

EDWARDSVILLE/GLEN CARBON
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

Updated November 2018



Edwardsville | Glen Carbon
Chamber of Commerce

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WELCOME FROM THE ORGANIZATION PRESIDENT & CEO

Welcome to the Edwardsville/Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce. We are pleased that you have chosen to work with our organization. In the pages to follow, you will find helpful information you will find beneficial as embark on a journey of committee service with the Edwardsville/Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce employee.

Businesses in our region take great pride in their affiliation with an organization committed to high standards, and adherence to industry best practices. We aim to maintain our excellent reputation, with continued growth and prosperity.

Your enthusiasm, performance and loyalty as committee member of the Edwardsville/Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce is highly valued by our board of directors, our members, our staff, your fellow volunteers, and me.

I hope you will find your service with this organization rewarding. Working together, we will continue our trajectory as the leading voice of business in the Metro East region.

Should you have any questions, whether or not addressed in this guide, please raise them with me. I am available to assist you, and will make every effort to provide you with whatever information you need.



Sincerely,
The Edwardsville/Glen Carbon
Chamber of Commerce

By:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DMB', written over a white background.

Desirée M. Bennyhoff, IOM, ACE
President & CEO

PURPOSE

The information contained in this handbook is designed to help orient you to your new roles and responsibilities as an Edwardsville/Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce committee member. As a committee member, you assume considerable responsibility for the smooth functioning, as well as efficient and effective operation, of the organization.

This handbook should be viewed as advice for a successful volunteer. For example, leadership is discussed to help you gain a deeper sense of your role in leading the committee's operations. Leading does not necessarily mean managing. The difference between the two is highlighted so that you can begin to separate the difference between your role as a member of a committee and the role of the chamber's president/CEO and his/her staff. This distinction is critical, as you are neither expected nor permitted to actually oversee the day-to-day operations of the organization.

ABOUT THE EDWARDSVILLE/GLEN CARBON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

THE EDWARDSVILLE/GLEN CARBON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE was established by **local business leaders in 1924**, originally incorporated as the Edwardsville Chamber of Commerce. For a number of years the Edwardsville Chamber of Commerce operated under a DBA: Land of Goshen Chamber of Commerce.

Today the Edwardsville/Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce, a 501(c)(6) corporation made up of more than 500 local business and organization members, serves as the voice of business.

A chamber of commerce is an association of businesses and organizations working together to enhance the economic and socioeconomic health of the community. It is a not-for-profit mutual benefit corporation of voluntary membership that invests time and dollars to carry forward programs relevant to members' needs, and that affect the orderly growth and development of the community. It is the agency that convenes forces – both public and private – through which common goals can be achieved.

The purpose of the chamber of commerce is to promote a favorable business climate for its members and the community; to work on issues of community interest; and to provide business leadership for economic, political, and quality of life environments.

As it works to improve your community's economy, quality of life, and political landscape, the following broad objectives are top-of-mind:

- To help business grow and prosper
- To increase employment opportunities
- To encourage strategic expansion and development
- To ensure to the economic stability of the region
- To encourage and promote the nation's private enterprise system of competitive markets

Essential ingredients for an effective chamber of commerce are:

- A sound organizational structure
- Unwavering adherence to the organization's mission
- A meaningful strategic plan
- A strong annual plan of work designed to advance the multi-year strategic plan
- Responsible volunteer and professional leadership
- A sound financial basis

GUILDING PRINCIPLES: Chambers of commerce honor and respect **capitalism** and **well-informed private sector job creators** as a central and foundational element of regional and national prosperity. Chamber of commerce actively facilitate collaboration and open discussion between business and public officials through **education, business advocacy** and **leadership**.

VISION: The Edwardsville/Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce will be the preferred provider of watch-dog, education and advocacy services that form a mission-critical catalyst for business success.

MISSION: The Edwardsville/Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce is a member-driven organization, dedicated to a strong, private-sector regional economy.

