



UNITED FOUR WHEEL DRIVE ASSOCIATIONS

An International Organization

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HOW TO ORGANIZE A CLUB

TWO TYPES OF CLUBS

Generally speaking, there are two different types of four-wheel drive organizations. By far, the largest number are formed primarily for recreational purposes. These clubs conduct trips over rugged trails, to scenic natural areas and reach out remote, primitive campgrounds in the real backcountry, or in a rock alcove. They're taking delight in the discovery of a perfect rest area created by Mother Nature, left for the adventurer to enjoy.

The second type of four-wheel drive organization is formed primarily as a service and emergency group. These are the posses and usually they work very close to a sheriff's office. They meet regularly for training in driving and emergency procedures and are on 24-hour call for search and rescue work.

It is well to remember that local, county, state, and federal authorities frequently call on recreational clubs in an emergency. This is usually for transportation of personnel, or equipment. In recent months, western clubs have been called out for forest fires and searches.

On the other hand, posses also conduct occasional group runs and camping trips. And in many areas a four-wheeler will be a member of an emergency group while also being active in a nearby recreational club. However, our Association's primary interest is in family oriented recreational clubs, therefore, this booklet is designed to organize this type of club.

DEVELOPMENT INTEREST

The first step in forming a four-wheel drive club is to develop interest. The best place to begin is with yourself and a few friends who are equally interested in four-wheel drive vehicles. Excellent possibilities for new members are persons who have an interest that can best be served by four-wheel drive. Among those are hunters, fishermen, camera enthusiasts, and rock hounds, just to name a few. After you have made your first few runs as an organization, invite these persons to go with you. If they don't already own a four-wheel drive vehicle, they may discover that 4WD can get them to places they never considered before, and come home determined to buy their own rig. Once they do, they are naturals for your new four-wheel drive club. Point out to them that your monthly trips will open up new territories for their own personal activity.

THE FIRST GROUP

But before you start securing members, get your club going with a small group of interested and dedicated people. It is far more important that the club have enthusiasm for its beginning than a large membership. If the initial group is right, the club will grow on its own inertia.

ESTABLISH A PURPOSE

Your first formal meeting will be long and technical. But nothing you do that night will be more important than the reasons you determine are the purposes for your club. These will be written in your constitution and will establish the character of your club. A sample of a few of the purposes might go like this:

1. To promote the sport and past time of four-wheel drive travel in all phases.
2. To enjoy and protect the natural resources and support the Multiple Use Principal as applies to public land.
3. To promote interest in the ownership and driving of four wheel drive vehicles.
4. To promote, organize and hold outings, meetings, runs, excursions, reliability trails, hill climbs, cross country trips and similar events.
5. To offer awards and prizes for various accomplishments of the persons of the club.

These purposes are included in the constitution of many 4WD clubs to cover most of the basic reasons for forming a club. Most clubs will find that their own special area will offer the opportunity to include other purposes designed to fill a localized need.

From the very first, your club should strongly consider legally incorporating under the laws of your state. One of the reasons for this is that any incorporated club or association formed for the purposes of social or recreational activities, even though non profit in character, is considered in the eyes of the law as a partnership wherein each member has unlimited liability for the actions of the organization.

A corporation, on the other hand, is considered by law as an individual or unity having rights and liabilities distinct from those of the persons composing it. In addition, as a non-profit corporation, the club can claim exemption from state and federal taxes and should apply to the Internal Revenue Service for an official exempt status. Therefore, the advantages to an organized group, such as a 4WD club, in becoming incorporated is that it affords protection for each member from a financial and legal standpoint.

Because of wide variance in state laws, legal counsel should be obtained locally for handling incorporation procedures. In selecting a lawyer, it might be a good idea to look around for one who drives a 4WD rig. More and more professional people are coming into four wheeling and not only would you interest a potential member, you might get your legal advice free!

Several associations have samples for incorporation. Although these might not apply to your state, they will be extremely helpful in formulation of your own incorporation documents. The UFWDA director in your state or area will also be glad to give your new club every assistance he/she can along these lines.

