

INFORMATION SHEET 06 - (31st March 2026)

ROLES OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Because there is often little competition for such voluntary positions some people often find themselves thrown into a role and not familiar with all that it entails. Apart from imparting some basic information to assist such people, these articles may promote discussion as to what does make for a successful film society.

If you wish to respond please write to the secretary as detailed at the end of the information sheet. This information is probably equally relevant to the running of community cinemas and film festivals.

1. The President and Vice President:

The **PRESIDENT** co-ordinates the committee and chairs all meetings of the Society, with the assistance of the **VICE PRESIDENT**.

The Committee, headed by the President, is responsible for the overall running of the Film Society.

The Vice-President is available to take over the running of the society or chair any meeting when the President is unavailable. In many cases the Vice-President is regarded as the next President and is groomed for that role.

Chairing Meetings

The President of a meeting has few if any legal responsibilities, but this freedom is countered-balanced by the many moral ones that have to be shouldered to ensure that the business of any meeting is efficiently carried out.

The President ensures that committee meeting agendas are planned and chairs meetings according to accepted rules – encouraging all members to participate and arriving at decisions in an orderly, timely and democratic manner.

In summary, the President's role is:

As Chairperson:

- To enunciate the objectives of a meeting and to facilitate the resolution of issues.
- To control the progress of any meeting, including:
 - Control and announce agenda item under discussion.
 - To conform to and explain the rules of procedure.
 - To provide adequate opportunity for all to participate.
 - To keep discussion to the topic under discussion.
 - To put motions to the meeting when discussion complete.
 - To determine method of voting and appoint scrutineers if needed.
 - To decide points of order.
 - To preserve order.

- To maintain impartiality at all times.
- To ensure all participants understand issues.
- To decide on adjournments if needed.
- To settle points of order.
- To confine speakers to the topic under discussion and keep them to time.
- Determine date, time and place of next meeting.
- The President usually has a casting vote when the voting for and against is equal.

The President ensures that the Society maintains positive and productive relationships with the media and other organisations, including the FVFS. In this capacity, the President often serves as the primary spokesperson for the Society.

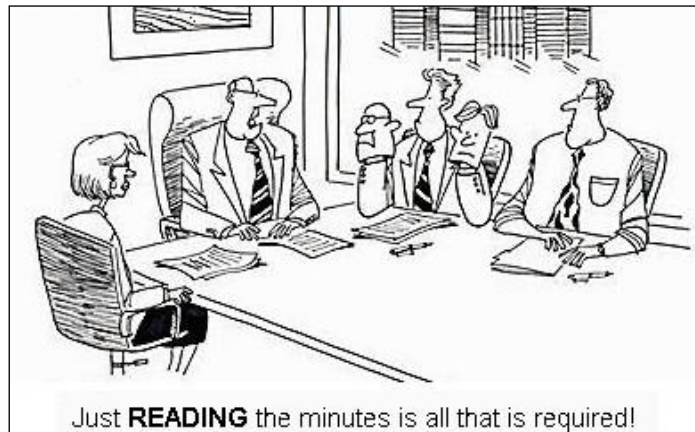
The President may delegate specific duties to members as appropriate.

The President is often designated as one of the signing officers for cheques and banking matters.

Note that the President should be careful not to abuse his powers by using the position to promote their own views nor to suppress opposing opinions. The role of President is that of a chairperson and to ensure everyone has a “fair go” even to the extent of not expressing their own views.

Secretary

The Secretary is, in effect, the General Manager of an organisation. Punctuality, organising ability, energy, carefulness, tact, orderliness, education, and a knowledge of the work are important qualities required of a Secretary.



The Secretary should be systematic in everything that is done. Writing and storing the minutes, attending to correspondence, liaising with the President and keeping tabs on various other issues are matters that need to be attended to regularly and thoroughly. Maintaining order makes for an easier job and allows for matters to be dealt with more effectively.

