The primary responsibility for the Vice-Chief for Operations is to ensure that the functions of the Operations Committee are completed. These functions include camping promotion, unit elections, the troop representative program, and such other duties as appointed by the lodge executive committee.

Unit Elections

The VCO’s most important responsibility is Unit Elections. As unit elections are usually during the middle of spring, this means that the VCO does not have a heavy burden during the other months of the year. The intensity of the unit elections, however, tends to more than make up for the little work at other times, in an amount that is inversely proportional to how much work is done then. In other words, the more preparation made for elections, the less work you have to do at the last minute and the more successful your Unit Elections will be.

There is a straightforward protocol to be followed for unit elections. It is critical that each step be laid out in advance and concretely. It is as follows: (1) Unit Election Materials are prepared. (2) Unit Election Teams are trained. (3) Scoutmasters and Unit Representatives are sent letters including certain pertinent information. (4) The Scoutmasters of each troop are called to schedule an election. (5) An Election is held.

1. Unit Election Materials are prepared.
   a. The National Unit Election Video is obtained, and sufficient copies are made so that each election team may have one.
   b. The Unit Election Booklet used in the previous year is reviewed by the VCO or his appointee, in consultation with an adult adviser, to look for any errors, to clarify anything vague, and to make such changes as are deemed necessary.
   c. 1st Spirit of the Arrow Booklet is prepared.
   d. The Letter to be sent to Scoutmasters in Step 3 is drafted.
   e. The Letter to be given to candidates at election, and to be mailed, is drafted.

2. Unit Election Teams are trained.
   a. The VCO in consultation with his adviser determines the exact format(s) to be used in Unit elections. (e.g. 1-person and 2-person versions, etc…)
   b. Confirm that all Unit election materials are prepared.
   c. Set up an event to train unit election teams. This should probably be at an hour, and should cover the following.
      i. All Election Materials and there proper use.
      ii. The National OA Eligibility requirements.
      iii. The Exact procedure for voting.
      iv. The exact procedure for submitting results of each election.
      v. This information should be given both verbally and in written form.
   d. It is the responsibility of the VCO to make certain there are sufficient arrowmen attending the training event to deal with all units in the council. This should be done well in advance of the actual date, and should also have reminders right up until the day of the event. Keep in mind that there are usually roughly 100 units in Westchester-Putnam Council. Assuming that we have elections in 70-80, 20 trained arrowmen would not be excessive. These arrowmen should be drawn from throughout the lodge, not just the operations committee.
   e. Training Syllabus and Trainers should be selected well in advance of the training session. The AVCO should be present at the training session to field questions, and should also work closely with the VCO in preparing it.

3. Scoutmasters and Unit Reps are sent letters including certain pertinent information.
   a. This letter should probably be from both (or symbolically from both) the lodge chief and adviser. It should inform scoutmasters of what the OA is, possibly via its mission and purpose. It should detail the National Requirements for eligibility, and the elections procedure. It should also have the phone number of a contact person in the lodge that can field questions. This may be the phone number of the person suggested in Step 4.

4. The SMs of each troop are called to schedule an election.
   a. The List of Scoutmasters should be broken up according to the number of people available. No less than five would be recommended. Each of these people is then responsible for following up with that troop. They should call with specific information in front of them
(eligibility requirements, election procedures) and should find out on what days the troop meets and on what two dates (A preferred date, a backup date,) the troop would like the election conducted. The SM should be informed of the amount of time needed to conduct an election, and should also be asked whether or not he has anyone eligible. He should also be asked to prepare a list of eligible scouts prior to the election. The caller then needs to contact a Unit Election Team (or director of Unit Election Teams) to make certain someone is available for that date. The Team should then be called, within one day of the Call to the scoutmaster. The caller should call back to the scoutmaster within two days of his initial call to confirm the appointment.

b. The vital part of this procedure is accountability. The protocol should be very specific – everyone making calls should have simple if/then or flowchart instructions as to what to do, and that should include directions on filling out information forms. (Each person keeps track of on what day they called who, what response they got, what follow-up action is necessary, when that action is taken, etc…) This information is all centrally compiled so that the lodge as a whole may keep track of the unit elections procedure.