VALUES: Ethics in business and government is essential to a healthy and sustainable society. The Edwardsville/Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce is committed to the values and virtues of – **honesty, integrity, professionalism, leadership** and **accountability**.

The chamber of commerce is not a social club or charity. It is not part of municipal government. Although it is not for profit, the IRS code for mutual benefit organizations is 501(c)(6), not 501(c)(3). Your chamber provides the means through which businesses can work together for the benefit of all.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE GROUP DIFFERENTIATION

BOARD MEMBER

The board of directors is the policy-making body of the chamber of commerce. It represents a cross-section of the business and professional leadership of the community. Board service should be considered an honor. Proven genuine unselfish interest in the chamber of commerce and its objectives is the first requirement for a board member.

COMMITTEE MEMBER

The committee serves as the clearinghouse for suggestions referred to it by officers and the board of directors, members, and others concerning priorities which are or should be receiving the attention of the chamber. Suggestions are reviewed and acted upon by the board of directors. Committees are action-oriented.

TASK FORCE

Occasionally the board may appoint a task force. This group is selected based on specific needs, and is assigned a very specific task to accomplish. When the task is complete, the task force is no longer active. Task forces have a finite beginning and disbanding.

COUNCIL

A council serves as an advisory body to inform the chamber on high-level policy matters.

STAFF

Chamber staff oversees the actions of the committee. They ensure all chamber policies and procedures are adhered to. The staff member organizes the committee and makes certain all pertinent information is available. Staff provides recognition to the committee. Staff, along with the committee chair, make sure the budget – as approved annually by the board of directors – is being followed. Staff is responsible for all expenditures and public relations efforts on behalf of the committee. Staff is required to have a broad knowledge of the chamber as a whole so that work of various committees do not conflict or become counterproductive, and to ensure that their purpose coincides with the mission of the chamber. Chamber staff is ultimately responsible for the outcome of committee work.

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

OVERVIEW

A written record of meeting proceedings is vital. In an age when government agencies are much more active in overseeing the affairs of voluntary associations, it is necessary that minutes be accurate, and that they be carefully maintained.

From a legal standpoint, it is not necessary that minutes read like legal transcripts with virtually every word recorded. It is not essential that minutes be complete to the degree that they record all information discussed, or the personal positions taken by those who participate in the discussion. Instead, they should operate as a summary of motions made and the action taken.

Brief minutes cause less potential harm when dealing with the IRS, or state/federal anti-trust divisions. Therefore, brevity minimizes risk.

ANTI-TRUST CONCERNS

The Sherman Anti-Trust Act (1890) states that a 'contract, combination, or conspiracy' in restraint of trade is illegal. By its very nature, a chamber of commerce is a combination of businesses that, in essence, compete with one another – therefore, the local chamber of commerce falls within the 'combination' purview of the Act.

Some specific issues raised under the Act relate to the denial of admission (i.e., membership) to certain businesses. Does the chamber, in fact, have a legal right to deny membership to businesses that are thought to be illegal, unethical, or distasteful? Anti-trust officials appear to conclude that most chambers of commerce and trade associations cannot operate as private clubs (i.e., they cannot automatically deny membership to any business). Anti-trust officials believe that the proper course is for the chamber to admit any firm to membership and, if the firm later violates the law, then the chamber is within its rights to expel that firm from membership.

Another example of possible anti-trust violation occurs when a particular segment of the chamber decides what rules or regulations will govern the organization. For example, a 'merchant's division' may decide that it will observe certain hours during a particular shopping season. This constitutes collective action, and it could force the anti-trust law into play. The advice of counsel, therefore, is most important when a decision on the part of a particular segment of the chamber membership is made.

COMMITTEES, TASK FORCES & COUNCILS

OVERVIEW

The heart of an effective organization is a strong structure whereby the chamber's mission and purpose may be amplified and accomplished. The chamber's goals are part of the strategic plan and the annual plan of work, so that all volunteers understand what is expected from a 'big picture' perspective.