CLUB BY LAWS or CONSTITUTION

The incorporation documents will call for the club to be run by its BY-Laws, which must be established by the members, or Board of Directors. Even un-incorporated clubs should establish By-Laws to properly organize their club. A small committee should meet and prepare a proposed set of By-Laws to present to the club or Board of Directors as a whole who will recommend or make changes or ratify each item in turn. This will, of necessity, be a long and technical meeting. But again, this will be a most important meeting as all the future rules governing your club and its activities will be established in your By-Laws.

At the back of this booklet a typical set of By-Laws has been prepared to serve as a guide for new four wheel drive clubs in starting their organizations. It is presented here only as a suggested form.

YOUR FIRST OFFICERS

Now that your paperwork is done, the next step is to choose a slate of officers who will make your club grow. No one can tell you whom to pick, but there are several qualifications, which all officers in a 4WD club should have.

First of all, they should own, drive, and be particularly devoted to their four-wheel drive rig. Secondly, they should enjoy driving off-the-road trails and camping in primitive areas. Third, and most important qualification in your first year, is time. The officers should have enough time to be able to do the many jobs they are going to find necessary. There are meetings to conduct, trips to plan, membership to be increased, and dozens of other things. The most sincere officer, whose work or business requires too much of his time, is liable to be more of a liability than an asset to a new club. So choose those first officers with care.

A FAMILY AFFAIR

Perhaps the most important single reason for the current upsurge of interest in four-wheel drive clubs is that it is a family affair. For this reason, many 4WD clubs count only vehicles, not individuals as their members. Some clubs that have 50 members (vehicles) may be composed of as many as 400 persons. Therefore, it is a good idea to consider this fact when drawing up your By-Laws for such items as dues, voting privileges, etc.

And remember also, that the success and continued growth of your club will depend largely on the ability of individual members to promote the family side of four wheeling.

PLANNING ACTIVITIES

Perhaps the thing you will need the least advice on is planning your outings. IN fact, if you have half a dozen or more persons interested in forming a club, you have probably been on several trips together. The thing to remember now is that one of the reasons you are forming a club is to organized and discipline these trips.

First of all, they should invariably be a family affair. Make plans to take wives and children along on each backcountry run. Incidentally, once you begin making your trips a family affair, you'll find that attendance is better and the growth of your club much more rapid.

4WD runs are usually set up along lines which strongly resemble the old wagon trains that journeyed west a hundred years ago. The leader (who must have made the run before) heads the line and breaks trail, so to speak. At the end of the line is the "drag rider" or "tail end Charlie" whose job is to see that there are no stragglers and that no one is left behind due to breakdowns. Many clubs now have citizen band radios for a least the leader and tail end rig so that there is constant voice contact, and if there is a break down, speeds can be adjusted accordingly.

Most clubs have rules about staying together on the trail. Usually there is a central meeting place for the trip. This might be club headquarters, if the trip is not too distant. If the trip involves a hundred or more miles of highway travel, the central camp is used. This merely means an area where members can camp is selected and the trip starts from there. Each member drive individually to the central camp in time to make the trip.

MAKE YOUR CLUB GROW

There are several ways to make your club grow. One of these is to obtain the local support of the Chamber of Commerce and other civic and fraternal organizations. Inviting officials from these groups to make a trip with you can do this. Be sure to keep them informed of your activities and offer to participate in theirs. Your club may be asked to participate in a parade, provide transportation or workers. Not only will this give your club a good chance to find new members, it will increase your good will in your own community.

PUBLICITY

Publicity is vital to any growing organization. Ordinarily, your local paper will give you coverage on your events if your press officers write them up. One good way to receive excellent coverage in the local paper (or even a nearby metropolitan daily) is to extend an invitation to the editor (or perhaps the

sports or automotive editor) to make a trip with you. See that you pick out an interesting trip over rugged terrain and that as many of your members as possible turn out. This can frequently result in a major feature story, which not only brings your club new members, but also is instrumental in forming other 4WD clubs in nearby areas.

Good "Public Relations" is another way to gain publicity. In most areas, 4WD clubs and associations sponsor or support local anti-litter and anti-vandalism campaigns. One of the best projects is to educate beginners in the proper use of their vehicles and most important, proper use of the public lands so that they leave clean camps and become courteous and considerate four wheelers. In the long run, the extent that we are going to be permitted to use 4WD vehicles in the public domain depends largely on the impression made by the various individuals and clubs who engage in such activities.