5. An Election Is Held
   a. The election teams visit the unit at the agreed-upon time.
   b. The election team confirms that the SM is aware of the eligibility requirements and makes certain it has a list of eligible scouts.
   c. The election team shows the video.
   d. The election team explains the election.
   e. The election team conducts the election.
   f. The election team performs any ceremony deemed appropriate in advance by the OpComm.
   g. The election committee gives the first Spirit-of-the-Arrow booklet out. This happens only if there is no council camporee in the year in question, or if it has already taken place. Otherwise, the booklet is given out at the call-out.
   h. The newly elected candidate is given a letter from the lodge explaining what the election means and giving the dates of the ordeals the candidate may attend.
   i. The candidate’s information is relayed to membership as per a method predetermined by the OpComm.
   j. The candidate is sent a letter including registration information for the Ordeal.

The Troop Representative Program

This program is just what it sounds; each troop in the council with at least one youth arrowman should have a Troop Representative. This person is appointed by the scoutmaster. OpComm and the VCO are responsible for (1) Ensuring that every troop possible has this person, and (2) using this person to the best advantage of both the lodge and the troop.

1. Ensuring that every troop possible has this person.
   a. This position is appointed by the SM. Calls should be made to each Scoutmaster that does not have a Troop Rep and the caller should ask if he has anyone he feels is appropriate for the position. The caller should have a roster of the arrowmen in that troop in front of him when he makes the call. He should also have the job description for that position. If the scoutmaster says no, you can’t do much.
   b. Roundtable visitation may be used to promote the troop Rep program.
   c. SMs and troops that have that person should be called once annually to confirm that the person holds that position and that they continue to for the next year. This call should be made in August or September, when troops are preparing their programs for the next year.

2. Using this person to the best advantage of both the lodge and the troop.
   a. For the Lodge
      i. A full roster of all troop representatives should be compiled, and should always be available to the Lodge Executive Committee.
      ii. The Lodge has the option of running training sessions for these individuals, to give them an idea of their responsibilities.
   b. For the Troop
i. The Troop Reps should be encouraged to attend all available training sessions for arrownmen, so that they can take new ideas back to their troop. They should also be encouraged to attend meetings of the lodge or section conclaves, so that they can bring back ideas from all over.

Camping Promotion

OpComm and the VCO have the responsibility for Camping Promotion in the Lodge. This is less important than unit elections, but is still an important function of the committee. It is one of the two quality lodge items that fall under the committee’s obligations. The Camping Promotion in past years has been scarce, so there is little to go into this session. Please feel free to add to it.

Roundtable Visitations

Roundtable visitations are a useful tool. Like unit elections, they must be performed by capable individuals, so as to present a good image. Roundtables are meetings held in each district of the council, where representatives from all troops are encouraged to meet and discuss the affairs of the district and where the district leadership disseminates information from council.

One visitation to a roundtable in each district in November might be a good time to promote camping in general and council camps in particular. This should be done by someone familiar with all council camping facilities (Durland, Clear Lake, Waubeeka, Buckskin, Summit,) or by more than one individual to provide information about several of them.

Another visitation in December or January for the purpose of (1) introducing anyone unfamiliar with the OA to it, (2) informing units about unit elections and promoting the opportunities that unit elections offer scouts and troops, and (3) promoting programs of the OA that take place following that time period, most notably the BQ and FW.

Calendar

Late spring ➔ Officer Elections
August/September ➔ Troop Rep renewal, Unit Elections Materials Prepared.
November/December ➔ Unit Elections teams trained. Roundtable Visitations.
December/January ➔ Mailings to Scoutmasters. Roundtable Visitations.
January/February ➔ Phone Calls to all SMs, Every Unit Election Scheduled.
Late Winter/Early Spring ➔ Unit Elections Completed

The Actual Committee

Review the Original committee charter included in appendix A. Specifically, review the chairman’s responsibilities. This committee exists in order to help you accomplish everything so far discussed. It is a tool, and if you want to be successful, it is a very important one. You need to recruit this committee first thing. It is best if you get a good geographic diversity, but the most important thing is to get bodies in those positions right away.

