

COMMITTEE CHAIR HANDBOOK

The Georgia Association of Water Professionals educates, provides professional development, and promotes sound public policy in the water resources and related environmental fields.

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**Georgia
Association of
Water
Professionals**

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THANK YOU!

Thank you! The question isn't what are we thanking you for—the question is, *“What should we thank you for FIRST?!”* Is it your dedication to preserving and caring for Georgia's greatest resource that prompted you to volunteer with GAWP in the first place? Is it your commitment to do what you've volunteered to do? Is it your willingness to sacrifice some of your time to help further the overall purpose of GAWP? Or could it be your positive attitude as you work with volunteers with varying backgrounds and availability? The truth is, we could go on and on with the list. As a Committee Chair you encapsulate the meaning of volunteerism. You donate your time and energy to benefit other water professionals, and ultimately fellow Georgians. ***For this, GAWP is grateful to you!***

The goal of this handbook is to guide you as you lead your committee. We've had more than 87 years of experience filled with trial and error to perfect a few processes in order to make chairing a committee a little smoother. Granted, we haven't perfected it all, but with each year and each volunteer we learn and grow.

At the end of your term, your feedback is welcomed. What you experience as a committee chair will help future volunteers, who will then be joining in our chorus of *“thank you.”*

Each committee is designed to focus on a specific topic within the water industry. Your committee is the voice to the membership for that topic. Your goals and activities should be focused on how to best serve the members and enhance the profession.

THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

MEMBERS OF GAWP

Because committee participation is a benefit of GAWP Individual Membership, all committee members must be Individual Members of GAWP. Those who work for a Corporate or Utility Member still need to have an Individual membership to participate on committees. Please remind your committee members of this and ask that they check their membership status with GAWP staff if they are unsure when their renewal is due.

Throughout this Handbook, you will see sidebars to highlight specific tasks for committee chairs and responsibilities of your staff liaison.

YOUR STAFF LIAISON

Your staff liaison should be included on all notices to your committee. The staff liaison's job is to support the work of the committee and provide answers to policy questions.

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE: SET UP A SUCCESSION PLAN!

In order to keep your committee active, it is important that you have a succession plan in place. Without a succession plan, your committee is likely to stall out when you step down as Chair! Line up your future leaders now so that they can be active participants in running the committee—great training for when they are Chair.

Committee positions can be for one- or two-year terms. All committee chairs change out at the Annual Conference.

Required committee positions: Fill out this section!

Chair:

Vice-chair:

Put your Vice-chair in charge of something!

SUGGESTED POSITIONS

Secretary: It is a good idea to have a secretary who can take notes while you run the committee meeting. These notes, including assignments given during the meeting, should be sent out via the Group Page immediately after the meeting and with the reminder for the next meeting. The secretary should be someone who can be relied on to attend all meetings or schedule a substitute for when they cannot attend.

PUBLICATION SUB-COMMITTEE CHAIR

Each committee is encouraged to submit updates on projects, meetings, and committee activities to the *News & Notes*. Keeping the GAWP membership informed of what your committee is working on is the best way to recruit new, active committee members. Your staff liaison can coordinate your submittal for *News & Notes*.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE

For your committee to have sessions at GAWP conferences, you must have a representative on the Program Committee. This person is responsible for attending Program Committee meetings, selecting and reserving session times for your committee, and coordinating the session moderator, topics, and speakers.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE


A representative on the Membership Committee is highly recommended to ensure that membership programs and membership benefits serve the interests of all of our members.

SPECIAL GOALS/PROJECTS SUB-COMMITTEE CHAIRS

If your committee holds events, has an award program, or takes on a special initiative, it is a good idea to have a sub-committee chair who will be responsible for organizing that and reporting back to the committee chair.

This structure prevents the committee chair from being directly responsible for all committee activities and getting overwhelmed! The sub-committee chairs also get a taste for being a leader and are better prepared to be committee chairs.

Be sure to send your staff liaison the names of your sub-committee chairs.



