

President's Message

SMPA was formed in 2005, and became an official NALA Affiliated Paralegal Association in January 2006. SMPA was created by paralegals dedicated to meeting the professional needs of not only East Tennessee paralegals, but also paralegals in other areas of the state and in other states. One of the goals of SMPA was to groom young paralegals to take over as leaders in our association.

We have reached the point in our association where we need those young paralegals to step up and become leaders. If this does not happen, the demise of SMPA is inevitable.

The last monthly CLE had three members in attendance in person.

SMPA held a social #networking event to gather and celebrate SMPA's first baby. Five members attended along with the guest of honor.

What is the solution to the lack of participation?

In an effort to find a solution, I recently sent a link for a survey of the membership to all members and it was posted on our social media accounts. There were a total of six responses received. SIX!

Why have you not declared for a position on the Executive Committee?

Why haven't you volunteered to serve on a committee??

- Half of the responses to both of these questions was "time."

Being on a committee, or even the Executive Committee is not as time consuming as one would think. So what does being on the EC entail, exactly? Let's look at the Bylaws and break down each of the roles of the Executive Committee.

11.8 Parliamentarian.

The Parliamentarian shall attend all meetings and give opinions on parliamentary procedures upon request of the President. This officer shall be familiar with association Bylaws and NALA Bylaws, shall receive all proposed Bylaw amendments, and shall prepare Standing Rules and amendments to Standing Rules and Bylaws upon request of the Executive Committee. *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* serves as parliamentary authority for items not covered by these Bylaws or the association Standing Rules. SMPA shall provide a copy of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* to the Parliamentarian.

- The Parliamentarian is appointed by the President.
- Be an Active Member in good standing.
- Attend EC meetings (4) and the Annual Meeting. EC Meetings are currently held via Zoom for everyone's convenience. They have been averaging about an hour each. The Annual Meeting is on the 2nd Thursday in December.
- Verify there is a quorum (1/10 of the membership with voting rights are in attendance.)

- Make sure the meetings are orderly.
- The Parliamentarian does not vote at the meetings.
- This position is not very time consuming.

11.7 Academic Outreach Director.

The Academic Outreach Director shall automatically be the chair of the Academic Outreach Committee and shall be in contact with schools with paralegal programs within the East Tennessee area to promote SMPA, assist with the needs of the school, and volunteer to speak at school programs. This officer shall oversee the Mentor Program, seeing that each new student is assigned a mentor and make periodic contact with student members. The Academic Outreach Director shall also oversee the student scholarship application and distribution process.

- Be an Active Member in good standing.
- Attend EC meetings (4) and the Annual Meeting. EC Meetings are currently held via Zoom for everyone's convenience. They have been averaging about an hour each. The Annual Meeting is in December, on the 2nd Thursday.
- Visit the local paralegal classes – in person or Zoom and promote SMPA and its benefits.
- Assign student members a mentor.
- Promote the student scholarship and present the award to the winner at our Annual Meeting.
- This position is a little time consuming.

11.6 NALA Liaison.

This officer shall be a NALA active member, shall be familiar with the NALA Bylaws, shall receive minutes of all NALA meetings, and shall represent the association at the NALA annual meeting of affiliated associations. In the event the NALA Liaison is unable to attend the NALA annual meeting of affiliated associations, the association may designate another NALA active member to serve as its' representative. This officer shall report bi-annually on association activities to the NALA affiliated associations director on forms provided by NALA headquarters, and shall report all officers' names to NALA headquarters and the NALA affiliated associations director.

This officer may submit items the association wishes discussed to the NALA Affiliated Association Director and shall participate in discussion sessions at the NALA annual meetings. A report to the association members on the NALA annual meeting will be required.

This officer shall, within sixty days of passage, notify the NALA Affiliated Associations Director of any changes in the association's bylaws. This officer shall be the main contact between NALA and the association. This officer shall be a member of the governing body of this association.

- Be an Active Member in good standing.
- Be an Active Member of NALA in good standing.

- Attend EC meetings (4) and the Annual Meeting. EC Meetings are currently held via Zoom for everyone's convenience. They have been averaging about an hour each. The Annual Meeting is in December, on the 2nd Thursday.
- Prepare and send various reports to NALA throughout the year.
- Attend the NALA Conference (paid for by SMPA).
 - Attend the Affiliated Associations meeting at the conference and prepare a report about the meeting.
 - Represent and promote SMPA at the Affiliate Association Showcase. (Think standing/sitting behind/at a table decorated and give away swag and collect ideas and swag from other affiliated associations.)
 - Attend CLE sessions at the conference and prepare a report of the conference for SMPA.
- This position can be time consuming, but only around July with the NALA Conference.

11.5 Treasurer.

The Treasurer shall automatically be chair of the Finance Committee, which shall prepare a budget for the ensuing fiscal year to be adopted by the membership at the annual meeting. (Budget shall be submitted to the Executive Committee prior to presentation at annual meeting.) The Treasurer shall deposit all funds and make all disbursements, subject to approval of the Executive Committee and as provided in the budget. Any extraordinary expenses must be approved by the Executive Committee before obligation to pay. The Treasurer may be bonded (premium paid by association). All disbursements of association funds must be by association check signed by the Treasurer or President. This officer shall submit a written financial report at each regular meeting to be attached to official minutes as part of permanent record. The Treasurer is also responsible for keeping a current roster of membership and reporting the membership annually to NALA with the renewal fee for continued affiliation with NALA.