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

One of the best ways to keep interest up in your club is to print a monthly newsletter. Most clubs do and they range from simple, one-page copied sheets to elaborate printed newsletters. Run little items about members and their rigs. Write detailed accounts of each trip and make those so interesting that anyone who missed the run wishes he hadn't. And, devote a special section to the minutes and decisions of the last regular meeting.

Be sure to print enough copies so that the secretary can keep a few on file. These will be valuable in interested new members, and for providing information to the newspaper, etc. Incidentally, be sure to include the UFWDA Editor and Officers on your mailing list for your newsletter and your club will receive national publicity.

WHEN YOU GET GOING

After your club has been organized, you'll find you want to keep in touch with other clubs in nearby areas. If you don't know where they are, drop a line to the UFWDA and we'll send you a list. There may be a state association in your state and joining will open up hundreds of interesting trips of which your club was unaware.

And give serious consideration to joining the United Four Wheel Drive Associations as a Club Association Member. The UFWDA is the greatest single step forward in recent for wheeling and promotes the sport all over the nation. A letter to the UFWDA will bring you information on joining.

A quote from an authoritative source might be in order here: Clubs existing as integral parts of a national organization enjoy long, productive lives, whereas, independent, local groups unrelated to a national organization and wholly devoid of national purpose, characteristically are short-lived.

FORMAT FOR FIRST TWO MEETINGS

FIRST MEETING: Before the first full meeting is held, the group who planned and called it should get together, go over all the proposals and plans, and select an acting chairperson or spokesperson and an acting secretary. The prospective members must be assumed to be unorganized and uncertain. Therefore, at the beginning an acting chairperson is needed to get things going.

The first meeting can make or break the club. The organizers must have a definite plan and purpose to show the prospective members. Otherwise, they will lose interest and will seldom show up a second time. Have a short trip planned and have the By-Laws ready for discussion and action.

As soon as the majority of the prospective members arrive, the meeting should be called to order by the acting chairperson, who introduces himself, the acting secretary, others of the founding group, and all of the people attending. He then should give a resume of the aims and purposes of the proposed club, the advantages and rewards and then should present the proposed BY-Laws and regulations for discussion. Sufficient copies of the proposed By-Laws should be available so that each prospective member may have one to study. Access to a copy machine is almost an absolute necessity for any club, and typing facilities are a must.

After an open discussion, the meeting should be called to order by the acting chairperson and the attending persons polled for their viewpoints on forming a club. Assuming an affirmative reaction, the acting chairperson will then ask for volunteers for various duties as follows:

1. A parliamentary committee to study the proposed By-Laws, and make recommendations.

2. An election committee to recommend a slate of permanent officers.
3. A trip committee to recommend trips and nominate a trail boss.

As soon as the committees are formed, the acting secretary (who should be taking minutes of the meeting) will obtain the name, address, and phone number of all prospective members. The acting chairperson will then discuss an early meeting date for holding a second meeting, at which the By-Laws may be approved, and the officers will be elected and dues collected. This second meeting will actually be the first club meeting.

It is possible, if the early formalities are short, that some of the second meeting procedures (particularly relative to dues) may be accomplished during the first. Dues would be the first consideration if possible, and collection at the first meeting will assure the organization's existence.

SECOND MEETING: The second meeting should be held shortly after the first. The acting chairperson should call the meeting to order, and as the first order of business, he should call for the By-Laws committee report (parliamentary committee) and present the By-Laws to the members for acceptance. Upon ratification of the By-Laws, the acting chairperson should ask for the report of the election committee, proposing the club officers with their given consent to run for office.

As soon as the names are given, the acting chairperson should call for voting on the election of the President. As soon as the vote is tabulated, the acting chairperson should turn the office over to the new President.

The new President should then call for the election of the other officers, in turn, who shall take their places as soon as selected. Upon election of the secretary, the acting secretary shall turn the club records over to the elected officer, but should assist the new secretary until the meeting is adjourned.

After the election of officers, the President should call for the trip committee report and recommendations, and the new members should select a trip.

The President will then call for any new business or discussion to be placed before the members. A regular meeting date and place should be selected. The meeting will then proceed by regular parliamentary practice to adjournment.

