

MANUAL FOR NEW DGC MEMBERS 2010 To 2011

Welcome to DGC for 2010 to 2011.

When I was asked to run for DGC for the 2007 to 2008 term I was advised that the requirements were to attend one meeting a month and be a liaison with some of the schools or sections. I was also advised there were no major controversies brewing. I soon found the situation was different. The DGC oftentimes establishes committees to work on projects which usually consist of councilors and there are usually controversies brewing.

It will probably take you several months to learn your job as a councilor. This “manual” is intended to make it easier for you to learn your job and to understand some of the basics of the operation of the Denver Group, the DGC, and the State CMC. One of your roles will be to be a source of information for Denver Group members as to what is happening in the CMC as a whole and in the Denver Group so you do need to educate yourself.

ORGANIZATION OF THE STATE CMC AND GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

The CMC is a Colorado Non-profit corporation which was incorporated in 1913 after having been established in 1912. A non-profit corporation does not have stockholders it has members. The members are the owners. The Denver Group is not a separate legal entity. The CMC also has a special 501(c)(3) tax exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code. With this status donations to the CMC are tax deductible.

There is a State Board consisting of 15 members selected by the State Council. The CMC officers are also part of the State Board. The State Board meets quarterly. Any CMC member may attend the open sections of the State Board meetings. As a Denver Group council member, you should consider attending a State Board meeting to meet the State Board members and other Group Chairs who attend the meetings.

The State Board assigns State Board liaisons to each Group. The Denver Group frequently has more than one liaison from the State Board.

The State Board does recognize the interests and needs of local groups and members and does consider comments from the same. Previously there were about 40 Board members which was too large to act effectively. When the number of Board members was decreased a State Council was established. Its tasks are to vote for State Board members and to advise the State Board. The State Council consists of a member of each local group usually the chair. Other members on the State Council are the State Board Committee Chairs and former Board members whose terms ended the year before.

The role of the State Council is set forth in the State Constitution. The State also has By-Laws and policies. The Denver Group also has By-Laws. A copy of Denver By-Laws will be provided you. The State Documents and polices are on the State CMC website under the Members tab at the bottom. State Board Minutes and Agendas are also located there. Under the About Us tab on the CMC website is other information about the CMC including the mission statement which comes from the articles of incorporation, history, and values. You should read the State Constitution, By-Laws, Polices, and the Denver Group By-Laws.

FINANCES

The CMC fiscal year is from October 1st through September 30. The DG By-Laws adopted the same fiscal year as the State. The State prepares an annual Action Plan and Budget. Each CMC Group is requested to also prepare an annual Action Plan and Budget. The annual DG budget is about \$225,000. Revenues mainly come from dues and fees for schools and sections. The August 2010 financial report showed dues collected of about \$69,500. Out of the annual dues the Denver Group receives \$26 from Individual (Regular) memberships and Young Adult memberships. The DG receives \$43 from a Family membership. The remainder of the dues go to the State. DG Schools and Sections are critical to the financial health of the Denver Group. The August 2010 financial report shows that Schools generated revenue of about \$87,000. After school expenses, the net income was slightly over \$37,000, a return of revenue in excess of expenses of 57.5%. Because the dues received from DG members are insufficient to cover expenses, it is requested that DG schools return 40% of their revenue from school enrollment fees to the DG. Many schools do better than 40%, some schools are not able to return 40% of revenues.

Regarding expenses, the State allocates and charges a portion of its expenses to the Groups. This is commonly known as fee for services. The DG is required to pay the State about \$120,000 to \$130,000 annually. This amount covers an allocation of Membership Services personnel and expenses, and an allocation of the CMC Finance Director and his staff and the CEO. The State charges the DG 75% of the salaries for the front desk member services employees. The State also charges 25% of the cost for accounting and IT services to the DG. The State also assesses the Denver Group 10% of the salary for the CEO.