*A Note about
Sub-Committees!
Sub-committees are a
great way to distribute
responsibilities (allowing
your committee to
accomplish more) while
training your future
committee leaders.*

SETTING UP A MEETING

RESERVING SPACE AND SELECTING A DATE


The first thing you should do to set up a meeting is complete the Meeting Information Form. This form can be found in the Committee Chairs Group, www.gawp.org/meetingform. This is for ALL meetings, even if they are not being held at GAWP. If the date you have selected is not available you will be contacted with alternate dates. You may send multiple dates on the same Meeting Information Form, as long as the times/locations are the same. After your form has been received, GAWP staff will create your event online and notify you when it is available so that you can email your committee about the upcoming meeting. **The meeting notification sent to your committee should be sent no later than two weeks prior to the meeting date.** Ideally you should send the notification to your committee with at least a month notice.

You can have a committee meeting at a GAWP conference. There are limited times and rooms available for meetings at conferences, so let your staff liaison know you would like to hold one and what your preferred time for meeting is so they can check the schedule.

NOTIFYING YOUR COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND SENDING REMINDERS

EMAIL

The only way to notify your committee members of a meeting is through your Group page. Under “Options” select “Email Members” to contact every member of your committee. If you do not email through your Group, you may be leaving people out or using old/invalid email addresses.



*All emails
should be sent
through your
Group page!*

You should give your committee members as much advance notice as possible when a meeting is scheduled. If the next meeting date is set at a committee meeting, complete the Meeting Information Form immediately to reserve your space so that you can include the registration link in the meeting’s follow-up email. This allows your members to put the date on their calendar and also have a deadline for any assignments they were given at that meeting.

The GAWP membership database will send an automatic reminder for your committee meeting five days prior to the meeting. If you are having a lunch meeting, you do not need to keep a headcount as this will be done through the online registrations for the meeting.

YOUR MEETING ON THE GAWP WEBSITE

When you reserve space with the Meeting Information Form, your meeting will be added to the GAWP website within one business day. This opens registration and allows all GAWP members to see upcoming opportunities for involvement.

LUNCH MEETINGS

GAWP will provide lunch for scheduled committee meetings that are held at GAWP. You don’t have to meet over lunch (although we know it’s nice to!); you can also meet at other locations where you may ask your host company to provide lunch for the committee.

CONFERENCE CALLS AND VIDEO CONFERENCING

Your staff liaison can provide you with a call-in number and password for conference calls. When members sign-up for a committee meeting, they are able to select an option for participating by conference call and they are asked to notify the committee chair that they will be participating by conference call.

Committee Members can also join the meeting via video conferencing. When members sign-up for a committee meeting, they would need to select the video conferencing option and they are ask to notify the committee chair.

RUNNING A MEETING

THE AGENDA

Your job as a committee chair is to provide structure and support to your committee. A meeting agenda should outline:

- ◆ The current goals of the committee.
- ◆ Open assignments under those goals (including who is responsible and the due date).
- ◆ Next steps to achieving the goals.
- ◆ New ideas/new business (the “parking lot”).

An effective agenda will help keep your meeting on track and make sure items are accomplished during the meeting time volunteered by you and your committee members. The last item on any agenda should be “Next meeting!” Set a date, time, and location for your next meeting before adjourning.

STAND AND DELIVER

To help energize your committee meetings, consider standing next to a white board to take notes and lead your members in discussion. You will set the tone for your committee meeting—if you are positive and excited, your committee members will be as well.

LEADING = DOING + DELEGATING


Don't try to do everything yourself. Your committee members have good ideas and should be allowed to see them through—they're on the committee to work after all! Your Vice-chair is a valuable partner and should be directly responsible for some aspect of your committee.

TAKING NOTES

Having an official secretary can be helpful during meetings. The secretary would be responsible for keeping notes during the meeting so that you can focus on leading discussions. Meeting notes should include a list of assignments and the person responsible, as well as any items put in the “parking lot” during the meeting.

