



An Aspiring Arrowman's Guide to Service

Writing the Letter of Intent for an Elected Lodge Officer's Position

So, you want to run for an elected position on the Lodge Executive Board? Here are a few steps you will need to follow.

The Process

1. Decide on what position(s) you want to run for.
2. Write a letter of intent and submit copies to the current Lodge Chief, Lodge Secretary, and Lodge Adviser. All of their contact information is included near the end of this document (right before the position descriptions). The deadline for submission of letters of intent will be announced prior to the weekend, but may be modified at the discretion of the Lodge Chief or highest ranking Lodge Officer with the consent of the Lodge Adviser (only to ensure fairness).
3. An "interview" will take place with a few key individuals both youth and adult to discuss responsibilities and expectations
4. The election happens
 - a. There is no campaigning permitted.
 - b. There is an opportunity to give a short statement of your qualifications, goals and ideas before the actual election takes place. You will be allotted a specific amount of time for this statement (generally 3 minutes). You will be informed of the exact amount of time allotted during the "interview" process. A timekeeper visible to you will keep you informed of how you are doing with your allotted time during your statement. At the end of your allotted time the officer or individual presiding over the election will cut you off.

The Letter of Intent

What should you include in your letter of intent?

First, you **must** include what position(s) you are running for. Elections are conducted in the following order – Chief, Vice-Chief Inductions, Vice-Chief Administration, Vice-Chief Program, Secretary, and Treasurer. At the end of this document, there is a description for each of these positions. Your letter of intent may specify your intent to run for multiple positions should you not be elected to the first position you seek. However, you must be specific as to which additional positions you wish to run for. Each position has its own characteristics and someone who is induction or program oriented may not be comfortable

with administration or the membership and communication responsibilities of being Secretary or the finance and budget responsibilities of being Treasurer.

Second, your letter should look professional and not haphazard. Being a Lodge Officer is serious business. You represent 700 plus Scouts and Scouters to the Council Scouting family, to the community at large, and to the wider Scouting community beyond our Council. Your letter represents who YOU are. Here are some suggestions to help your letter look professional –

1. Use one of the many letter formats available in word processing programs with standard page margins, consistent spacing and paragraph organization.
 - a. Date the letter with the date you finalize and submit the letter.
 - b. Include your name and return mailing address before the body of the letter. You can align this in the center or to the left.
 - c. Address the letter to the Lodge Secretary by name (if you are the Lodge Secretary and are running again for the position you should address your letter to the current Lodge Chief). Use the Lodge's mailing address of Lenapehoking Lodge IX, Northern New Jersey Council, BSA, 25 Ramapo Valley Road, Oakland, NJ 07436.
 - d. Use the Lodge Secretary's (or Chief's) name in the salutation or greeting line.
 - e. Use a closing appropriate to you such as "Yours in the W. W. W." or "Yours in the admonition" or "Yours In brotherhood (or service or brotherhood and service).
 - f. Physically sign the two printed copies you should bring with you to the election weekend. If you submit an electronic copy in advance (something you should give serious consideration to) you can choose not to sign the electronic copy or to insert a digital signature.
2. Proofread your letter for typos, spelling and grammatical errors.
3. Seek feedback from a trusted friend or mentor. Remember feedback is a gift and good leaders consistently seek to improve themselves by encouraging feedback.

Finally, here some additional suggestions to possibly make your letter more meaningful and perhaps help you become an elected Lodge Officer.

- In the first paragraph introduce yourself. What rank are you? What Troop are you in & where is your Troop located? How long have you been a Scout? What town are you from or where do you live? What experiences have you had or what jobs have you done or what positions have you held in the Order. Let your readers know who you are, what you have done, and what you can do! (Suggested length: 5-7 sentences).
- In the second paragraph state explicitly which position(s) you are running for, why YOU are running for that or those position(s), and what you think qualifies you for that job. Remember though that having held a leadership position already in our lodge or having done a job or task in our lodge is not a requirement to run for office. What is more important is your desire to lead in the spirit of service to which our Order is

dedicated and here are some resources you can reflect on as you seek to explain why you desire to be a leader in our lodge.

- The Scout Oath, Law, Slogan & Motto
- The Order of the Arrow Obligation
- Special personal memories you may have of your induction or brotherhood or any other weekend or Order of the Arrow event.
- Ceremonial quotes or quotes from our founder E. Urner Goodman that may have special meaning to you.
- Consider adding a third paragraph that speaks to your personal vision for leadership (what leadership means to you) and specifically to any vision and goals you hope to impart to the Lodge.

As stated earlier you should bring two physical signed copies of your letter. They should be turned in at registration. You should also submit your letter electronically in advance of the weekend. The letter should be sent to lodgeixchief@gmail.com (Lodge Chief, Mark Ciccaglione), padraic@padraicburns.com (Padraic Burns, Lodge Secretary), and wdresslerj@gmail.com (Lodge Adviser, Warren Dressler).

