membership Services at Sons of Norway Headquarters no later than April 1st. The Sons of Norway Fraternal Department will ensure that the form is featured in the upcoming International Convention Report Book.
- District boards will be free to allocate district fraternal funds to each of the four Fraternal Fund categories, as they deem appropriate: district cultural programs, district youth programs, district sports-related programs and district leadership seminars.

LODGE OF THE YEAR AWARDS (ALSO SEE SECRETARY GUIDE FOR LEADERSHIP SECTION)

This award program is designed to encourage lodge improvement through an incremental system of bronze to silver to gold merit certificates. The highest scoring lodges will be considered for the district and international Lodge of the Year Awards. Progressive recognition will encourage lodges to seek continual improvement and growth. Districts are encouraged to achieve the following goals:

- 10% of district lodges should achieve gold
- 20% of district lodges should achieve silver
- 50% of district lodges should achieve bronze

Awards are given for each year, however the official award ceremony takes place at the biennial District and International Conventions.

For this competition, lodges are divided into two categories: large lodges and small lodges. Large lodges are defined as being at or above the median lodge size at a district level. Small lodges are defined as those who are at or below the median lodge size at district level. Of the gold award lodges in a district, one small lodge and one large lodge will be selected as District Lodges of the Year. The high scoring lodges will go on to the International Lodge of the Year competition. The awards given are:

- 2 International Lodge of the Year Award (*plaques*)
- 16 District Lodge of the Year Awards (*plaques*)
- Gold Merit Certificates
- President Gold Merit Certificates
- Silver Merit Certificates
- President Silver Merit Certificates
- Bronze Merit Certificates
- President Bronze Merit Certificates

Each local lodge secretary fills out the Lodge of the Year form using data based on the period of January 1st to December 31st of the previous year. The secretary submits the form to their zone director. The zone directors complete a corresponding form (*Zone Director Lodge of the Year form*) and forwards it with all the lodge materials to their district president. Using data received from Sons of Norway Headquarters, together with local lodge LOY forms and zone LOY forms, the district president will determine the final LOY score for each lodge. The district president forwards all forms to Membership Services at Sons of Norway Headquarters for preparation of LOY awards.

This award program is designed to reflect the combined interests of the district presidents, the Fraternal Committee, International Board and Sons of Norway Headquarters staff. Questions cover all major areas of activities and programs throughout Sons of Norway. The goal is keep the award program flexible, while measuring and recording the success of the programs and activities that Sons of Norway offers.

FAMILY LODGE OF THE YEAR

The Family Lodge of the Year awards showcase lodges which are committed to excellent family and youth programming. The forms for Family Lodge of the Year are sent out with the Lodge of the Year forms to the lodge secretaries and then forwarded on to the Zone Directors upon completion. Unlike Lodge of the Year, there are no separate zone director or district president forms for Family Lodge of the Year. These awards, in the form of a plaque, are currently only bestowed at a district level and are given out at the biennial District Conventions.

NATIONAL FRATERNAL CONGRESS OF AMERICA SURVEY

Sons of Norway is a member of the National Fraternal Congress of America, whose purpose is to educate, guide, set standards and provide information on the best practices and governance of fraternal organizations. They also inform fraternal societies about regulatory changes, especially those regarding the preservation of tax-exempt status.

As a member of the NFCA, Sons of Norway is asked to provide information about the number of events, hours and monies our lodges dedicate to community and fraternal services each year. This data is collected at monthly board meetings by the lodge secretary and is reported at the end of the year on the NFCA Lodge Activity Report (*see page two of the Lodge of Year form*). Each April, Sons of Norway Headquarters submits this information to the NFCA who features it in their annual report book. This data helps Sons of Norway retain its non-profit status. It is vital that all lodges report this data. Also, only lodges that report NFCA information are eligible for that year's Lodge of the Year or Merit awards. More detailed information about how lodges should track this information is in the Secretary section of the Guide for Leadership.

V. NEW LODGE STARTS

Beginning new lodges is critical to the continued existence of Sons of Norway. The procedure to start a new lodge is as follows:

A. PREPARATORY WORK

1. Requests for organizing a new Sons of Norway lodge may come from international lodge members, Sons of Norway Headquarters, district lodge members, financial benefits counselors, local lodges, members of an existing group or club, or an individual interested in having a lodge organized in a particular community.
2. When such a request is received by or communicated to Sons of Norway Headquarters, an informational packet is mailed out by Membership Services to the requesting party. This packet includes the New Lodge Organizational Guidelines brochure and the New Lodge Organization Inquiry application. At this point, a district officer or member of the field staff should work together with any interested local members or potential future members to investigate the feasibility of organizing a new lodge in that particular community.
3. Before organizational work starts, the inquiry form New Lodge Information and Approval Form must be completed and sent to the district president for approval. Following the approval, the district president forwards the form to the Fraternal and Marketing departments at Headquarters.
4. When approval has been granted, a lodge number is assigned and a confirmation letter is sent out to the member, district officer or field staff representative who has been indicated as the new lodge contact person in section B, question 7 of the new lodge application. This person is considered to be the Organizing Representative, unless the district president informs Sons of Norway Headquarters otherwise.