PARKING LOT

Never discourage new ideas—but keep your committee on task. Having a “parking lot” is a great way to encourage ideas while staying on task. As your meeting progresses, ideas will be expressed that do not address the current agenda item. Have your secretary note the idea either in his/her own notes or on a white board for everyone to see. When you get to the “parking lot” or “new ideas” line item on your agenda, come back to these “parked” ideas for discussion or decide to add them to the agenda for a later meeting. Don't let your committee motto be “We digress!”



While developing new projects, keep in mind that GAWP has policies that committees must work within. Your staff liaison is there to guide you through them!

AFTER THE MEETING

EMAIL YOUR COMMITTEE

After every meeting, you should email the meeting notes to your full committee/group (not just those who made the meeting). Your meeting notes should be your agenda as it was updated during the committee meeting. Meeting notes should include:

- ◆ The current goals of the committee.
- ◆ Open assignments under those goals (including who is responsible and the due date).
- ◆ Next steps to achieving the goals (including the next meeting date).



Include the next committee meeting date and open assignments in the body of your post-meeting email.

It can be helpful to include the most important information (such as the next meeting date, and open assignments with person responsible and deadline) in the body of the email. You can also save the meeting notes to your Group page.

FOLLOW-UP, FOLLOW-UP, FOLLOW-UP

It is extremely important that you follow-up with your committee members who have assignments. Make sure they understand what is being asked and the deadline set for them. Remember that all your committee members are volunteers and are busy (like you!) with work, family, and other obligations. Be firm but understanding, and if someone seems overwhelmed offer to find them a replacement or a partner.

AWARDING PDHs

PDHs CAN'T BE AWARDED FOR ATTENDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS.

PDHs *can* be awarded for attending a workshop. It is the responsibility of the workshop attendee to ensure that the training meets the board requirements. The workshop attendee is also responsible for keeping copies of the agenda and provided handouts for submittal to the board. After the workshop, the Committee Chair can provide PDH certificates to those who attended the workshop upon request.

A PDH certificate template can be obtained from your staff liaison. If you need to confirm attendance, your staff liaison can assist.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN 'WORKSHOPS' THAT EARNS POINTS, AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS THAT DO NOT.

Every two years, GAWP submits a certification approval request for all of the courses, workshops, and conferences that GAWP offers during a two-year period. This request is sent to the Georgia State Board of Examiners for Certification of Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant Operators and Laboratory Analysts. Once certification approval is received for these training events, GAWP is able to award certification points for attendance.

If a new training is developed after GAWP obtains the Board's certification approval, a new certification request needs to be sent to the Board for that specific training. Once certification approval is received from the Board for the new training, GAWP is able to provide points for attendance.

Because committee meetings are not approved for certification by the Board, GAWP is not able to award certification points for meeting attendance.

FUNCTIONS OF A COMMITTEE



SETTING GOALS

Committees exist to benefit GAWP members' careers and the profession as a whole. Committee members benefit the most by their involvement in the work and connections they make with other committee members.

Each year, all committees should outline three goals that will be their focus. Work with your committee members to establish goals. There are long-term goals, which can be multi-year projects or broad objectives that your committee is dedicated to achieving. Short-term goals are one-time projects or side projects with a start and end time clearly outlined. Most goals can be adopted as either short- or long-term.

The Committee Planning and Budgeting Form (see appendix H) will be the committee road map for the year and will help you in establishing the goals for the year and securing financial resources to achieve those goals. The Committee Planning and Budgeting Form is due to your Committee Liaison by September 30.

EXAMPLE GOALS:

Networking and Ideas Exchange

SET ASIDE TIME FOR CURRENT ISSUES.

This is a great goal for any committee and can be achieved through regular committee meetings and a designated time during your meeting to discuss current issues surrounding your committee's mission. *(Your committee's mission is most easily identified in the name of your committee!)* Leave it open for topics or select a specific topic in advance.

PRESENT AND EXHIBIT AT CONFERENCES.

