

# San Luis Obispo Model Railroad Association

## Policy Manual

This document shall serve as an operational guide for the San Luis Obispo Model Railroad Association, expanding upon the Association Bylaws to provide instructions for the conduct of all Association business and activities. This manual replaces and in all cases supercedes all previously published policies, written or expressed guidelines, and all other agreements and/or procedural conventions for the SLOMRA.

### Section 1: Association Management

#### A. General Management

1. The Board shall have the power to resolve the general business and activities of the Association by simple majority of the Board.
2. In all cases which specify a vote by the Board, the majority required for passage of a resolution is expressed as a portion of the Board members in attendance or voting by proxy, unless otherwise specified.
3. The Board may elect to send matters to the general membership for voting as it deems appropriate or necessary. Such matters may be passed by simple majority of voting members present.
4. The Board shall acquire and maintain Liability insurance through the NMRA or a competitive agent to provide adequate coverage for the Association's activities.

#### B. Revisions of Policies

Unless otherwise specified, revisions to this Policy Manual shall be conducted in the following manner:

1. The proposed revision shall be presented and discussed in any General or Special meeting.
2. The discussion shall be distributed via email to the membership in the meeting minutes.
3. A separate notice shall be distributed to the membership specifying that a vote on the proposed revision is scheduled for the next regularly scheduled business meeting. This notice must be sent at least 21 days before the scheduled vote. It must also be sent via postal mail, in person, or by telephone to those members who have specified that they cannot receive email notices.
4. The proposed revision shall again be discussed and finalized at the meeting for voting, and minor changes that do not alter the basic focus of the proposal may be made at this time. A 10-minute time limit for debate may be imposed at any time by the Board member presiding over the meeting, after which the vote will be called.
5. The proposed revision may be adopted by simple majority of voting members present.

### Section 2: Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct is under development and will need future approval to be placed here.

### Section 3: Membership

The following membership classes expand upon the basic membership levels specified in the Association Bylaws.

#### A. Regular Member

Any person of age eighteen or older who has not had their membership previously revoked is eligible for Regular membership. A Regular member may vote, hold any office or position, and participate in all group activities without restriction. Group property loan privileges are expressly limited to Regular members.

## **B. Student Member**

Full-time students aged eighteen and over but not more than twenty-five are eligible for Student membership. Student members shall have the same rights as a Regular member, with the exception of property loan privileges.

1. Student members shall pay quarterly dues of half the Regular membership rate, but not less than \$5 per quarter. Student members shall pay no initiation fee, but must instead pay for the first two quarters of membership in advance, at the aforementioned student rate.
2. A Student member may opt to transition to Regular membership at any time, or by necessity in the quarter following the Student member's 25<sup>th</sup> birthday. A Student member transferring to Regular membership must pay the standard initiation fee of Regular membership, unless he or she paid such fee previously (such as a Regular member transferring to Student membership and back again).

## **C. Junior Member**

Membership shall be allowed for the child(ren) or legal charge(s) of a regular member, provided that such child or charge consistently demonstrates a level of maturity and behavior that is neither disruptive nor destructive to persons or property while engaged in group activities. Further, a junior member must be under the full-time supervision of a parent or guardian while attending a group activity. A Junior member may hold an appointed position as deemed appropriate by the Board. A Junior member shall have no voting rights, may hold no elected office, does not receive the newsletter, and may only participate in group activities with the consent of both their sponsoring regular member and the event organizer.

## **D. Associate Member**

The spouse or established domestic partner of a regular member shall be considered an Associate Member. Each Regular member may sponsor only one Associate Member. An Associate Member is assigned no dues, fees, or assessments, may not hold any elected office, does not receive a newsletter, and may not vote, but may serve in appointed positions and committees, and otherwise participate in all group events.

## **E. Honorary Member**

Persons may also be inducted as Honorary Members for the period of one year by a three-quarters majority vote of all members in attendance at the annual elections meeting. An Honorary Member is assigned no dues, fees, or assessments, may not hold any office or appointment, and may not vote, but receives the newsletter and may serve in event committees, and otherwise participate in all group events.

## **F. Limited Member**

Limited membership may be applied for at any time by a member *in good standing*, and is granted by majority vote of the Board of Directors. The Board may also impose Limited Membership by a  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority vote. Limited Members may attend but may not participate in group meetings and events, and may not vote, hold office, nor serve on any committee. While on Limited status, a member shall pay no dues or fees. A Limited Member may return to Regular Member status at any time by paying the dues for the quarter concurrent to reinstatement, plus any dues or fees that were outstanding prior to entering Limited status.

## **G. Guests**

Public events are always open to everyone, and persons attending open events are termed Visitors as opposed to Guests for the purposes of these Policies. A Guest is a person invited by an Association member to a non-public group event or activity, such as a layout operating session, primarily for the purpose of sharing the hobby and attracting new members. Guests may fully participate in such events so long as they conform to the operating rules and code of conduct of the group. A guest may only actively participate in a single non-public event. They may attend an additional two non-public events without participating. After three visits, an individual must join the group at some level of membership in order to attend another non-public event.