- Be an Active Member in good standing.
- Attend EC meetings (4) and the Annual Meeting. EC Meetings are currently held via Zoom for everyone's convenience. They have been averaging about an hour each. The Annual Meeting is in December, on the 2nd Thursday.
- Prepare a report for the EC Meetings showing the current status of our financial situation (where we are on the budget).
- Pay the bills, collect the money.
- Collaborate with the President and prepare the next year's budget.
- This position can be somewhat time consuming.

11.4 Secretary.

The Secretary shall automatically be co-chair of the Nominations/Elections/Credentials Committee. The Secretary shall be responsible for minutes for all meetings and keeping permanent minutes. This officer shall assist the President in any way including giving notice of meetings. Association minutes of any meeting shall be available to the NALA President upon request.

- Be an Active Member in good standing.
- Attend EC meetings (4) and the Annual Meeting. EC Meetings are currently held via Zoom for everyone's convenience. They have been averaging about an hour each. The Annual Meeting is on the 2nd Thursday in December.
- Take minutes at these 5 meetings for presentation to the EC and publication to the membership in *The Liaison*.
- Keep the official copies of the Officer Reports from the EC Meetings – on a jump drive.
- This position is not very time consuming.

1.3 Second Vice President.

The Second Vice President shall automatically be chair of the Membership Committee and shall be charged with the responsibility of developing programs to encourage membership in the association. This officer shall receive applications for membership and present names of new applicants to the Executive Committee for acceptance or rejection. Upon approval of membership, applications shall be signed by this officer and delivered to the treasurer with dues payment. The Second Vice President shall work with her national counterpart (NALA Second Vice President) to encourage membership in NALA.

- Be an Active Member in good standing.
- Attend EC meetings (4) and the Annual Meeting. EC Meetings are currently held via Zoom for everyone's convenience. They have been averaging about an hour each. The Annual Meeting is on the 2nd Thursday in December.
- Process renewals and new member applications.
- Chair the membership committee – promote SMPA to paralegals and paralegal students for membership.
- Promote membership in NALA.
- This position is a little more time consuming.

11.2 First Vice President.

The First Vice President shall preside and shall assume all duties assigned to the President in the President's absence. This officer shall automatically be chair of the Educational Programs Committee. These duties shall include planning seminars and workshops and working with NALA in the event of co-sponsorship of any programs. The First Vice President shall also be responsible for fulfilling the educational requirements under Article VI, Section 6.1 of these Bylaws and shall report such education meetings to the NALA Liaison. The First Vice President shall work very closely with the President in preparation for the impending election to President.

- Be an Active Member in good standing.
- Attend EC meetings (4) and the Annual Meeting. EC Meetings are currently held via Zoom for everyone's convenience. They have been averaging about an hour each. The Annual Meeting is on the 2nd Thursday in December.
- Schedule the monthly CLE meetings and obtain prior approval for credit with NALA.

- Chair the membership committee. The committee plans the Annual Seminar and Annual Meeting.
- This position is a little more time consuming.

11.1 President.

The President shall preside over the Executive Committee and membership meetings. The President shall appoint a Parliamentarian and special and standing committee chairpersons as provided by these Bylaws. The President shall pass files to successor immediately upon installation and shall ensure all other officers' and chairpersons' files are passed to respective successors. The President shall be ex-officio (non-voting) member of all committees except the committee on nominations and elections.

- Be an Active Member in good standing.
- Attend EC meetings (4) and the Annual Meeting. EC Meetings are currently held via Zoom for everyone's convenience. They have been averaging about an hour each. The Annual Meeting is on the 2nd Thursday in December.
- Previously hold an officer position on the EC.
- Preside over the EC Meetings and the Annual Meeting.
- This position can be time consuming.

Participating on a committee is not as time consuming as being the Chair of a committee.

The following committee chairs serve according to their duties as officers of the association:

Academic Outreach Committee (Academic Outreach Director)
 Educational Programs Committee (First Vice President)
 Ethics Committee (President and Second Vice President)
 Executive Committee (President)
 Finance Committee (Treasurer)
 Membership Committee (Second Vice President)
 Nominations/Elections/Credentials Committee (Secretary)
 Resolution Committee (NALA Liaison)
 State and Local Bar Associations Committee (President)

The President shall appoint the following standing committee chairs:

Audit Committee
 Community Outreach Committee
 Nominations/Elections/Credentials Committee (Co-Chair Parliamentarian)
 Publications Committee
 Resolution Committee (Co-Chair Parliamentarian) Web Manager

How can we improve SMPA?

There were only 5 responses.

1. More people need to want to be involved; the dance people do everything and it's not sustainable.
2. Better involvement.

How does SMPA get its members to be more involved?

SMPA offers social #networking events throughout the year. These events vary in location, day, and week to encourage participation.

SMPA participates in community outreach. Our members are encouraged to participate in these endeavors. Our most successful community outreach is sponsoring the Ronald McDonald House.

3. More in demand CLE.

SMPA offers 11 CLE during their regularly scheduled monthly meetings.

We offer a minimum of 7 CLE at our Annual Seminar.

Earning an ACP designation is equal to 20 CLE.

NALA offers webinars and on-demand webinars for CLE.

4. Unsure.

The bottom line is we cannot continue as an association without your involvement. I personally do not want SMPA to fail. I encourage each one of you to become more active in SMPA. If you don't know how or where to begin, ask. Ask me or any current or former member the Executive Committee whatever questions you have. We are here to help.

We cannot continue without you.