

Chapter 5

CLUB SPONSORS – who, what and why

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Did you know that clubs have Sponsors to provide a pool of adults keenly interested and invested in the success of the local club? They vote to make decisions to guide the club's direction.

Club Sponsors – Who are they and why?



REMEMBER: Each club must maintain a minimum of five adult Sponsors in order to remain a Registered Club in good standing.

The Sponsors of a club are truly invested in the welfare of their local Pony Club. Sponsors provide suggestions to the DC for the operation and administration of the club at Sponsors' Meetings. They vote to recommend the DC and Jt-DC(s) for their club to the RS. With the Sponsors' recommendation under consideration, the RS will appoint the club DC and Jt-DC(s). And Sponsors have the power to elect officers other than the DC and Jt-DC(s). They are the adults committed to the success of the program. They make decisions that will affect all members.

The Sponsors of a club pay an annual Sponsors' fee and are:

- ▶ A DC, Jt-DC, or club officer. All administrative officers and all club officers must be Sponsors of Record and have paid annual Sponsors' fee. (Club Bylaws, Sections 2.1 and 2.2)
 - If an individual is elected at the Annual Meeting, but is not a Sponsor of Record, they should become a Sponsor immediately following the meeting.

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The term of office begins on January 1, so technically they have until then to become a Sponsor, but it should be done so as soon as possible.

- ▶ A parent of a child in the club who has paid the annual club Sponsors' fee.
 - Parents are not required to be Sponsors, but should be made aware of this opportunity.



REMEMBER: Each Sponsor joins on an individual basis, thus if both parents wish to become Sponsors, each must pay the Sponsors' fee. A club may decide to set a reduced fee if more than one parent in a family wishes to be a Sponsor, but each individual has a separate and independent status and a separate vote.

- ▶ Other individuals who have indicated an interest in supporting the club, have been approved by the District Commissioner, and have paid the annual club Sponsors' fee.
- ▶ The club Secretary should maintain a list of current Sponsors. The list is submitted to the National Office each year with the club report packet. The Secretary should give the DC the complete minutes of any Meeting of Sponsors, a list of the Sponsors present and absent from the meeting.

Sponsors' Term

The term of a Sponsor is never more than one year. The term begins when the Sponsors' fee is paid and ends at the conclusion of the Annual Sponsors' Meeting.

After the DC has adjourned the Annual Meeting, new and renewing Sponsors are accepted. The DC, Secretary, and Treasurer will accept Sponsor renewals and new Sponsors (payments, etc.) as the previous year's Sponsors leave the meeting.

Sponsors may be accepted at any time during the year *EXCEPT* for the four-week period prior to the Annual Meeting or after notice of a regular or special Sponsors meeting has been sent. The club Secretary should maintain a list of current Sponsors to define the Sponsors of Record for the club.

Sponsors' Fee

Sponsors themselves set the fee annually at the Annual Sponsors' Meeting, which should be reasonable, so as to encourage Sponsorship in the club. It should reflect the economics of the local area and be levied separate from any fund raising and/or Participating Members' dues.



TIP: Sponsors may establish a separate non-Sponsor, non-voting category for support of the club, such as “Patron” or “Friend of ABC Pony Club,” for individuals who wish to financially support the club, but who don't intend to participate actively in the club's program or decision-making authority. These funds are to be recorded separately.

The Sponsors' fee varies greatly around the country, but an average is about \$5. Each Sponsor pays the fee individually. It should not be added on to any youth member dues or fees. Think of it this way: if you (improperly) charged your youth members an amount that included a Sponsors' fee, which parent would be the Sponsor? Remember that each parent joins separately. The purpose of having a separate fee is to clearly delineate whom the Sponsors are according to who has paid the Sponsors' fee. This also allows the club secretary to easily maintain a list of the Sponsors of Record for the club.

Rights and Responsibilities

- ▶ Sponsors of Record must be notified of all Sponsors' Meetings.
- ▶ Sponsors of Record are entitled to attend and to participate in all Sponsors' Meetings with the power to move, discuss, and vote on issues.
- ▶ Sponsors establish an annual Sponsors' fee.
- ▶ Sponsors comprise a Nominating Committee that proposes a slate of officers at the club's Annual Meeting.
- ▶ Sponsors recommend (to the RS) persons for appointment as DC/Jt-DC.
- ▶ Have the power to elect officers other than a DC/Jt-DC.
- ▶ Sponsors may provide suggestions for the operation and administration of the Club at Sponsors' Meetings.

- ▶ Sponsors are entitled to examine (Club Bylaws, Section 4.1.1):
 - (a) Bylaws of the USPC, Regions of the USPC, and Registered Clubs of the USPC (all of which are available on the USPC Web site);
 - (b) Club policies currently in effect;
 - (c) Records of the Sponsors' Meetings;
 - (d) the Sponsors' List;
 - (e) Club financial records;
 - (f) DC Guide, and
 - (g) any other documents pertaining to the club.

Removal of a Sponsor

Removal of a Sponsor may be initiated in two ways. (National Bylaws, Section 8.7 (b).)

- ▶ “Upon the request of a majority of the Registered Club Sponsors, the DC shall consider termination of a child’s or Sponsor’s participation in the Registered Club.” This means that the DC must *consider* the request of the Sponsors. It does not mean that the DC must *act* on the request of the Sponsors.
- ▶ In addition, the National Bylaws say, “A DC, after consultation with the Registered Club Sponsors and with the advance approval of both the Regional Supervisor (or Vice Regional Supervisor in charge) and the Vice President of Regional Administration, may remove from the Club any Sponsor or Participating Member at any time, with or without cause.”