## **H. Probationary Membership Status**

Each new member shall serve their first six months of active membership as a Probationary Member. Existing Members may also be placed on Probationary status for up to four quarters if found to be in violation of the Code of Conduct by 75% vote of the Board of Directors. During their probationary period, Probationary members are subject to the revocation of their membership if they are found to violate the Code of Conduct by 75% vote of the board of directors. New members (not established members placed on probation) who have their probationary membership revoked are subject to the refund of their initiation fees, less any outstanding debts owed to the group or its members.

## **I. Transitioning Between Membership Classes**

Any member who meets the requirements of a membership class other than their current class may opt to transition to that alternate class. If the member no longer meets the eligibility requirements of their current membership class, they are compelled to transition to a suitable membership class in the quarter immediately following their loss of eligibility. If transitioning to Regular membership, the member shall be responsible for the standard Initiation fee, except in the case of Limited members and Student members as provided above or regular members who have completed their Probationary term.

### **Section 3: Dues and Fees**

#### **A. Initiation Fees**

Each new Regular Member shall pay a one-time initiation fee of \$20. Former Regular members who were not on Limited status, or have not been Regular members for a period of 8 or more consecutive quarters, are also required to pay the initiation fee.

#### **B. Quarterly Dues**

Regular Members shall pay standard quarterly dues of \$5, payable in advance and with a grace period extending to the end of the quarter.

### **Section 4: Elections**

#### **A. Uncontested Candidates**

Generally, SLOMRA elections are not very competitive, as the number of available positions on the Board of Directors generally exceeds the pool of members willing and able to perform the duties of office. As a result, our elections are in practice much simpler to conduct than specified in the Bylaws, which require a secret ballot. Therefore, in the case of a candidate who has been nominated unopposed to an available position on the Board of Directors, the candidate may be elected by simple majority of the voting members present.

### **Section 5: Board of Directors: Duties and Procedures**

This section elaborates upon the general job duties described in the Association Bylaws, and provides detailed instructions on how to perform the duties of each position within the Board of Directors.

#### **A. President**

1. Preside over all group meetings, appoint committees not otherwise provided for in these Bylaws, serve as ex-officio member of all committees, represent the SLOMRA to the public, media, and other organizations, and be responsible for the overall conduct and direction of all group endeavors and activities.
2. Actively direct the Association in pursuit of its mission.
3. Provide for the stability and growth of the Association.

#### **B. Vice President**

1. Perform all duties of the President in the President's absence

2. Bear primary responsibility for event planning and production such as public exhibitions, NMRA meets, and shows. The Vice President may appoint Event Coordinators and Committees as necessary to assist in the planning and execution of said events.

#### **C. Secretary**

1. Take and maintain minutes of all SLOMRA meetings, and shall distribute said minutes to the membership within a week of the meeting via the group email list at <http://groups.yahoo.com/slomra>
2. Notify members of all meetings and other activities, especially as required by Article XI(A) of the Association Bylaws. Notices are generally distributed by email (directly to each individual member), and not over the group email list. For those members who cannot receive email, the Secretary shall arrange for them to be noticed by phone, in person, or by postal mail as required.
3. Maintain both historical and current membership rosters. A copy of the current roster shall be provided at least once each year to each member. Maintain contact information, membership status, notification preference (email or postal mail), and any other pertinent information for all members.
4. Publish or delegate publication of a quarterly newsletter. Solicit article submissions from the membership and outside sources, and offer advertising space as appropriate.
5. Maintain the Association Bylaws, Policy Manual, and a copy of all other operations documents. Record all amendments to the Bylaws and Policy Manual. If necessary, appoint a Bylaws committee to prepare amendments or revisions for presentation to the membership. Maintain a file containing the original and composite, current Bylaws and all Amendments.
6. Maintain a file of all SLOMRA records, including all business documents, legal and official records, and significant correspondence.
7. Preside at any meeting in which both the President and Vice President are absent.

#### **D. Chief Financial Officer**

1. Receive and disburse all funds. All payments shall be by check, unless approved by the Board. All checks shall be co-signed by any two signors, generally the President, Vice President, Secretary, or CFO.
2. Make monthly financial reports to the Board, and/or as directed.
3. Prepare a yearly financial report, to be presented in January and published in the Newsletter.
4. Make available all records for audit as directed by the Board.
5. Notify the Secretary of all dues payments.
6. Notify the Board of any delinquencies.
7. The CFO shall file all appropriate paperwork with the Franchise Tax Board and the Internal Revenue Service as required by state and federal laws and directed by the Board.