Remember the first two meetings should organize the club and get the club going. Subsequent meetings would all be regular meetings. Changes in operations and By-Laws should be expected as club operations who the need for change.

FOUR WHEEL DRIVE CLUB CONSTITUTION OR BY-LAWS

Typical club By-Laws: The following is a typical set of By-Laws to serve as a guide for new four wheel drive clubs in starting their organizations. It is presented here only as a suggested form.

ARTICLE I

1. This organization shall be know as the (club name).

ARTICLE II

Objectives

1. The (club name) is organized as a non-profit organization for the purpose of:
 - a. Providing social, educational, and recreational activities for its membership.
 - b. Participating in and supporting civic activities for the betterment of the community.

(See additional Purposes outlined earlier in this booklet.)

ARTICLE III

Membership and Dues

1. Owners of four-wheel drive vehicles are eligible for membership in the (club name).
2. The total number of memberships shall not exceed (number) at any one time. Each membership includes the immediate family, however, voting power is restricted to those family members eighteen years of age or over.

3. All members must conduct themselves in a respectable and orderly fashion whether in or out of club activities. Any member disgracing himself in the public eye will be immediately subject to expulsion from the club, subject to decision by the Board of Directors.
4. Application for membership must be sponsored by a member in good standing.
5. Applicants for membership must be at least eighteen years of age (exceptions may be made by decision of the Board of Directors) must hold a valid drivers license, and must show a minimum of PL & PD insurance coverage on their vehicle.
6. Applicants for membership must attend one membership meeting and one activity before being issued an application blank to be properly filled out and submitted to the Board of Directors. An initiation of (fee) shall be assessed against each new membership and must accompany the application for membership. Following review of each application by the Board of Directors, the applicant will be notified as to his acceptance or rejection and when his dues will become payable.
7. Dues for this organization shall be (dues) per membership per year, payable in advance. Any member whose dues are three months in arrears shall be dropped from the rolls of this organization. Nothing herein contained shall prevent reinstatement of a delinquent member upon payment in full of his unpaid dues, together with a reinstatement fee of (fee), providing a vacancy exists.
8. Any member not having attended a membership meeting during three consecutive months shall be dropped from the rolls of this organization. Exemptions may be made by decision of the Board of Directors.
9. All personal expenses such as uniforms, decals, insignia, etc., shall be bore by each individual and are not to be arranged for in any manner by the club.
10. Members shall immediately notify the Secretary upon a change of address, mailing address, or telephone number.
11. Resignation of any member shall be in writing and submitted to the Secretary.
12. When a member disposes of and no longer posses a four-wheel drive vehicle, his membership in this club shall terminate.

ARTICLE IV

1. Members who adopt and sign the By-Laws of the (club name) on or before (date), shall be know as Charter Members of the organization.

ARTICLE V

Meetings

1. Meetings of the membership of the (club name) shall be held once monthly at such times and places as may be designated by the Board of Directors.
2. Fifty one per cent (51%) of the membership shall constitute a quorum for a membership meeting.

ARTICLE VI

Administration of Officers

1. The officers of the (club name) shall consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer and shall be know as the Executive Committee. It shall be their duty to draw up agenda for all board and membership meetings, and it shall be their further duty to assume the functions of the Board of Directors in cases of emergency.
2. The Board of Directors shall consists of the members of the Executive Committee, the immediate past president, and (number) directors elected by the membership. Each director shall be assigned one or more committees and it shall be his duty to represent such committees on the Board. Further duties of the Directors shall be to conduct the day-to-day business; to take such actions as might best fulfill the aims of this organization, and to audit the books of the previous administration. The Board of Directors shall meet regularly once each month and eight members shall constitute a quorum of the body

3. The President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer shall not succeed themselves in office. No director shall serve in the capacity of a director for more than two successive terms. Serving as an officer or director for part of a term due to vacancy shall not constitute a term.
4. No office shall be added to the club except by the vote of the majority of the entire membership of the club.