Select one or more conferences at which your committee will have a session each year. *(See section on Conferences, Workshops, and District Meetings)* Any committee can have booth material developed for use at GAWP conferences. This is a great way to share what your committee is accomplishing and recruit new members.

WRITE FOR THE GEORGIA OPERATOR.

This can be a short-term goal—just one article, or you can set a long-term goal by choosing to write an article as a standard submission for each issue of the magazine.

CREATE YOUR OWN WORKSHOP.

Create your own half-day or full-day workshop, which can be held multiple times throughout the year at different locations. Plan a pre-conference workshop to be held in conjunction with the Industrial, Spring, Annual, or Fall Conference. Ask your staff liaison early, as we only offer one pre-conference workshop at each conference. *(See section on Conferences, Workshops, and District Meetings for planning information.)*

Technical Advancements

CREATE A BEST PRACTICES GUIDE.

Committees that have accomplished this include Customer Service, Collection Systems, and Integrated Master Planning.

Your staff liaison needs to be involved in selecting and outlining your Committee Goals. It's a good idea to talk to them ahead of time about your ideas. Your Committee Planning and Budgeting form is due on September 30!

PARTNER WITH EPD ON RULES OR REGULATIONS THAT ARE IN NEED OF UPDATING.

Committees that have accomplished this include Collections Systems (CMOMS) and Water Loss Control.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Sometimes you just have to kick back and have some fun! Here are some examples of special projects committees have had in the past:

- ◆ **Public Education:** *Mascot parade* at the Spring Conference.
- ◆ **H2Opportunity!:** *Toilet paper toss* at the Annual Conference Sunday night event (they charged \$1 and raised enough money to buy a water drop in support of the GAWP Headquarters in the name of H2Opportunity!)
- ◆ **Young Professionals:** The YPs worked with *Habitat for Humanity* to help build a house.
- ◆ **Diversity Committee/Young Professionals/H2Opportunity!:** These committees joined forces to start a Model Water Tower Competition for middle schools in Georgia.

HOW TO ASK FOR MONEY

Most committee goals do not require a budget. If your committee is taking on a special project that does need funding, discuss it with your staff liaison. Each year GAWP sets aside \$250 (for each committee) for committee work activities; your staff liaison can help you track the amount remaining of your budget for the year. For committee projects that require funding beyond the \$250, be sure to make a budget request via the Committee Planning and Budgeting Form by September 30. The Executive Committee will review the request and allocate funds as needed in the following year's Budget. Committee budget funds that haven't been used for the approved purpose can't be reallocated to a different purpose by the committee.

Check the GAWP Strategic Plan to see other ideas for how your committee can help accomplish GAWP's Goals!

COMMITTEE SOCIALS FUNDING

GAWP strongly supports committee social events and networking. Because the committee budget can only be used for committee work projects, GAWP encourages committees to plan 'Dutch treat' type committee networking socials or to find a sponsor to cover the cost of committee social activities.

As an exception, the Young Professionals Committee is allowed to use their budget towards committee networking socials.

*Bragging about what your committee is doing will:
1. Increase participation on your committee, and
2. Enhance GAWP member's perspective of the real value of their membership!*

COMMUNICATING TO THE MEMBERSHIP

All of the committees accomplish a great deal throughout the year, but a goal of GAWP staff is to increase the visibility of the committees and their work. The best way to accomplish this is through the *News & Notes*. Your write-up can be written very casually, or you can create a flier. 150-300 words would be perfect, but we'll take less or more. Recognize your committee's achievements and highlight outstanding projects or people with a short article or bio! Let the membership know what great work you are doing and how they can get involved. We just want to give you an avenue to brag to everyone else!

Social Media is another great way to communicate with members. Please refer to the Social Media Policy (Appendix G).