While the board of directors is the chamber's policy-making body, recommendations for new policies often emanate from the committee, task force and council level. For this reason, the task force and council levels, comprised of experienced volunteer business leaders, are two of the most important segments of the chamber's operations. You could consider task forces and councils the most basic unit of the chamber endeavor. Neither committee, task force, nor council member shall represent the chamber of commerce in advocacy of or position to any project or issue without the specific consent of the Edwardsville/Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce's board of directors.

If a project is of an ongoing nature that will carry over to future years, then the term 'committee' is used. If the assignment is the accomplishment of a very specific task that will be completed in a reasonably short period of time, then the term 'task force' is used. If the purpose is high-level guidance and perspective on policy matters, the term 'council' is used.

The president/CEO appoints committee, task force and council chairpersons, often with the concurrence of the board of directors. Together with the CEO and board leadership, they outline, organize and prioritize assigned activities. The board and CEO normally delegate the appointment of the committee, task force or council members to the chairperson and staff liaison.

Chairpersons are responsible for seeing that the activities assigned to their respective group(s) are carried out on time and within budget. They must evaluate their work and procedures as well as the progress of the group as a whole and its individual members. These results are regularly reported to the board. Chairpersons must be committed to progress.

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

The committee chairperson regularly reviews progress with chamber staff and evaluates committee accomplishments. The chairperson is to the committee

what the captain is to a ball team – his or her function is to explain the task, line up the team, and advise and inspire them as play advances.

The chairperson studies the task, clarifying any points not thoroughly understood in cooperation with the president/CEO or staff. In partnership with staff, the chairperson recruits individuals for committees whose skills will help and are needed.

The committee meets only to utilize its members in accomplishing a goal. Meetings are to be held as needed, have an agenda (prepared by staff), start on time, end on time, and provide an opportunity for members to report, suggest, and participate. The chairperson keeps his/her eye on the goals and objectives of the committee, and ensures all discussions are pertinent to the goal.

The chairperson guides and encourages the group to produce. The chairperson must constantly evaluate his or her work, procedures, and progress of the committee and its members.

The chairperson does not have the authority to commit the chamber financially to any project, or to authorize any kind of contractual agreement.

Each committee chairperson is directly accountable to the assigned chamber staff member for coordination, performance, and assistance. All committee meetings require a chamber staff person in attendance. Meeting notices will automatically be sent to all committee members in advance of the meeting, but a chamber staff person.

Before any report of committee action is provided to media outlets, it must be cleared and approved by the president/CEO. At no time should a committee member release information on any chamber program or event. All press interactions and dissemination of information are handled by paid chamber employees, not volunteers.

The staff member assigned to the committee will aid the committee in achieving its goals.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Members in good standing are eligible to serve on committees. Task force and council members are appointed by the board of directors in concert with recommendation from the president/CEO. Committee authority is delegated by the board of directors, and action must have approval by the board unless such action is specifically granted previously.

The chairman of the board of directors leads. The board of directors sets policy. The board of directors initiates and receives reports and advice from the president/CEO. Staff advises, coordinates and implements action taken. Members on the committee do the work.

The committee and its members serve as the clearinghouse for all suggestions referred to it. Suggestions for creation of a special committee, task force or council are reviewed and acted upon by the board of directors. Each member is responsible for his/her phase of the work as assigned.