It can be difficult to get bodies. The first thing to do is to call around and get an idea of who wants to be on the committee (or who you can trick into it that will willingly agree to do it.) When calling, have a list of what nights of the week you are available to meet. Indicate when others can meet on the same sheet. Select the option that allows the most of you to meet on the same day. In order to get names, consult with other youth leadership in the lodge. It might also be advisable to consult the database and simply call Brotherhood members (and some recent ordeal members) at random. Schedule a meeting within two weeks (or three at the outside) of the time you start making phone calls seriously. The minutes and agenda of the meeting are important, as is sticking to the agenda. Most important of all, at the first meeting, make sure that the meeting keeps flowing, and that it goes some way towards accomplishing your goals. Giving each scout a very small task to complete before the next meeting, or within a time frame, might be
appropriate. You need to hook them somehow—by providing a sense of accomplishment, by giving them candy, by doing whatever you have to. Your success is critically dependent upon getting these bodies. Do not allow your first meeting to drag on into infinite boredom—get something accomplished.

The Agenda and minutes, while they may not initially seem important, actually are. They keep people doing little things—they keep the secretary busy, they provide a record of a discussion so that you are not stuck having forgotten what you did at the last meeting, and they provide for accountability. This means that the minutes indicate who is responsible for what, and this can be vital to the VCO when he is following up on assigned tasks.
Appendix A: Operations Committee Original Charter
Ktemaque Lodge #15 Order of the Arrow
Westchester-Putnam Council #388 January, 2000

Operations Committee

The Operations committee as a whole is responsible for a broad number of responsibilities. A different pointman from the committee is responsible for a specific function, in addition to their role in support of other committee members. Its responsibilities include the Troop Representative Program, The Unit Elections Program, the Camping Promotion Program, and the majority of program involving field contact with units.

Its goals include ensuring that the lodge meet quality lodge items #5 and #8. (5) is “The lodge held elections in every troop and team desiring one. The election teams were trained and in proper uniform when conducting the elections.” #8 is “The lodge had an effective camping promotion committee that actively supported the council’s camping and high adventure programs. The lodge planned and executed annual camping promotion visits to a minimum of 70% of the troops and teams in the council in existence on January 1, 2000.” It is permissible for the Operations Committee to be the said camping promotion committee, but it must complete the functions above required of such a committee, including coordination with the council camping committee.

The Chairman of this committee is appointed by the lodge chief. The Adviser is appointed by the lodge adviser. This committee is under the jurisdiction of the Lodge Vice-Chief for Operations. It is recommended that this committee include a diverse group of arrowmen, including at least two ordeal members and at least four arrowmen likely to remain active for an additional program year.

The Responsibilities of the chairman of this committee include:
1. To preside over the meetings of the committee
2. To arrange for meetings of the committee as often as may be necessary.
3. To recruit and maintain an active youth membership of no less than twelve members of the committee, and to ensure their presence at no fewer than 60% of held meetings.
4. To appoint a committee secretary, responsible for secretarial duties associated with the meeting of the committee.
5. To establish, in advance of each meeting, an agenda appropriate to the goals of the committee.
6. To report monthly the progress of the committee to the Lodge Executive Committee.
7. To maintain a regular contact with all members of the committee and such members of the lodge as may be placed above him.
8. The chairman leader should at all times be ensuring that the time spent in committee is productive, and that unresolved issues are parceled out as appropriate and dealt with.

