

Organizing A Hunting Club

The popularity of hunting clubs in Alabama grows each year. Hunting clubs offer their members several advantages not available to independent hunters. Members cite fellowship, opportunities to actively manage resources, and an increased sense of safety and security while hunting as primary reasons for joining clubs.

The longevity and success of a hunting club often depend on how it is organized. Establishing and following a constitution and a set of bylaws helps to ensure efficient operation and continued existence. Provisions and regulations, which are basic to most social clubs, should be contained in any club's constitution and bylaws. The suggestions in this publication apply primarily to large hunting clubs, but most provisions will benefit clubs of all sizes.

The constitution of a hunting club should contain provisions for the following: 1) name; 2) objectives; 3) membership; 4) officers; 5) board of directors; 6) meetings of the club; 7) financial matters; 8) amendments; and 9) bylaws.

Name

Select a name that will identify the club and distinguish it from all other such clubs in the county or state.

Example:

The name of this club shall be The Silver Creek Sportsmen's Club.

Objectives

Clearly state the club's objectives in the constitution.

Example:

The objectives of this organization are:

1) To create, foster, and promote the ideals of true sportsmanship and to actively manage, protect, conserve, and hunt white-tailed deer and Eastern wild turkey.

2) To cooperate with all local, state, and federal

agencies and other organizations similarly dedicated to the welfare of these and other wildlife resources.

Membership

Eligibility requirements for membership and how members will be brought in to the club should be clearly stated.

Example:

1) Any licensed hunter who meets the requirements set forth by this club shall be eligible for membership. (Each club should specify its own requirements.)

2) Members shall be selected by a majority vote of the board of directors.

3) Any child under legal age, whose parents or guardians are members in good standing, shall be an associate member without voting privileges and without payment of dues until reaching the age of 16.



Officers And Board Of Directors

In the constitution, include a description of the number and titles of officers in the club, the length of their service, their duties and responsibilities, and how and when they are to be elected.

The composition and powers of the board of directors should also be described in the constitution.

Example:

1) The officers of this organization shall be: president, 1st vice-president, 2nd vice-president, secretary-treasurer, and three directors.

2) The board of directors shall be composed of all elected officers.

3) Each officer will serve for a period of one year following a majority election during the July meeting.

4) Two-thirds of the members of the board of directors shall constitute a quorum for business transactions.

5) The powers of this club, expressed or implied, shall be vested in the board of directors.

a. It shall constitute the executive body of this club and its action may be final, subject only to review by the membership.

b. It shall have general management control of the business property and funds of the club.

Meetings

State in the constitution when and how often club meetings will be held.

Example:

1) The club shall hold its meetings on the second Tuesday of each month (or quarter).

2) Two-thirds of the directors and one-half of the additional members shall constitute a quorum at regular meetings.

Financial Matters

Clearly specify matters regarding dues, the fiscal year, and the handling of finances.

Example:

1) Membership dues shall be set by the board of directors and are payable by July 1 of each year.

2) The fiscal year of the club will begin on July 1 and end on June 30.

3) The secretary-treasurer shall make a full accounting of the clubs finances as often as directed by the board of directors. A statement shall be prepared, in acceptable accounting form, showing receipts, disbursements, and balance of funds.

4) The books and records of the secretary-treasurer shall be open to inspection at any time by members of the club.

5) Checks for all disbursements of the club shall be signed by the secretary-treasurer and countersigned by the president.

Amendments

Allow a provision for amendments to the constitution.

Example:

This constitution may be amended at any regular meeting by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the members present.

Bylaws

Bylaws should govern the day-to-day operation of the club. Adapt the bylaws to local conditions that affect the club, its relationships with landowners, and its use of wildlife resources.

Avoid overly burdensome bylaws. Newly formed clubs often create too many bylaws and are unable to enforce them. Select bylaws that are basic to the clubs operation. Add others as needed when the club grows or changes. Consider the following concerns when writing bylaws:

1) Safety.

2) Guest regulations.

3) Land management.

4) Disciplinary procedures.

5) Specific hunting regulations.

6) Operational committees (e.g., dogs, clubhouse, firewood, food, safety).

7) Hunter-landowner relationships.



ANR-537

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This publication is intended to provide basic information on fee-hunting and the liability of landowners. It is not intended to substitute for competent legal assistance. Persons entering into a fee-hunting agreement should consult an attorney, their insurance agent, and other business advisors.

For more information, call your county Extension office. Look in your telephone directory under your county's name to find the number.

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UPS, 8M03, Rep. 12:96 ANR-537