

## **Checklist for Hosting a Chapter Council Meeting**

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It is important for the environment of Chapter Council weekends to be enjoyable and productive. Host-groups can handle the organization and support of the quarterly meeting in any way that works well for them. The following checklist is provided as a guide, especially for first time hosts.

### **High Level Roles**

The Chapter Council Vice-chairperson oversees Chapter Council meeting preparation. Responsibilities include confirming that preparations for the coming meeting are on track, to emphasize the importance of good meetings, to post the meeting notice to the list serve [chaptercouncil@cnps.org](mailto:chaptercouncil@cnps.org) , to receive requests for meeting rooms for committee meetings in order to present the host chapter with a comprehensive list of rooms needed, and to serve as a contact for questions.

The Chapter Council Chairperson is responsible for the agenda of the Chapter Council meeting, although the hosting chapter plans evening speaker, field trips, etc.

The CNPS State Office handles centralized support functions such as gathering of meal reservations and the mailing of meeting materials.

Chapter Hosts do... well, just about everything else!

### **The Checklist**

1. Select initial representatives from chapter host group. (Chapter)
2. CC Vice-chair meets with the representatives from the chapter-host group (usually done at a Council quarterly meeting) a year prior to the meeting that group will host. A guide or checklist is provided to the host group.
3. Find potential sites and building(s) to host meetings. Look for free sites. State can absorb costs in the low to mid hundreds of dollars if the site is especially conducive to successful meetings. (Chapter)

Rooms needed:

The Chapter Council meeting will be attended by 40-50 people.

The Saturday dinner usually has 35-40 people (60-80 in Berkeley)

The Board of Directors needs a meeting room—this may be at the same site as the Saturday meeting, in a member's home, or elsewhere.

Board, Council and Program committees may wish to meet and require meeting space.

4. Determine food needs for Friday evening, Saturday morning snacks, lunch and dinner. The Saturday night dinner price should be kept under \$20. Find food sources, local restaurants or caterers as needed. Attendees pay for own meal costs, with central office assisting in mailing out meal reservation forms. (Chapter)
    - Lunch can either be at the meeting, or nearby. As attendees pay for their own meals, this requires some coordination with the office if it is on site.
    - Dinner again is paid for by the attendees (except the honorary guests at the December banquet). Buffets or sit-downs can work equally well.
  5. Select activities you would like to provide and highlight for the weekend: local attractions for delegate family and friends and any CNPS member, classes or seminars for all members on Saturday afternoon, hikes, tours, visits to local botanical interests, etc. (Chapter)
  6. Estimate number and size of rooms needed. Will the board of directors or program groups have Friday sessions? Will breakout sessions be held concurrently during primary CC meeting? Will concurrent afternoon classes or seminars be held? Where will social hour and dinner with presentation be held? Is the dinner and presentation open to all members or primarily CC meeting attendees and their guests? Will Sunday morning meetings or presentations be given? The main CC meeting itself usually has 40 to 50 attendees. (Chapter)
  7. Reserve meeting site building or rooms. Discuss insurance coverage with state office. (Chapter, state office)
  8. Find speaker for Saturday evening presentation. (Chapter)
  9. Set up meal catering and other food arrangements. (Chapter)
  10. Finalize activity arrangements. (Chapter)
  11. Determine materials, supplies, equipment needed and obtain: digital projector, display screen, extension cords, slide projector, large note paper board and easel and markers, signs, tables and chairs, microphone and speaker? (Chapter)
    - (Council Chair and vice-Chair)
    - Amenities for meeting rooms\*:
      - High speed internet access is nice for presentations
      - Adequate AV connections for computers, projectors, etc. and adequate screens are a help
- \*These may not be necessary, especially if their loss is offset by being in a rustic setting more attuned to our natural history leanings.
12. If not already started, create a plan with activities, time, location, responsible person, and equipment needs for the whole weekend. Gather volunteers for weekend tasks. (Chapter)

13. Mailing Packet #1: The first information packet goes to a fairly broad group and is sent out about 1 month ahead of the meeting. Information is assembled by the chapter council chair or vice chair with the hosting chapter: location, date, time, agenda highlights and focus topics, meal options (including order form if appropriate), lodging options, speaker information, field trips, map, and who to contact for more information. Office staff copies and collates materials and US mails the packets. Recipients include Chapter Council representatives, the board of directors, staff and program directors. When the meeting has an emphasis on a particular subject, chapter leads associated with the topic also receive packets (for example a focus on rare plants.) We have not relied on email to ensure delivery of this information, but email can be used as a concurrent option or to reach an audience beyond those already stated. (Chapter, CC Officers, state office)
14. Mailing Packet #2: The agenda packet is sent about two weeks prior to the meeting. Information is assembled by the chapter council chair or vice chair and includes the agenda, background material for presentations, plant policy issues to be discussed, the executive director's report, program reports and handouts. The executive director is responsible for making certain these are ready by the deadline. Office staff copies and collates materials and US mails the packets. The agenda mailing goes to CC delegates, board members and program directors. The CC Chair can request that staff or other individuals receive packets as well. Additional email packets can be sent to a wider audience at the discretion of the Chapter Council Chairperson. (Chapter, CC Officers, state office)
15. Post CC agenda on the CNPS website (not the password protected section, but the public section). Send information [webteam@cnps.org](mailto:webteam@cnps.org) with an explanation of where to post it. (CC officers)
16. State office collects meal reservations and money. A final count is provided to the chapter host on a prearranged date with the caterer. Host provides meal counts to food supplier. (State office, Chapter)
17. Chapter Council Weekend: Friday, Saturday, Sunday. Follow activity plan.
18. Post minutes written by CC Secretary on website. (CC officers)
19. Finalize payments with vendors and reimbursements with state. (Chapter, state office)
20. Thank volunteers. (Chapter)
21. Hosts, CC vice chair and hosts for next meeting update guide from what was learned through the process. (Chapter, CC officers)