The State also charges the DG for use of the American Mountaineering Center (AMC). When a school or section uses a room at the Clubhouse the State charges a fee. The rate is 50% of the fee charged to the public. For example, the fee for DG use of the auditorium is \$300 per night and for one of the first floor conference rooms such as Room A is \$120.

The DG sponsors specific “sections” which have their own membership activities. These sections charge a small fee for joining to cover their own expenses such as newsletters and social activities. Sections are requested to return 10% of their revenue to the DG. Most sections return more than 10% to the DG Budget.

For the fiscal year 2009 to 2010 it is estimated that the DG will operate in the black. For the fiscal year 2008 to 2009 the Denver Group had a deficit of about \$25,000, although cash flow was positive. In 2008-2009 the tight economy was felt as both dues and school enrollment declined from prior years. However, the DGC decided not to raise DG dues since the State was raising its dues.

The State collects all the dues and fees for schools. Each month the State then charges the Denver Group for fees for services which is about \$10,000 per month. The balance is then transferred into a Denver Group Bank Account. The Chair of the Denver Group then signs checks for expenses incurred. The checks are prepared by the State accounting staff.

The DG treasurer, Karen Hurley, regularly emails the DG financial reports to council members.

The Denver Group does have a surplus account built up several years ago; the surplus of approximately \$72,000 is invested in a Schwab account which pays minimal interest. DGC has considered investing some of those funds in other higher interest, higher risk investment alternatives but no decisions have been made at this time. The Denver Group By-laws gives DG treasurer authority to invest those funds. The Treasurer has requested direction from DGC on how to invest those funds. This is an issue that will face DGC this term.

DENVER GROUP MEETINGS

Denver Group meetings are on the second Wednesday of the month. They start at 6:30 p.m. sharp and usually end about 9:00 p.m. They are held in the Baker room. There is an agenda for the meetings which is emailed to councilors in advance of the meeting. Minutes are kept by the Secretary. Sandy Curran has done a marvelous job of preparing the minutes for the last three years. The minutes are emailed to the councilors and approved at the next meeting. The DGC Chair presides but does not have a vote unless there is a tie. There are 9 Denver Group Councilors. Sometimes there are advisory councilors who do not have the power to vote. A quorum is five councilors. Roberts Rules of Order are followed.

DGC discusses matters. There are norms for DGC and a State Code of Conduct. The norms will be provided. Your obligation is to discuss matters in good faith and use your best judgment and common sense. Everyone’s opinion is important in reaching the best decision. Sometimes issues which councilors are passionate about are discussed. Everyone needs to be considerate of each other. At times confidential matters concerning specific individual members must be discussed, and in those situations, you as a council

member are requested to retain confidentiality of the situation and those members involved.

Oftentimes members of the State Staff or other outside speakers will talk about their areas of expertise. It is important to make them feel welcome and be respectful. There may be differences of opinion with the speaker's opinions but these need to be made respectfully. There is oftentimes a liaison to the DG with the State Board present at the meetings.

One thing you will learn is that it is easier to generate an idea than to implement it. You should consider the difficulty and cost of implementing an idea.

To deal with issues that affect members or state policies, oftentimes the Chair will establish a committee and ask council members to participate in that committee. The committee will be asked to study the matter and bring a specific proposal to the DGC to vote upon. You need to be willing to serve upon these committees.

One task of the DGC pursuant to the Denver Group By-Law is to approve new directors for schools and to approve new schools and sections.

It has been customary to bring snacks to the DGC meetings. It will be proposed that this be done on a rotating basis by the councilors.

PAST TERM ISSUES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

As council members of the Denver Group our task is to identify problems and try to solve those problems.

Linda Lawson was the chair for the last two years. There have been many significant issues during her two year term. One of those was membership decline and retention of members especially new members. To address these problems a study was completed by Dr. Judith Cohen, a professional and member who issued a Membership Retention report. The comprehensive and excellent report will be made available to new councilors. It was discovered that many new members did not engage in any activities. An electronic letter was developed that is sent out to new members who do not participate in any activities in 6 months from date of joining encouraging them to participate.