#### **E. Membership Director**

1. Provide for the care and retention of existing SLOMRA members, and the recruitment of new members.
2. Publicize group events, and promote the SLOMRA
3. Provide new member orientation, including the assembly and distribution of membership packets (to contain the Association Bylaws, Policy Manual, current Newsletter, standards, etc.)
4. Act as a liaison between the membership and Board of Directors to ensure that member needs are being served by the Association

#### **F. Superintendent**

1. Maintain, update and publish the Standards and Guidelines document pertaining to the group modular layout specifications.
2. Provide certification of modules and equipment for use on the group layout, assuring that all items conform to the published standards to ensure interoperability.
3. Manage the group's material assets by maintaining an inventory, issuing receipts, and recording the disposition of all SLOMRA equipment, materials, property, etc.

4. As far as practicable, maintain a list of private resources and assets which members have offered to share with others. Loans and use of private resources are the sole responsibility of the individual members involved, but the Association shall keep a list of what is available as a convenience to members.

## **Section 6: Appointed Positions: Duties and Procedures**

The Board of Directors may appoint any eligible member to the following positions, as needed by the Association. The term of any appointment is indefinite, and shall be at the sole discretion of the Board. The Board may create additional positions, on either a temporary or lasting basis, as needed. Any appointed position must include a description of the scope of responsibilities and duties of that position, as for those below.

### **Webmaster**

The Webmaster (Michael Mickens, Secretary) shall maintain the Association's official website, including current events, recent news, contact information, and relevant information on group's activities. The group's existing website is at: <http://www.slomra.org>

The domain is owned by SLOMRA and is provided through Yahoo Small Business Web Hosting. The monthly fee is charged to Michael Mickens and he will be reimbursed quarterly. <sup>(1)</sup>

1. No personal contact information shall be posted on the website without a person's expressed written consent. This shall protect the Association from liability and help reduce spam.
2. Every effort should be made to keep the website current. Date-specific content that is more than 1 month out of date should either be updated or removed from the website to avoid making the site appear outdated.
3. Offsite backups of all website materials should be maintained by the Webmaster. Periodic backups should be created on removable media (such as a CD-ROM) and delivered to the Secretary for archival storage at least once a year.

### **A. Event Coordinator**

The Vice President may delegate the production details of any given event to an Event Coordinator. An Event Coordinator shall organize and provide for the production and successful execution of the given event or activity, and shall keep the Vice President informed of all milestones in the project. The Vice President must ultimately ensure that all events are adequately planned and executed, and is the de-facto Event Coordinator for all events without an appointed Event Coordinator. The duties and responsibilities for a standard SLOMRA event are outlined below.

1. Secure a suitable location
2. Create an event schedule
3. Work with the Membership Director & Secretary to provide publicity
4. Coordinate and correspond with any participating third parties
5. Compile a list of required materials and arrange for acquiring them
6. Work with the CFO on budgeting and expenditures
7. Arrange for adequate production assistance for setup and teardown
8. Schedule event staffing, if necessary
9. Manage the event

## **Section 7: Assets and Property**

All group assets are for the exclusive use of group members, and may not be loaned out to third parties. The group Superintendent is in charge of tracking and accounting for all group property.

1. Property may be "checked out" by a group member in good standing for a period of up to one month at a time. A waiting list may be maintained for property which is in demand by more than one member, with priority being established by signature list. After checking out an item

for up to a month, a group member is moved to the end of the waiting list for that particular item.

2. Group property may be resold by 75% majority vote of the Board of Directors. Proceeds are to be returned to the group fund.

### **Section 8: Standards and Guidelines**

- A. The Superintendent shall maintain a document entitled "SLOMRA Standards and Guidelines," detailing the specifications for the construction, configuration, and operation of modules and equipment on the group's modular railroad layout(s). If the group creates more than one modular layout standard (such as in two different scales), multiple documents shall be maintained, with only the information pertinent to a single modular standard published in each one. The document shall include all officially adopted specifications as Standards, and all casually adopted or generally accepted best practices as Guidelines. The document shall be prepared such that a person could construct a module ready for certification without further input or explanation of the specifications.
- B. Standards shall be adopted by a majority vote of the respective Layout Standards Committee plus *all* members with *operational* modules within a given modular standard.
- C. A Certification Document shall be issued to the owner of a newly approved module to commemorate the addition of their work to the group layout.

### **Section 9: Activities and Events**

#### **A. Meetings**

Meetings shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order

#### **B. Annual Show**

The Association shall endeavor to produce an annual Train Show, including multiple layouts, items of historical interest, educational displays and activities, vendors, prizes, and other events and activities which support the mission of the Association and increase attendance. A separate document entitled "Public Show Procedures" shall be created and maintained by the Vice President which documents and details the logistic, administrative, and production procedures of a show.

#### **C. Operating Sessions**

Operating sessions on the group's modular layouts or by invitation on the home layout of a member shall be held approximately once per quarter.

\*This entire document was revised and accepted by the membership on November 20, 2006. Subsequent changes are as follows: (1) The web hosting changes were approved on January 15, 2007.