AWARDS

Several committees have their own awards program to recognize peer achievements. If your committee has an awards program, make sure to review and revise it regularly to ensure it is accomplishing what you want! All awards are assigned to specific issues of the *News & Notes* to correspond with the conference at which the award is presented. Be sure to review the attached schedule so that you are aware of when your award is advertised and the submission deadline for those advertisements. Committees are encouraged to notify their award winners—it will mean more to hear it from the people who selected them to receive the award than from a GAWP staff member. You must notify your award winners and GAWP (for printing and plaque purposes) at least four weeks prior to the conference at which the award will be presented.

Don't forget that your committee's award program is a great task to assign to another committee member.

Award Inspectors are not permitted to inspect/judge facilities that they are currently competing or eligible to compete against. (This includes the previous year's winner that is sitting out the current year to avoid any conflict of interest)

CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS, AND DISTRICT MEETINGS

GAWP wouldn't be able to hold conferences, workshops, or district meetings without our wonderful volunteers! You are the technical experts who know what should be on the program and who should present it. Below we walk through how committees are involved in creating GAWP's learning and networking experiences.

CONFERENCES

Conference programs are created exclusively by committees. To be involved on the conference program you must have a representative from your committee on the Program Committee (the Industrial Conference is planned by the Industrial

Committee). Your responsibilities as a committee are simple:

- ◆ Get a time slot approved at the Program Committee meeting.
- ◆ Assign someone on your committee as the Session Moderator.
- ◆ Find and confirm your speakers and topics (this is the time to let the speaker know they will be expected to pay for their registration unless they meet the criteria for being comp'ed).
- ◆ Communicate back to the Program Committee the session title, individual presentation titles, speakers' names, company, and email addresses.

Your staff liaison will let you know the deadline for printing material to be used at an upcoming conference and will send the graphics to the printer.

As the Committee Chair, it is your responsibility to have the booth graphics and text designed by the Committee and sent to your staff liaison on time.

*Be sure to inform your speakers of the Speaker/Moderator policy BEFORE you have them added to the program (See the Policy Section). **Speakers are required to pay to attend the conference or event.***

COMMITTEE EXHIBITS

To have a committee exhibit at a conference, you will need to complete the committee booth agreement (located on the Committee Chair Group) at least two weeks before the show. You must have volunteers who are available to set-up and break down the booth during the official hours designated for that conference. It is recommended that you also have volunteers willing to staff the booth during each exhibit hall break (it is not necessary to be there while sessions are being held). If your committee does not have booth material, or needs to update its booth material, talk to your staff liaison about getting new material printed.

When creating a workshop, your staff liaison will make arrangements for the location, set the date and prices, order food, advertise to the membership, and get approval for operator recertification points (if applicable).

As the Committee Chair, you will present the workshop and target date(s) to the Program Committee for approval, develop the program, and line up speakers and moderators.

WORKSHOPS

Workshop programs are also created at the committee level. Workshop programs are focused on a specific topic related to the committee developing it. Workshops can be a half day or a full day. Planning should begin at least 6 months prior to the target date and must start with presenting the workshop to the Program Committee for approval. (If you are planning to hold multiple workshops in one year, have as many dates as possible ready to present at one time to the Program Committee.) Creating a workshop is not complicated, BUT it is vital that your staff liaison be directly involved from the beginning. Only GAWP staff can set up workshop locations, get approval for operator recertification points, set dates, set prices, order food, advertise, etc. We'll handle all of the logistics; you only have to get approval from the Program Committee, and develop the program and speakers. We don't want to bog you down with the logistics involved in setting up the workshop!

Several committees have created workshops that they have offered at various locations around the state. These workshops have been very well received—Collection Systems, Asset Management, Customer Service, Utility Management & Finance, Stormwater, Water Resources, and many other committees plan workshops.

DISTRICT MEETINGS

If your committee doesn't want to create a half day or full day program, then you may be interested in making a presentation at a district meeting. These presentations can be 15 minutes to 2 hours in length and can cover technical topics, your committee awards program, or other committee activities that the membership needs to be aware of. These meetings can be arranged directly with the District Director in the district you wish to present, or you can contact the District Director Coordinator to assist you with getting your presentation on the schedule with multiple districts.