Committees are action-oriented. They receive facts, face facts, and take action to achieve strategic goals. A successful committee will:

- **Understand objectives:** Make sure you have a clear, positive goal. Study it and agree on exactly what is to be done. If there is disagreement, seek clarification at once from the chairperson.
- **Analyze a problem or activity:** Understand all parts of the problem and determine a sequence of actions to follow.
- **Assign work:** Make specific assignments to members.
- **Gather facts:** Obtain the information required to intelligently work on the problem or activity. Avoid prejudices, previous opinions or beliefs, and assumptions.
- **Get outside help if needed:** Use outsiders as advisors or consultants, but refrain from assigning them responsibilities the committee is expected to assume.
- **Evaluate results:** Determine to what extent goals are being met, and to what extent each member of the committee is doing his/her part.
- **Conclude its work:** When your task is complete and the goal is reached, you have achieved your commitment to the committee.
- **Respect confidentiality:** Above all committee members must understand the importance of confidentiality. Committee members are often entrusted with sensitive information. Those serving on committees with access to such information must sign confidentiality and code of conduct agreements. Understand that failure to adhere to these agreements will result in immediate dismissal from volunteer service.

Committee members are accountable to the chairperson. The committee as a body is accountable to the board of directors through the chairperson and chamber staff.

Committees will be continued so long as there is work to be done. Occasionally a committee must consider a problem of which a member has close financial interest. In these cases, the member is free to express his/her belief in the matter, but then must temporarily disqualify himself/herself as a member until this particular issue is settled.

Lack of interest in the task and its progress is considered adequate reason for dropping a member from the committee. If a committee member does not attend three consecutive meetings, with no notification to the chamber, it will be assumed that the person is no longer interested in serving on the committee and the individual will be removed from the communication list.

SUCCESSFUL MEETINGS

Broad participation and open discussion are criteria for a successful meeting. Ideas and opinions expressed by individuals should be recognized and respected, even if considered controversial. It is from the sum of experience and ideas that wise decisions will be made, and each member of the group must feel they are part of a 'team,' with an obligation to assist in formulating a plan of action and making it a success.

The function of the chairperson is to serve as a guide to the discussion – to keep it moving, and moving the right direction. He or she must manage the group in a manner to best avoid conflicts of personalities.

The chairperson helps define the problem at the start of the meeting, keeps the discussion pertinent to the subject, summarizes the discussion at key points and at the conclusion of the meeting, and assists the group in developing a plan of action to implement the decisions reached.

The better the chairperson understands both the problem and the individuals comprising the committee, the better prepared they are to lead a successful meeting. They should familiarize themselves with the subject and objectives, and roughly outline topics to be discussed with a time allocation for each.

Leading a discussion without dominating it requires skill and tact. All meeting participants enjoy equal status for discussion purposes, and an uninhibited flow of information is critical to problem-solving. Rather than serving as an authority on the subject seeking acceptance of one's own ideas, the chairperson stimulates the thinking and discussion of participants. Instead of making positive statements, ask pertinent questions designed to draw out ideas and opinions. Try to create an atmosphere conducive to free expression.

The agenda for the meeting should be carefully planned in advance. It may require a statement of the issue to be discussed, a list of topics, or a comprehensive outline. An outline serves the dual purpose of guiding the meeting and as a time control measure.

LISTING OF CHAMBER COMMITTEES

OVERVIEW

As someone deeply involved with the chamber, you have likely noticed structural changes within the chamber's operations over the last few years. It is critical that you as a volunteer understand the philosophy and strategy behind those changes, as they have impacted the chamber's committees.

As determined through the strategic planning process, the Edwardsville/Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce focuses strives to eliminate duplication of services through redundant committee work. As a result of strategic plan implementation, the chamber has made a concerted effort to refrain from 'meeting just to meet,' and has restructured to minimize the previous 'leadership by committee' format – instead relying on professional, trained staff to manage issues previously handled through committee work.

This streamlining has resulted in the chamber better respecting volunteers' time, and better utilizing its internal human capital resources. As such, the scope of committee work has been largely decreased, resulting in increased organizational efficiency.

Further, as the chamber continues its evolution from a 'chamber of events' to a 'chamber of advocacy,' there are noticeably fewer events-related committees, and the expectations of those remaining committees are more task-oriented and manageable.

AMBASSADOR

Serving as champions of the organization's mission, ambassadors serve as the signature committee of the chamber. Ambassadors are the chamber's key volunteers, providing assistance at events. With the leadership of the chamber's membership director, ambassadors play a significant role in recruitment and retention efforts, and actively promote the chamber's purpose as leaders in the community.