B. ORGANIZATIONAL WORK

1. Appropriate publicity should be arranged in the local news media as the organizational work is begun. A sample news release is available from the Fraternal department
2. A steering committee should be formed with a chair, secretary and treasurer pro-term appointed. This committee should work with the organizing representative in the formation of the lodge. When possible, include the local financial benefits counselor and/or district officer as part of the steering committee.
3. The dues and the application fee should be determined and the Fraternal department should be notified.
4. Applications for membership and insurance may be obtained in the normal manner using the newly assigned lodge number. Those authorized to start new lodges may request complete information and membership applications from Headquarters.
5. The organizing representative will be responsible for all lodge and membership materials until the lodge is officially instituted.
6. All transfer requests, form #3, should be processed as promptly as possible so that they can be completed by the time of the institutional meeting.
7. Many times an informal pre-organizational meeting, or a special meeting of the steering committee, to lay plans for the institutional meeting, is beneficial. The following should be included:
 - a. Appointment of an Arrangements Committee to determine the date, time and place of meeting, and to plan for refreshments or a dinner.
 - b. Appointment of a Publicity Committee to send out invitations to the new members for the institutional meeting (form #24) and arrange for an announcement of such meeting in a local newspaper.

- c. Appointment of a Nominations Committee to prepare a slate of officers to be presented at the institutional meeting (*having a president, vice-president, counselor, financial secretary/membership secretary and social director somewhat definitely established in advance is important and will save considerable time the evening of the institution*).
 - d. Selection of a bank to be used for lodge accounts.
8. When at least 40 individuals have been signed up for membership, an institutional meeting can be held. The Fraternal department of the Sons of Norway Headquarters should be informed about:
- a. The date of the institutional meeting
 - b. When and to whom the lodge supplies should be sent if this was not already indicated on the inquiry form. (*All supplies necessary for running a lodge are furnished free by the Sons of Norway Headquarters. Officers' badges and charter pins are presented to the new lodge by the district.*)

C. THE INSTITUTIONAL MEETING

1. A secretary pro tem should have been selected in advance. The duties of this person are:
 - a. To process all membership applications turned over by the organizing representative.
 - b. To see that all new members sign the Membership Roster according to the instructions included in the kit of supplies for the secretary pro tem.
 - c. To take the minutes of the institutional meeting and, if possible, send a copy to the Fraternal department.
 - d. To turn over to the newly-elected secretary materials from the Fraternal department contained in the kit of supplies.

2. The institutional meeting, usually conducted by the district officers, will normally include the following items:
 - a. Opening ceremonies
 - b. Report of applications and election to membership
 - c. Welcome ceremony for new members
 - d. Election of officers
 - e. Installation of officers
 - f. Announcements
 - g. Closing ceremonies
 - h. Refreshments - See Agenda Worksheet sample in section VIII.
3. The time and place of the first regular meeting of the lodge should be determined in advance if possible, and announced at this meeting.

D. REIMBURSEMENT FOR NEW LODGE EXPENSES

Districts can be reimbursed for up to \$2,000 of their expenses associated with a new lodge start (see *Request for New Lodge Organization Grant form*). Expenses eligible for reimbursed include those for publicity, hall rental, refreshments, entertainment and transportation which are incurred in relation to pre-institution meetings and the institutional meeting itself. Expenses associated with acquiring regalia, flags or charter pins are traditionally borne by the district and not eligible for reimbursement.

The district treasurer should fill out the Request for New Lodge Organization Reimbursement Grant form, attach applicable receipts and mail the packet to Membership Services at Sons of Norway Headquarters. Reimbursement of new lodge related expenses incurred by members can be reimbursed by the advance from the new lodge's escrow account.

E. MISCELLANEOUS

1. The organizing representative should keep all interested people (*district officers, financial benefits counselors and Sons of Norway Headquarters*) informed concerning the progress of the organizational work.
2. A district officer should arrange a meeting with the new officers of the lodge as soon as possible after the institutional meeting.
3. The charter for a new lodge is officially kept open 60 days after the institutional meeting, though the members can vote to extend this period by 30 days for a total of 90 days. At this time, an application for charter is sent to the lodge. When the charter has been completed, the district president is notified for presentation.
4. After the institutional meeting, the new lodge secretary should inform Membership Services of the lodge's newly elected slate of officers. This can be done in the member's area of the website, www.sonsofnorway.com, by mailing in a D63 Lodge Officer Update form or by e-mail: fraternal@sofn.com.
5. The new lodge secretary should assist the district secretary in the application for matching funds by providing that officer with the appropriate bills/receipts. See the following pages for appropriate expenses.