The duties of the Secretary may vary according to the nature of the organisation. However, the basic set can be fairly extensive.

Duties before a meeting (often assisted by a deputy) include:

- Receive correspondence - sort, summarise if necessary and communicate with the President as appropriate.
- Notify members of the meeting.
- Contact members regarding reports or matters arising from previous minutes.
- Anticipate and obtain relevant information.
- Set out matters in a draft agenda.
- Prepare for other occasional matters e.g. ballots, elections etc.

Duties during a Meeting:

- Read the minutes of the previous meeting (unless otherwise circulated).
- Read the correspondence (or summaries).
- Record the proceedings, in particular attendees, apologies, any decisions taken, action arising (including person responsible to action).
- Ensure any motions are recorded word-for-word, and mover and seconder recorded.
- Have all relevant documents, papers and ballots ready.

After a meeting:

- Write up the minutes noting place, time and purpose of the meeting,
- If recorded electronically, an annual storage for archiving purposes to digital memory or other permanent storage such as printout should be carried out.
- It is preferable to number pages and items for easy reference (also sometimes indexed).
- It is essential to have a good filing system.
- Carry out directions regarding the correspondence, etc.
- Furnish information as directed.
- Update Supplementary Rules, membership records, committees, etcetera.
- It is important to attend to matters at the earliest opportunity, particularly minutes and correspondence whilst details are readily recalled.

Where the duties of the Secretary are seen to be particularly onerous the role is often shared with other positions such as minute secretary, publicity and membership officer who take responsibility purely for those specific tasks leaving the more general duties to that of the general Secretary.

Treasurer.

The **TREASURER** deals with the financial side of the society, pays all bills, receives all monies and gives monthly financial reports to the Committee, prepares a budget and presents an annual report.

The occupant of the position of Treasurer should be a person of unquestionable trust and one who is careful and methodical. Otherwise, it could lead to mistrust and disputes in the organisation. It is desirable that this trustworthy person also be familiar with bookkeeping and accountancy methods.

Handling Finances.

a. Monies Received.

Receipts should be issued for all monies received (with perhaps the exception of competitions, concerts, etc.) on a proper official machine-numbered form. As soon as possible, all monies received should be paid into the appropriate account or accounts at the bank approved by the Society for that purpose.

b. Payment of Monies.

Payment of money should only be made if authorised by organisation (or delegated committee).

Dockets for material supply should be certified by the person authorised and making the purchase on behalf of the organisation.

Payments of any kind should be countersigned (traditionally on a cheque but these days by a second authorisation of an on-line bank payment)

Receipts for goods should be carefully preserved.

c. Investment of Monies.

Treasurers should be extremely wary about investing money with institutions that have other than trustee status.

d. Books to be Kept.

Normally for most organisations bookkeeping would be of the simplest form. All that is required is some form of a record of all transactions which may be in book form or a simple computer spreadsheet.

For larger and more complex organisations a number of accounts may be kept e.g. capital account, general account, trust account, etcetera.

e. Statements.

The Treasurer may be required to supply statements to the general committee or finance committee (if such exists) from time to time.

The Treasurer is normally required to give a statement of finances at each committee meeting. These statements should be derived from the transaction records and not bank statements.

Books of the society would not normally need to be audited unless the organisation has a large income stream. However, the annual financial report should be prepared by the Treasurer, endorsed by a fellow committee member and accepted by the committee. It is the duty of the Treasurer to compile all documents (e.g. butts of receipt books, pay in slips, receipted accounts, statements, etc.) available and prepare the Summary of Transactions and the Balance Sheet.

The Treasurer may be required to explain any matters which the AGM requires to be clarified.

Books (and/or files) of the organisation should be properly packaged and stored after each annual report and kept for up to seven years.

Change of Treasurer.

It is advisable that an outgoing Treasurer liaises with the person taking on the position to arrange such matters as transfer of authorities and to generally familiarise that person with the operation of the finances.