ANNUAL AWARDS GALA

Committee members serve as a volunteer force the day/evening of the annual gala, which is the chamber's largest annual fundraiser. Committee members are assigned into volunteer slots by chamber staff to ensure adequate coverage in all areas of need. A streamlined committee ensures an enjoyable evening of celebration for attendees and award recipients.

EXECUTIVE

Comprised of board of the organization's officers the committee acts on behalf of, and exercises the power of, the board of directors between meetings as necessary. Any actions taken are reported to the full board at the next meeting.

FINANCE/AUDIT

Led by the organization's treasurer and accountant, respectively, this group is responsible for oversight of the chamber's financial health. This committee is also involved in the chamber's financial audit and review process.

GOLF TOURNAMENT

Volunteers assist throughout the day at the chamber's annual golf outing, which features more than 100 golfers competing in a scramble tournament.

Committee members assist with event logistics, contest holes, and various aspects of the tournament to ensure a smooth, enjoyable day on the course.

HALLOWEEN PARADE

Volunteers assist with the annual Halloween parade to ensure public safety and overall order of the annual tourism event, which draws an estimated 25,000 spectators to downtown.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This sub-group of the board of directors determines how the chamber's multi-year strategic plan will be furthered through appropriate annual plan of work objectives. This group also works with the strategic plan facilitator as necessary.

NOMINATING/BOARD DEVELOPMENT

This committee is comprised per organizational bylaws to identify potential nominees to the chamber's board of directors. This is the most critical committee of the chamber, as future organizational direction and success is reliant upon selection of qualified directors.

POLICY COUNCIL

This council serves in an advisory capacity, focused on local, state and federal governmental activities. This 'think tank' group guides policy positions, suggests updates to the annual legislative agenda, provides recommendations to the board of directors, and informs decisions of the chamber's Business Builds PAC (political action committee). Policy council assists in monitoring of legislative issues, and in further strengthening the chamber's grassroots advocacy network.

POLITICAL ACTION

The Business Builds PAC committee functions as the officers and decision-making body of the chamber's political action committee, per PAC bylaws.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

DOES A MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE HAVE TO BE A MEMBER OF THE CHAMBER?

Yes, only members can serve on the chamber's committees. At times it may be appropriate to invite a guest as a reference or speaker, however they are not to be added to committee rosters or become a regular meeting attendee.

WHO PREPARES THE COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA?

The staff liaison, with input of the committee chair, is responsible for preparing the agenda according to the chamber's protocol, policies and branding standards. Any input from the committee chairperson must be provided to the staff liaison at least one week prior to the meeting. Meeting notices, as well as all other committee communications, will be sent out from the chamber office.

IS IT NECESSARY FOR STAFF TO ATTEND ALL COMMITTEE MEETINGS?

Yes. The chamber requires that staff be in attendance at any meeting of the chamber of commerce, including committee, task force, and council meetings.

IS THERE AN ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERS?

In accordance with the chamber's bylaws, any person who misses three consecutive meetings without notice or relevant communication will be removed from the committee. Staff will advise the chairperson of any issues.

HOW LONG SHOULD A MEETING LAST?

Most meetings, unless otherwise noted, should be completed within one hour, preferably less. It is important to begin and conclude on time, and to keep non-pertinent discussions to a minimum. Out of respect for everyone's time, chairpersons should not bring latecomers 'up to speed' on what has been discussed until after the meeting is adjourned.

WHO DEVELOPS EVENT/PROGRAM-SPECIFIC NEWS RELEASES?

All press relations are handled through the chamber office. No volunteer, other than the chairman of the board of directors, may speak on behalf of the chamber on any topic. The president/CEO is the chamber's official spokesperson and may occasionally delegate this duty to staff as appropriate. At no time should a press release be written or sent from a committee member's office.



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