

Sample First Meeting Agenda **Refer to alrwa.org for Guidelines**

You should read this well before the first meeting of your Chapter. Some items require a bit of preparation! Also, please treat this as a "thought starter." You can have a successful meeting by following the suggested agenda as presented here; however, this is not to be considered "prescriptive" in how you run your meeting. You are at liberty to conduct the meeting in any way that you see fit, so long as such conduct is not in conflict with any Legion policies or with the minimum requirements of the by-laws as put forward by the founding Chapter.

I. Call to order

II. Introduction of meeting chair and organizing team members

- a. Meeting Chair to designate Sergeant At Arms for initial meeting
- b. Meeting Chair to designate Secretary for initial meeting

Initial Chair, Sgt. at Arms, and Secretary are typically pre-arranged from amongst the organizing team.

III. Discuss purpose of American Legion Riders (refer to the Constitution for Washington at www.alrwa.org)

- a. Support of Legion programs
- b. Social affiliation of Legion members sharing a common pursuit (motorcyclists)

*It is important that the prospective members understand that the ALR is **NOT** a motorcycle club. We do not support M/C-like rules, and each member is a member on their own recognizance – they are required on their own to fulfill membership criteria as defined in the governing by-laws on their own with no "sponsorship" or "probation." There are no "required" activities, and a member need only fulfill membership requirements for the Legion and for their Chapter to remain a member.*

The "ALR Brochure" on the ALR Information Center website (<http://americanlegionriders.net> or www.alrwa.org) is helpful in spelling out what the ALR is all about. You may wish to download it, and make copies available to your prospective members at the meeting.

IV. Determine quorum

- a. Ensure all attendees are qualified to vote as potential ALR members
 - i. Sgt. At Arms verify current American Legion or affiliate (Legion, SAL, Auxiliary) Membership Card
 - ii. Sgt. At Arms verify ownership of suitable motorcycle (current registration will suffice)
- b. Non-qualified attendees asked to refrain from voting

How you wish to determine the motorcycle ownership portion of the membership requirements is left to your own discretion; however, membership in one of the Legion family of organizations is absolutely mandatory.

- V. Review proposed by laws**
- a. Review required paragraphs from ALR By-laws
 - b. Review Chapter-specific paragraphs
 - c. Discussion, additions, deletions
 - d. Membership vote to adopt by-laws

*It is a good idea to have framed a set of by-laws from the template before your meeting. This is one of the activities well suited to your organizing team. **Note that if you have a State Chapter within your Department, your by-laws should be modeled after theirs.** Whether or not you have copies of your initial by-laws printed and available at the initial meeting is up to you. They should not be a secret; however, sometimes having printed copies allows a depth of review that belabors the meeting. If you find that there are too many issues raised on the initial by-laws to facilitate an open forum, vote on them by section so that you can (hopefully) define your board. Indicate that a "by-law committee" will be designated from paid membership to resolve the remaining issues. Be sure your secretary records the sections voted in. Note that those required for recognition by the ALR Advisory Committee do not require votes.*

- VI. Nominate officers**
- a. Chair reads description of position duties
 - b. Chair open floor for nominations.

Do not assume that the organizing group will be the Chapter officers at the end of the meeting. Do require the commitment of those nominated from the pool of prospective members that they would accept the nomination, execute the duties of the office, and, above all, officially join and pay their dues! (You may wish to prepare blank membership cards for use at this meeting. Avery and equivalent business card forms are ideal for this. Include space for the members' name, ALR membership number, and a Chapter Officer's signature. The card should also indicate the year in which it is valid. Note that many Chapters provide new members with machine-printed, laminated cards either by return mail or at the next meeting.)

- VII. Election of officers**
- a. Determine method of voting
 - b. Carry out voting

Your voting system can be open (show of hands, etc.) or closed (slip of paper) balloting. Have someone who is not interested in office (or is not a close supporter of any candidate) count the votes.

VIII. Installation of officers

This is simply an announcement of election results, and, if necessary, the surrender of the chair to the newly elected Director. If the new Director is not the original Chair, and is not a member of the organizing team, it is recommended that the Director return the chair so that the initial agenda can be completed.

IX. Determine dues structure

- a. Amount
- b. Renewal date
- c. Whether prorated or not

Typical dues are \$12 per year, renewable in January of each following year. Prorating (for instance, a member renewing in June is charged only \$6 for the remainder of the year) is optional – some Chapters prorate, others do not. Note that many members will not renew early in a prorated system, which may throw off the Chapter's financial planning. Monies raised are for the use of the Chapter in the pursuit of its activities.

X. Determine meeting schedule

Select a mutually agreeable day of the month and time in which to meet. It is advisable to inquire at the Post as to what times and days are available each month. It is also advisable to have a recurring schedule, for instance: the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 pm.

XI. Solicitation of members

In this portion of the meeting, those who were deemed qualified to join, and who wish to do so are solicited to document their membership and pay their dues. A template for a membership form is available under Chapter Resources on the American Legion Riders Information Center website or the Bremerton Chapter 149 website.

These are the major "business" items to be decided early in the existence of your Chapter. There are many other items that could be handled in your initial meeting. For instance, whether you wish to set up a Chapter store for patches and pins, designating a Charity Committee to handle donations and requests for donations, designating a Webmaster to advertise your Chapter's exploits on the public internet, discussing how the patch will be worn in your Chapter, etc.

You can look at www.alrwa.org for an idea of how the current Washington State chapters are handling websites. The Bremerton Chapter 149 webmaster is also the state webmaster and can help your chapter with building a site if you desire.

Any Questions please feel free to contact: Dennis G. Osborn, Past Director of Bremerton 149 State Chapter

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