The Responsibilities of the Secretary to this committee include:
1. The taking of minutes at all meetings of the committee
2. The distribution of said minutes, in electronic or written form, to all members of the committee within two weeks of any meeting’s closure.
3. The reading of said minutes at the beginning of the next meeting.
4. The forwarding of a copy of said minutes to the designee of the Lodge Executive Committee for permanent lodge records.

The Responsibilities of any member of the operations committee when acting as pointman for a committee function:
1. Establishing well in advance (a minimum of thirty days) a written plan for the execution of the assigned duties.
a. This plan is to be approved by the operations committee. The pointman should come to an operations committee meeting with a brief list of possibilities and be prepared to discuss them, and then should prepare the written plan, which is to include all
specific information necessary for the execution of the plan, based upon the recommendation of the operations committee.

b. In the event that a pointman is appointed too late for this to be effective, a report is still necessary upon conclusion of the duties in hand.

c. The initial report should include, at a minimum, (1) a summary of what is to be accomplished, (2) a list of the goals of the committee for this operation (these goals should be real and quantifiable), (3) The implementation details of the operation, (4) the necessary procedures, and the names of those responsible for completing each of these procedures, and (5) upon completion, an evaluation of the proceedings, including high and low points, as well as what goals were met, what goals were not met, and how those goals may be achieved in the future.

2. Leading the operations committee in the preparationary administration, such as contacting appropriate unit members to arrange for visitations, assembling material for use and distribution, and determining in advance the syllabus or agenda for any extra-lodge communication related to the function.

3. Attending the Executive Committee Meeting immediately prior to and immediately following the function’s primary time of execution, or on an ongoing basis for an ongoing function, to report on plans and effectiveness.

The Responsibilities of any member of the operations committee when acting as support for a function pointman:

1. Continuing active work for another function, if assigned.

2. Working as designated by the pointman and committee chairman to fulfill the goals of the committee.

Operationally, all youth members of this committee have one vote when voting becomes necessary. The chairman shall not vote except in the event of a tie. Two motions are the minimum number for any meeting after the first: one motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, and another to adjourn. Each of these motions requires a simple majority, save as part of an unfriendly act, in which case they require a two/thirds majority. The interim operational policy of the committee is at the discretion of the committee chairman, although the following motions should be recognized at any time:

1. A Motion to approve paperwork presented to the committee (e.g. reports or minutes)
2. A Motion to approve a significant plan or decision made by the committee.
3. A Motion to spend money.
4. A Motion to amend another motion, paperwork, or planning that comes under the committee.
5. A Motion to the previous question.
6. A Motion to table.
7. A Motion to adjourn.

A Motion to spend money has additional requirements- specifically, the money must fall within the budget of the committee. This budget is prepared in advance by the Committee Chairman or his designee, and must be approved by the lodge executive committee prior to expenditure. The motion to spend money must be entered into the minutes, and must note (1) the nature of the items or services purchased, (2) The exact amount spend, or the parameters of what the committee has authorized be spent, (3) the individual responsible for making certain the money goes where it has been approved, and (4) the number of votes for, against, and abstaining.

Each of these motions requires a simple majority (50% approval) to pass, with the exception of the motion to amend. If a motion is made to amend an item, and the amendment is a “hostile” or “unfriendly” act, meaning that the creator of the item being amended disagrees with the amendment, then a 2/3 majority is necessary to amend the item. If the creator of the item being amended approves of the amendment, it is a “friendly” amendment and is automatically incorporated into the item. If the creator either is not present or is indistinguishable, a simple majority is required to approve the amendment.

A Motion to the previous question is a move to close debate on an issue.
The recommended goals for the first meeting of this committee include:

1. Surveying the committee with the new LLDP materials.
2. Appointing a committee secretary.
3. Assigning a pointman to each of the following areas:
   a. Unit Elections
   b. Troop Representative Program
   c. Unit Visitation / Camping Promotion
4. Establishing the committee’s goals for the next six months.
5. Generating a list of possible methods to approach each committee function.
6. Reminding pointmen to prepare their pre-function report for the next meeting of the committee.
7. Establishing a second meeting date within one month.