

Committee Guidelines

Last Updated Sunday, 28 February 2010

Small Business Week

Guidelines for Committee Participation

These guidelines are intended to help all of our volunteers and supporters to better understand how Small Business Week functions and how each person can contribute to achievement of our goals. The organization's main focus is a series of events celebrating small businesses that occurs in a single calendar week, traditionally the first week of May each year.

The committee directly sponsors and arranges three events each year, and coordinates events sponsored by other like-minded organizations. A total of sixteen to twenty events are scheduled each year. All are organized by non-profit educational institutions, business trade groups, government entities or civic groups. Many for-profit businesses sponsor the organization's activities with cash and in-kind contributions and the generous use of their employees' time.

It is important that we have a consistent understanding of our mission and how we work amongst all volunteers. We ask that whenever you invite someone to participate in this committee, please do two things: First, be sure that they know that this is a working committee. Second, please explain these guidelines so that we all can work together, all supporting the common goals. Potential volunteers are welcome to visit a monthly committee meeting, or a sub-committee meeting before making a commitment to the organization.

Small Business Week of Eastern Missouri, Inc. is a Missouri not-for-profit corporation. We are an all-volunteer organization. There is no paid staff; in past years we received significant staff support from the Small Business Administration, but that has waned recently to a minimal level. The SBA provides guidance, and we must operate within their parameters, but all staff functions, including legal, accounting and cash management, marketing, web site, event management, etc. are performed by volunteers for no compensation.

Many people volunteer because they want to do some good, to return something to their community. Others do it because the visibility and networking opportunities are good for their own businesses. And we do try to reward volunteers by making their contributions very public.

This organization actually functions at three separate levels of volunteers: Board, Committee and Sub-committee.

There is a Board of Directors, as required by law of all non-profit corporations. They meet periodically, for an annual board meeting and the occasional action that might require formal approval. Only a few active committee members (with significant experience or history on the committee) will be asked to serve on the board of directors. Qualifications include

- a demonstrated leadership style;
- demonstrated commitment and accomplishment as a volunteer;
- some necessary professional expertise.

Committee: Most of the visible activity and most of the coordination takes place in a series of monthly committee meetings. The committee chairs attend these meetings; all members are welcome and encouraged to attend. Most event decisions are made here.

The third level is the sub-committees; much of the real work takes place at this level, as individual committee members do all the various tasks to arrange the events or perform the myriad functions necessary. Sometimes the work is done in sub-committee meetings; each committee sets its own schedule. Much effort takes place individually, as individuals carry out the agreed tasks of the sub-committee; these tasks can frequently be performed at times chosen by the individual, although a lot must be done within business hours, such as calling sponsors or exhibitors. A volunteer can and should choose the sub-committee(s) where their personal skills and abilities will give them the greatest rewards. Some members are representatives of agencies that sponsor Small Business Week events. There are currently sixteen sub-committees , from Breakfast to Dinner, Sponsorship, Marketing and Booths. See the Committee Description page for details.

Committee members are expected to actively participate in the work of at least one sub-committee. We do NOT need people who will only offer "ideas". We need people who are prepared to execute the idea and to make it happen if the concept is approved. In other words, don't worry so much about what others should do, but tell us what you can and will do to help the process.

A suggestion from anyone on the committee will be taken more seriously if the person suggesting it is willing and able to personally do what they are suggesting. No one has to shoulder the entire burden by themselves, but ideas are plentiful; we need doers.

It is possible for a volunteer to work only on a sub-committee, and not attend monthly meetings if desired. We have implemented a telephone conference capability that allows people to attend the monthly committee meetings “electronically”. Every committee volunteer is expected to serve actively on at least one sub-committee. Due to the need to coordinate the various disciplines, the committee chair will be someone who can commit to attend as many monthly committee meetings as possible in order to facilitate communication. In past years, and planned for the next year at least, the committee meets at 4:00 PM at the US Bank office on North Hanley in Clayton, on the second Monday of every month from August through April.