VI. BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

There are many benefits to belonging to Sons of Norway. As a district officer, you may be called upon to provide information on benefits to current or prospective members. Following is a brief summary of some of the benefits available:

A. HERITAGE & CULTURE PROGRAMS

To promote and preserve the Norwegian heritage in the United States and Canada a wide range of heritage and culture information and resources have been gathered or developed by the Fraternal department for member usage. Information is available in the members section of our website www.sonsofnorway.com or by calling the Fraternal department at Sons of Norway Headquarters. Lodge officers (*typically cultural directors*) and members alike can make use of the following resources:

- Norwegian Cultural Skills Program - a series of instructional units that can help members learn about a variety of aspects of Norwegian culture.
- Information Banks – a diverse collection of informational essays on a variety of topics related to Norwegian heritage and culture.
- Idea Banks - a collection of helpful ideas for lodges to utilize in planning programs.
- Mini-Presentations – three-minute essays about Norwegian heritage and culture.
- Media Lending Library - offers hundreds of films, DVDs and slide presentations available for no charge to all members.
- Norwegian Music Lending Library – provides a wealth of CDs for any interest.

B. VIKING MAGAZINE

Viking magazine is sent to members monthly and offers a variety of articles on Norwegian heritage and culture, travelogues and travel tips, insights into modern Norwegian society, Norwegian-North American history and much more.

Viking also keeps members involved and informed about their organization by reporting

on Sons of Norway programs, products and activities, as well as lodge and district events.

Because the magazine has a larger readership and circulation than all other Scandinavian-American publications combined, *Viking* advertisements focus on the special interest of the readers.

C. THE SONS OF NORWAY WEBSITE - WWW.SONSOFNORWAY.COM

The Sons of Norway website provides the most current information about the organization. There are two "sides" to our website - a public side that anyone can access and a section available only to Sons of Norway members. Benefits of our website include:

- Constant promotion of our organization
- Ever expanding resources on Norwegian heritage and culture
- Information on the Sons of Norway Foundation
- Sons of Norway Marketplace, including our On-Line Store, classified advertisements and a Lost Branch (*genealogy*) section
- Lodge Directory with location and contact information for all Sons of Norway lodges.
- An extensive collection of Norwegian recipes
- Norwegian language lessons, including lessons with audio that are available only to members.

D. VIKING FOR KIDS

Viking for Kids is 16-page, quarterly Sons of Norway publication that is distributed free to Heritage members (*to age 15*). This colorful magazine is written and designed specifically to excite children about their Norwegian heritage and culture.

E. YOUTH ACTIVITIES

There are a number of Sons of Norway pro-

grams to help educate youth about Norway, its culture and heritage:

- Barnas Norsk program – a program that is designed to help youth leaders engage children ages 5 to 12 in Norwegian language, games, crafts and other fun activities through their local lodge. Programming ideas are distributed monthly to all youth directors and other interested members.
- Youth Norwegian Culture Skills program - a series of instructional units that can help youth learn about a variety of aspects of Norwegian culture. In addition, part 1 of the adult cultural skills units can be modified for youth to utilize.
- Folk dance groups – available through many lodges.
- Junior lodges and informal youth groups
- Norwegian language and culture camps – are available in all of the Sons of Norway districts.
- Adopt a School program.

F. SPORTS ACTIVITIES

The Norwegian concept of activity and wellness is extended to all members through the Sons of Norway Sports Medals Program. Patterned after the medals program of the Norwegian Ski, Bicycle and Sports Association in Norway, the program rewards members for athletic and fitness achievements. The sports director within each lodge administers this program.

G. FINANCIAL BENEFITS

Financial products continue to be one of the most important benefits available to Sons of Norway members. Participation has grown steadily and serves as the financial foundation of Sons of Norway. To learn more, contact Sons of Norway or your local financial benefits counselor to find sound, responsible solutions to financial needs.

H. SONS OF NORWAY FOUNDATION

The Sons of Norway Foundation offers scholarship and grant opportunities to members, lodges and their communities. The most comprehensive and up-to-date information about the Foundation can be found on the Sons of Norway website www.sonsofnorway.com/foundation. Other information about the Foundation can be found in the *Viking* magazine, Viking Resource and the annual fall mailing to all foundation directors. Periodic e-mails to foundation directors also provides valuable information. For questions or information on the Foundation, contact foundation@sofn.com or 800-945-8851.

I. TRAVEL

Travel is an appealing benefit of membership in Sons of Norway. Each year many members travel to Norway and take advantage of reduced rates for car rentals, hotels and escorted tours, as well as a discount on airfare through Icelandair.

J. VISA CARD

The Sons of Norway Visa credit card from US Banks, available to members in the US, offers the following benefits:

- A percentage of each purchase is contributed to Sons of Norway.
- Every dollar spent earns members points that can be redeemed for travel, merchandise rewards or cash back.
- An attractive card that displays a colorful Norwegian scene and the Sons of Norway logo

VII. CONCLUSION

As a district officer, you hold a key role in the management and future planning for the organization. Sons of Norway depends on you to motivate the lodge officers within your district and create an atmosphere of cooperation, energy and excitement, as well as showcase the benefits and programs of Sons of Norway throughout the lodges and communities within your district.