ARTICLE VII

Duties and Powers of Officers

1. The PRESIDENT shall preside over all membership and board meetings and shall be present at all events when possible. He shall be the executive officer and shall have the duty to carry out the policies and decisions of the Board of Directors. He shall be without right of vote on the Board of Directors except in the event of a tie. He shall sign all checks with the Treasurer, unless both are members of the same family.
2. The VICE PRESIDENT shall, in the absence of the President, serve in that capacity. He shall also serve as a Parliamentarian and perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Board of Directors.
3. The SECRETARY shall keep and preserve all records and minutes of the meetings of the regular membership and the ledger roll call and determine the number of voting members present so it may be known if a quorum is in attendance, shall keep a file system of membership, and shall receive and answer all general correspondence pertaining to the organization. He shall sign checks with the Treasurer in the event the President and Treasurer are members of the same family.
4. The TREASURER shall keep accurate and complete records of the funds and accounts of this organization, shall collect all dues and maintain a record thereof. He shall make only such disbursements from the funds of the organization as are directed by the Board of Directors and Article VIII hereof.

ARTICLE VIII

Expenditures and Finance

1. All moneys received from all sources shall immediately be turned over to the Treasurer to be deposited in the checking account of the (club name).
2. No withdrawal from funds shall be made without the approval of the Board of Directors. Single expenditures in excess of Twenty Five (\$25.00) must have an approval of the majority of a voting quorum of the membership. All expenditures shall be made by check, and the item for which each check is drawn shall be designated on the face or the reverse side thereof separately, stating the amount of each.

ARTICLE IX

Committees

1. Committees shall be designated by the Board of Directors. Each committee shall be assigned by the President to a director who shall be responsible for its activities and who, with the approval of the Board of Directors, will appoint a committee chairman.

ARTICLE X

Election of Officers

1. The membership shall meet and elect officers and directors for each fiscal year at the regular February meeting. The newly elected officers shall take office on March 1st. Voting shall be in person and not by proxy or mail.
2. A nominating committee consisting of a chairman and two members in good standing shall be appointed by the Board of Directors to nominate one or more candidates for President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, and (number) directors. The candidates for offices must be regular members in good standing. The candidates for the office of Treasurer must be bondable, bond to be paid for by the club. Nominations shall be announced by mail to each member in good standing at least two weeks prior to the

general election. At all elections, nominations for each and every office of this organization may be made from the floor.

3. Balloting for each office shall be in separate successive sequence and will be held by secret ballot. All ballots for offices must be counted and checked by three members other than the nominees.
4. A majority of votes cast is necessary for election to an office or position on the Board of Directors.
5. In the event of a vacancy in the office of Vice President, Secretary, or Treasurer, an election shall be called to elect a successor. In the event of a vacancy on the Board of Directors, a successor shall be elected by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE XI

Recall

1. Any officer or director of the (club name) may be recalled by a two third majority vote of the entire membership.

ARTICLE XII

Events

1. All events shall be subject to approval by the Board of Directors. Events will be under the direction of a Trip Leader appointed by the Board of Directors.
2. All members, including the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, are responsible to the direction of the appointed Trip Leader and his appointed assistants from the set time of the beginning of an event, to the termination of an event. At no time has any member or officer the right to demand any unscheduled stop or change of route or plan. No provision is to be made to permit any member to join an event at any location or time other than the location and said time decided upon for the event if such provision causes any change of time, any stop, any delay, or any change of route.
3. All events must be conducted in an orderly manner and with safety as the prime factor. Any event held on private property will be subject to liability releases.
4. No member or guest under the age of twenty-one years will be permitted to drive in any event unless accompanied by or with written permission of parent or guardian.
5. All competitive events shall be under the direct authority, supervision, and control of the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall determine entrance classifications and regulations for various events and shall approve trophies and awards to be presented. Anyone determined to be physically or mentally disturbed at the time of an event shall be disqualified. Vehicles may be subject to technical inspection varying according to the type of event and shall be disqualified if found to be mechanically unsafe.
6. All members and guest participating in an event shall abide by the Motor Vehicle Code of the state concerned and by the laws and regulations of the city, the county, or the circumstances involved

ARTICLE XIII

Rules and Procedures

1. Unless otherwise specified in these By-Laws, Roberts Rules of Order Revised shall govern parliamentary procedure.

ARTICLE XIV

Amendments

1. These By-Laws may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote at a regular membership meeting, a quorum being present and voting. Any amendment to the By-Laws must be presented to the membership at the regular membership meeting preceding that in which the vote is taken.