Regarding membership decline, this has been a problem throughout most of the local groups. In 1980, 1990, and 2000 the average Denver Group membership was 4300. As of June 2009 Denver Group membership had declined to 3197. See membership statistics sheet which will be provided. One reason for this decline is a lack of awareness of the existence of the CMC and its activities. On increasing membership, this is a complex task. The consensus is that there needs to be outreach to get the CMC name before the public. Janet Martel, a DG Councilor, developed a poster for distribution at area mountaineering stores and recreation areas. Beth Dwyer, a DG council member, also

developed a power point presentation about the CMC and has given several presentations at companies and REI stores. The State has had commercials on Colorado Public Radio. The State hired a full time marketing director in July of 2010 who is developing a plan which will hopefully involve the state and local groups. It is anticipated that this director will give a presentation to DGC.

Two years ago the State Publications department addressed the DGC suggesting that the DG produce a hiking guide for 30 Denver area hikes. This was approved and Bob Dawson spearheaded this project. Bob Dawson spent a considerable amount of time on this project and the book became a reality.

The annual leader's summit was resurrected this year after not talking place for five years. It was well attended and Linda Lawson addressed the leaders.

There has been criticism of the CMC website as difficult to use. As a partial response Sharon Kratze, a DG councilor has developed a website for the Denver Group entitled Denver Hikes. She has spent a great deal of time on this website. You are encouraged to click on Groups on the main CMC.org website, then select Denver from the left side of the screen. The "HikingDenver.net" website is quite active and provides photos of many activities which should appeal to a younger member demographic.

The DGC also either sponsors or provides funds to a specific committee for seminar topics of interest to our membership and the general public. A Lightning Safety seminar supported in 2009. In 2010 the DGC provided funding to the DG Safety and Leadership Committee to support a Leader Summit and a Not in Your Backyard A&B Hikes seminar.

Some ongoing issues involve improving the relationship between the State Board, CEO, State Staff and the DGC and Denver Group members. This was addressed with a couple of "tension management" meetings. One issue has been whether the State recognizes the members as a customer. This was clarified and affirmed at the DGC meeting in September by the CEO. More local group interaction is also a goal. Minutes are being exchanged between the DG and other groups.

Then there is the matter of rebranding and the new logo being advanced by the State. It has been encouraging that there has been interaction between the State Board and local groups over the new logo design and that the State Board has listened to the local groups and members on this issue. One Board member also made the comment that a new logo was not the total answer to improvement. There also needed to be improvement of member services and outreach to get the CMC name before the public.

There is also an issue of needing more A&B hikes and waiting lists for hikes. The above referenced seminar was put on to encourage more A&B hikes. The DGC approved funding at the request of Denver Safety and Leadership to send out email notices to members who signed up for hikes 3 days in advance of the hike to remind them about the

hike. If they would not be able to attend they were reminded to cancel so other members on the waiting list could be notified.

These are just some highlights. I believe you will learn that DGC takes its responsibilities seriously and works hard. In dealing with the problems we will be addressing it is important to keep in mind the words of Bill Gates the founder of Microsoft. I saw him say on television that the key to success is patience.

FUTURE ISSUES

The Centennial year for the CMC is in 2012. There is a State Centennial Committee. Two ideas that will be lead by DG members are 1) the proposal to climb all the Centennial Peaks in 2011 and 2012 by Group Members statewide 2) a local Golden art contest for a poster to used during 2012. All statewide Groups are asked to participate in Centennial Year activities.

The role of conservation v. recreation in the CMC is a perennial issue.

The State Safety and Leadership Committee is developing Minimum State Leadership Guidelines.

The State has recently adopted the following policies, all available on the State Website under Groups, group resources: Transparency, Code of Conduct, and Firearms.

Myself, as the new Chair of the Denver Group, and present members of the DGC look forward to getting to know you and working together with you. If we work together we will survive, if we don't we perish.

Bob Reimann
Chair, Denver Group Council
2010/2011 & 2011/2012