CHEAT SHEET OF POLICIES

The following policies concerning committees have been set by the GAWP Board of Directors.

EMAIL PROTOCOL

All emails must be sent through the GAWP website Groups pages.

LUNCH POLICY FOR COMMITTEE MEETINGS

GAWP will pay for lunches for committee meetings held at the GAWP offices with the following restrictions:

- ◆ GAWP will provide lunches for scheduled committee lunch meetings. Committee members must pre-register through the website to reserve a lunch.
- ◆ GAWP staff will arrange lunches for committee meetings held in the GAWP headquarters building.
- ◆ Lunches will be ordered only for those committee members and guests who register in advance.
- ◆ The chairperson is encouraged to find a sponsor to pay for all off-site lunches. GAWP will not reimburse expenses for lunch meetings held off-site.

CONFERENCE CALLS / VIDEO CONFERENCING FOR COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Make sure to let your staff liaison know in advance if you will hold a conference call or video conference during your meeting at GAWP. Your staff liaison will provide you with a conference call number and password or set up the meeting room for a video conference.

ENDORISING COMPANIES OR PRODUCTS

GAWP and its committees may not endorse any specific company or product. Please make sure that presentations made at your meetings comply with this requirement.

SETTING UP A COMMITTEE MEETING AND REPORTING AFTERWARDS:

- ◆ Reserve meeting space through the **Meeting Information Form** (see page 6).
- ◆ After the meeting, send your minutes to your full committee/group.

COMPLIMENTARY REGISTRATIONS FOR CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

Complimentary registrations for speakers/moderators must be approved by GAWP staff or the Program Chair only. Speakers must meet all of the following criteria to receive a complimentary registration, unless approval has been received from the Program Chair.

- ◆ The speaker is invited.
- ◆ The speaker is neither a consultant nor vendor, and otherwise does not receive secondary benefits from the presentation and resulting exposure.
- ◆ The speaker only makes his or her presentation and does not attend any other conference functions.

It is GAWP's policy not to pay fees or expenses for speakers at our programs.

FINANCIAL REIMBURSEMENT/BUDGETARY NEEDS

All committee-related expenditures must be made by a GAWP staff member. If your committee has a project that will require significant funds (greater than the \$250 budgeted for each Committee yearly), please discuss with your staff liaison and submit a Committee Planning and Budgeting Form prior to September 30. The budget request will be considered for inclusion in the next fiscal year's budget by the GAWP Executive Committee. Committee members should not collect or raise funds for any purpose without pre-approval from GAWP staff.

AWARDS

The following rules apply to every award program:

- ◆ No repeat consecutive winners
- ◆ Must have a minimum criteria for plaque and certificates of achievement (recommended at 90% or above)
- ◆ Judges must not have conflict of interests
- ◆ See awards presentation schedule
- ◆ Individual GAWP membership is required for individual awards
- ◆ Corporate or Utility GAWP membership is required for facility awards

WORKSHOPS

Planning should begin at least 6 months prior to the target date and must start with presenting the workshop to the Program Committee for approval. GAWP will promote the workshop at least monthly beginning with a 'save the date' 6 months in advance. The detailed program should be completed no less than 6 weeks from the date of the workshop.

SOCIAL MEDIA

- ◆ New Social Media accounts must be cleared with GAWP (Liaison)
- ◆ Keep it professional
- ◆ Strictly used for GAWP/Committee business
- ◆ Used to add or supplement existing tools – GAWP Website, E-New, News & Notes, etc.

ANTI-TRUST POLICY

- ◆ We are a non-profit organization
- ◆ Cannot have presentations (conference or meetings) where a sales pitch is being made
- ◆ Cannot discuss allocating or dividing service markets
- ◆ No discussion about discouraging/encouraging patronage of a product or service.
- ◆ Cannot discourage entry into competition.

IF YOU NEED HELP

THAT'S WHAT WE ARE HERE FOR!

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