Other Office Bearer Positions.

The President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer are the key office bearers, often referred to as The Executive, in a club or organisation.

Other positions that may exist are:

Assistant Secretary.

This position, sometimes referred to as the Minute Secretary, can free the secretary to attend to other tasks during a meeting. The person undertaking this position must be able to understand the nature of the discussion, listen carefully and distinguish the important points and take notes that contain the names of the speakers, the main points they make and the text of all motions. The Assistant Secretary can act as Secretary during the latter's absence, can assist the Secretary in the issue of circulars to members and generally help in other matters. The Assistant Secretary is in a position to gain experience to become Secretary at some future time.

Scrutineers.

When it is necessary to have an election, scrutineers are appointed by the Chair, or by the Meeting at the request of the Chair.

Their duties are:

- Distribute the ballot material.
- Collect the completed ballot paper from each voter.
- Determine the valid votes.
- Allot the votes.
- Sign the result slip of the voting and deliver to the Chair

If the election is a major task a Returning Officer can be appointed as overseer.

The work of the scrutineers is finished when they deliver the result of the election to the Chair. If eligible to vote they should cast their vote at the same time as the other voters.

Immediate Past President.

The Immediate Past President in some organisations fulfils an important role, giving advice, contributing ideas and experience. Such a person is often ex-officio on the Executive and may assist as an intermediary in delicate negotiations and so on. It is usual that the Immediate Past President position, if recognised, be occupied for one year only.

Membership Officer.

Even though membership of many organisations is the concern of every member the role is important in the following:

- Seeking new members and replacing resignations.
- Assisting new members to settle in.
- Encourage regular involvement by existing members.
- Seek publicity for the organisation (although this can be the province of a separate portfolio).

Technical Officer (Projectionist)

Screens the films and DVDs, cares for equipment and transports equipment to and from the venues. Checks and prepares films and/or DVDs before each screening. Prepares projectionist roster.

Programming Officer

Organises a sub-committee for the selection of a suitable programme of films for the society and books them.

Catering Officer

Provides a lovely supper at each screening and buys the supplies to make this possible. Organises a roster of supper helpers.

Newsletter Officer

Searches for film information, edits and produces the newsletter. Ensures it is delivered to the members in plenty of time for the screening.

Publicity Officer

Makes sure the correct information reaches local papers and radio stations on time. Designs, produces and distributes promotional leaflets. Prepares and produces the annual calendar of events. Prepares promotional (coming attractions) slides and posters.

Theme Nights Officer

Organises special guests, activities or decorations for the screenings.

Film Officer (if the society uses films)

Makes sure the programmed films are available and delivered on time and returned to the distributors (if relevant) after the screening.

DVD Officer (if the society uses DVDs)

Ensures the best version of the programmed DVDs are purchased in plenty of time ensures their viability and tabulates any relevant information regarding the movie for use by the projectionist.

Delegates to the FVFS

Attends meetings of the Federation of Victorian Film Societies on behalf of the society, and reports back to the committee.

Public Officer (Now usually the Secretary)

Is the Society contact person for Consumer and Business Affairs, Victoria (Re Incorporation) and is required to submit an annual report and fee to the Department as soon as possible following the Society AGM unless the society is registered with the ACNC and submits reports to them.

Membership Secretary

Maintains a full list of all members and is the contact point for new members.

The above list may be exhausting but it is not exhaustive, nor are all positions essential! One purpose of the identification of specific jobs is to give recognition to the work of the committee and to allow all members and committee to pass relevant information on to the right person.

Conflict of Interest

All committee members including the Executive, are obliged to identify to the meeting any conflict of interest if it arises. If such conflict occurs the member should (subject to the meeting's wishes) not participate in discussions or perhaps leave the meeting for the duration. They should also refrain from voting on the issue.

For feedback or more information admin@fvfs.org.au