

Club Models and Flexibility

SLIDE – WHAT IS A CLUB

What do you think RI says a club should be and do? [Invite them to put thoughts in chat]

If you look at the RI Club constitution this is what it says is the Purpose of a club

Article 3 Purposes

The purposes of this club are to:

- (a) pursue the Object of Rotary;
- (b) carry out successful service projects based on the five Avenues of Service;
- (c) contribute to the advancement of Rotary by strengthening membership;
- (d) support The Rotary Foundation; and
- (e) develop leaders beyond the club level.

Nothing about sergeant, prayers and invocations, bling, flags, songs, toasts and compulsory meals.

SLIDE – WHAT DOES A CLUB DO

Many believe RI determines everything a club should do, when in fact there is very little about what a club should do. There is guidance on meeting management, a reference to the club bylaws being able to account for exceptions, requirements for Annual Meetings and Board meeting.

[Sample below from relevant section of constitution – used to speak to bullet points]

Article 7 Meetings

Section 1 — Regular Meetings.

(a) *Day and Time.* This club shall hold a regular weekly meeting on the day and time set in the bylaws.

(b) *Method of Meeting.* Attendance may be in person, by telephone, online, or through an online interactive activity. An interactive meeting shall be considered to be held on the day that the interactive activity is posted.

(c) *Change of Meeting.* For good cause, the board may change a regular meeting to any day between the preceding and following regular meetings, to a different time of the regular day, or to a different place.

(d) *Cancellation.* The board may cancel a regular meeting for these reasons:

- (1) a holiday, or during a week that includes a holiday;
- (2) in observance of the death of a member;

(3) an epidemic or a disaster that affects the whole community; or

(4) an armed conflict in the community.

The board may cancel up to four regular meetings a year for causes not listed here, but may not cancel more than three consecutive meetings.

(e) *Satellite Club Meeting (When Applicable)*. If provided in the bylaws, a satellite club shall hold regular weekly meetings at a day, time, and place decided by its members. The day, time, and place of the meeting may be changed in a way similar to that provided for the club's regular meetings in section 1(c) of this article. A satellite club meeting may be cancelled for the reasons in section 1(d) of this article. Voting procedures shall be as provided in the bylaws.

(f) *Exceptions*. The bylaws may include provisions that are not in accordance with this section. A club, however, must meet at least twice per month.

Section 2 — Annual Meeting.

(a) An annual meeting to elect officers and present a mid-year report, including current year income and expenses, together with a financial report on the previous year, shall be held before 31 December, as provided in the bylaws.

(b) A satellite club shall hold an annual meeting of its members before 31 December to elect officers for the satellite club.

Section 3 — Board Meetings. Within 30 days after all board meetings, written minutes should be available to all members.

This is the 'WHAT' but 'HOW' you go about putting this all into practice is up to the club and its members. Let's look at some examples of different club models and ways of operating.

SLIDE – SATELLITE CLUB

The most recent club in the district, a satellite club, formed out of interested parties, who attended the Rotary Women Leadership brunch held in March this year. These friends of the Rotarians who invited them were so impressed by what they heard about Rotary they asked about joining. The Rotarian friend knew these people lived in different parts of Auckland but were connected through a common cause and that they would want to work together. Despite not being able to come together every week, they use technology and different ways of meeting.

SLIDE – PROJECT_BASED CLUB

This club started off as a satellite, one that developed from the passion of one member in the parent club, who wanted to teach the young people of Mangawhai how to sail. The satellite built its relationship with the community and drew interest to the point where, earlier this year it became a full club. Whilst the original project is still a key focus for them the club has taken on other projects in the community.

SLIDE – CAUSE-BASED CLUB

In April 2021, the United Nations declared drowning to be the number-one cause of preventable deaths around the world.

Aquatic educators and industry leaders who were committed to advancing access to quality swimming lessons came together to form a club with a focus in this area.

The Swimming Gift project, involves asking Rotary clubs to give US\$650 a year to support swimming lessons for primary school children.

The club has participated in two district grant projects, one in Uganda and the other in Thailand

SLIDE – CORPORATE-BASED CLUB

Past Governor, Andy Rajapakse (on the left of the photo) identified this building in his home town as a potential location for a Rotary club. He spoke to several companies within the Corporate Centre, identified a couple of people to drive the formation and developed a club which operates on-site. This enables young professionals to participate within their working day and not cut into family time at home.

You can read more about this club in the Rotary magazine here [Rotary mag story October 2022](#)

SLIDE – Mark Huddlestone

Have you seen this book?

The district bought one for every club and Governor Matt has been delivering them. If you haven't seen it – ask your President or just order it at Amazon.

Australian Rotarian, Mark Huddlestone shares his insights on why clubs struggle with membership and what can be done to turn them around.

You can find Mark on Facebook under 'Creatures of Habit' or Google for any of his YouTube videos

This link below takes you to a 27-minute presentation Mark gave in 2019 to an E-Club based in the USA. [Mark Huddlestone 2019 Why Rotary Struggles With Membership](#)

Central to that presentation are his top five reasons as to why Rotary has not been able to recruit against its losses over the last 20 years – rate of loss is steady, rate of addition has dropped.

Relevance – clubs are smaller, members are older, less are working, Our perceived capacity to network and serve has decreased If you can attract people, what are you offering them?

No longer attractive – to those we tended to target for membership. Need to change those things we have kept doing which aren't attractive anymore.

Volunteering landscape has changed – but Rotary hasn't changed its practises. The way we meet, the way we communicate, the way we do business.

Not focused on outcomes – obsessive about processes/ argue about meals, and venues and fines and collars and flags and where we sit. Focus on local projects, youth programmes, developing future leaders, helping those in need.

Too comfortable – we've become comfortable and apathetic.

Mark put his into action, leading the charter of Rotary Seaford in 2014. The club meets twice a month, on the first Thursday and third Sunday, providing some flexibility of options for its members. The venues are rotated and announced on the website home page and they also use Rotarian's homes or projects for meetings, providing more flexibility of options for members.

SLIDE – Keep, Stop, Start

For the club to be flexible and meet changing times - what are your club and members prepared to Keep, Stop, Start?

This involves a review of a variety of club operating aspects.

Have you asked your newer, possibly younger, participants, member partners or family members?

Can you get out of your own way?

SLIDE – Rotary ALUMNI PATH

If we think about Rotary Alumni and their potential evolutionary path, does the way our club operate make it possible for them to continue to be engaged or want to engage with Rotary.

SLIDE – Participate, Lead, Create, Join?

Earlier this month I spoke to the Rotary Youth Leadership Award attendees about Rotary, a sort of Rotary 101.

I encouraged them to connect with their sponsoring club or a Rotary club with which they felt connected. I said that Rotarians and Rotary clubs would be willing to work with them.

How confident are you that your club or your members could flex to accommodate these energetic, enthusiastic people?

SLIDE – Rotary Toolbox

Your Rotary Toolbox already contains a number of resources, tools and information and you can add to it.

Your Rotary International dues have helped build the My Rotary site and all the resources available on it. A number of which you have seen today.

There are others – and it's not all online – it also includes connections with other clubs, other Rotarians and the various District Leaders and their teams who are ready and willing to support Rotary's success.