Position Descriptions

Lodge Chief- The Lodge Chief is the leader of the Lodge Executive Committee and the top youth leader in the Lodge. The Lodge Chief must have a clear vision for the future of the Lodge and must be extremely capable of executing this vision. This capability should be based on strong communication skills, planning skills, and leadership skills. The Lodge Chief must be goal-oriented, organized, and consider the interests of the Lodge to be of the most importance as opposed to selfish interests. Lodge Chief is a serious time commitment and should only be pursued by those arrowmen with an extremely strong commitment and dedication to the Order of the Arrow. Responsibilities include:

- Planning and running monthly Lodge Executive Committee Meetings
- Supporting and assisting all LEC Members
- Communicating with the Lodge Advisor regularly (on an almost daily basis)
- Representing the Lodge in the Council, including at Council Executive Board Meetings
- Representing the Lodge at Section Council of Chiefs Meetings
- Actively participating in and attending nearly all Lodge functions and activities
- Being aware of and resolving any miscellaneous work in the Lodge
- Ensuring that the Lodge obtains the highest Journey to Excellence ranking possible
- Being actively aware of all that is going on in the Lodge and all that must be planned for the future (so this job is not for the type of person that has trouble planning for things and events and saves work to the last possible minute)

To summarize, a Lodge Chief must be highly organized (including a strong sense of mental organization) and must be prepared for an extreme time commitment to the Lodge. The Lodge Chief must constantly practice a shared style of leadership, where he makes it clear that he trusts his team to make their own decisions, enabling and even encouraging them to do so. The Lodge Chief is not necessarily expected to be a dominant or commanding leader, but is expected to be confident, constant, humble, encouraging, and

trustworthy. Essentially, the Lodge Chief should embody servant leadership, concerning himself with the success of each individual team member, as well as the team as a whole.

Vice-Chief of Inductions- The VCI is the Lodge Vice-Chief responsible for everything related to the three Induction Weekends each year. First of all, someone who is running for VCI must be very knowledgeable of Induction weekends and should have attended many weekends to get an idea of how to run these weekends. Most of the work of the VCI involves planning for the weekends and developing the committees that play a role executing a successful weekend. These committees include:

- Brotherhood- encourages ordeal members to obtain brotherhood status. This committee develops and improves the brotherhood induction process, including the brotherhood hike
- Elangomat- recruits and trains elangomats as well as guiding and supporting elangomats on the weekend.
- Service- Plans, organizes, and executes the service projects that are conducted on weekends.
- Ceremonies- Organizes ceremony meetings throughout the entire year in preparation for the ceremonies on the Induction Weekends. Ensures that the ceremonies are prepared for in terms of supplies, logistics, and people ready to perform the ceremonies.

The VCI is the leader of the committee chairman for the committees above, so the VCI should be comfortable guiding, leading, and working with others. Also, the Induction Weekends are major events that take significantly more planning and preparation than probably any event one would experience in a troop. Someone considering the role of VCI must be able to visualize what needs to get done in preparation for the weekends months before they occur and use this visualization to develop a highly organized plan. Like the Lodge Chief, someone who saves things for the last minute might not want to consider running for VCI.

Vice-Chief of Administration- The VCA oversees the 3 Chapter Chiefs and the operations of the three chapters. While it is not necessary that a VCA have been a Chapter Chief, someone who is running for VCA should have been heavily involved with their chapter at some point and should have an idea of how chapters operate. The VCA is responsible for making sure that all of the Chapter Chiefs are fulfilling their responsibilities and providing them with all the support necessary to succeed. The VCA should also encourage new ideas amongst the chapter chiefs and should be the driving force towards a chapter oriented Lodge. One of the VCA's most significant responsibilities is ensuring that the troop election process runs smoothly. Organizing troop elections is a very complex process that may seem overwhelming for a chapter chief who is not particularly experienced, so the VCA must make sure that all of the chapter chiefs are completely prepared and completely organized. The VCA promotes and plans for unit elections. Planning includes updating and editing election materials as well as distributing these materials to the chapters. Someone who is running for VCA must be highly organized, as a significant amount of the work is administrative (hence the name).

Vice-Chief of Program- The VCP oversees the committees that run the Lodge events and activities. The VCP should guide the committee chairman and offer them support regularly. In addition, the VCP oversees our Lodge's involvement in other activities, such as council events. The largest and most complex committee is the banquet committee that plans the Lodge Banquet each year. The VCP must make sure that the preparation for this event is going smoothly and must be completely invested in the preparation for this event. Other events include the Lodge trade-o-ree, the section conclave, the Fellowship Weekend(s) and anything else that happens to come up (such as Scoutfest in 2014 and NOAC). The VCP also works with the Dance-Team Chairman and checks up on him to make sure that there are no issues. Someone who is running for VCP must have strong planning skills and must understand the work that needs to occur well in advance of the actual event.

Lodge Secretary- The Lodge secretary is responsible for keeping minutes at all Lodge Executive Committee Meetings and distributing these minutes to the LEC and to the Lodge. In addition, the Secretary writes newsletters regularly pertaining to the past and future events of the Lodge. The secretary should reach out to the necessary members of the Lodge to obtain information for these newsletters. The Secretary also takes part in registration at events and weekends if possible. The secretary keeps track of Lodge Records. Lastly, the Lodge Secretary should try to think of new ways to improve the Lodge communication process, including the Lodge website. If possible, the Lodge Secretary should post to the Facebook group when necessary or when requested to do so.

Lodge Treasurer- The treasurer is responsible for operating the Lodge trading post. They must keep a constant inventory of the items in the trading post and should make sure that there are enough people working at the trading post whenever it is open. The treasurer should also make sure that the trading post makes it to all the events where the Lodge plans on opening it. The treasurer should be aware of the prices of items and should request approval to update them if needed. The treasurer should also develop new items in the trading post. Another important job of the Treasurer is developing an annual budget and working to make sure that the Lodge stays within the budget throughout the year. Based on the budget, the treasurer should advise other LEC members who are determining the prices for events throughout the year.

All of these positions are serious time commitments. It is expected that the members of the LEC described above attend most, if not all, of the LEC meetings that occur on the second Monday of every month.

Take a chance.

Make a change.

Join THE IX Leadership Team.

Good Luck!