



HARFORD BUSINESS NETWORK BYLAWS 2023

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i. **MISSION / INTENTION**

The Harford Business Network (HBN) is a Professional Networking Group based on fostering an environment of trust, and a commitment by each member to uphold the intentions of the group. The group is a collection of motivated business professionals, using the strength of relationships and trust, to promote each other's businesses by providing referrals and value.

ii. **ORGANIZATION**

The leadership of HBN consists of the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Membership, Events, and Technology. Ideas and suggestions from all HBN members are funneled through the Leadership, which investigates, consolidates, and presents results to the general membership for a vote. The Leadership reviews member complaints and determines the appropriate action to be taken. In addition, the coordination of a mentoring program for new members is handled by the Leadership.

i. **PRESIDENT**

The President coordinates the weekly meetings and oversees all of the committees. In addition, the President is the contact person for inquiries about HBN. The President may make, for the benefit of HBN, purchases with HBN funds of less than \$300 without the approval of the general membership of the Leadership committee.

ii. **VICE PRESIDENT**

The Vice President shall assume all of the responsibilities of the President in the President's absence.

iii. **TREASURER**

The Treasurer receives dues and manages expenses for HBN. The Treasurer also deposits funds into the HBN bank account. He/she is responsible for providing financial reports and balance to the Leadership Committee and membership. The Treasurer will also be responsible for submitting the 990N form annually to the Federal Government, when applicable. Responsible for invoicing existing members and new members for dues.

iv. **Membership**

The Membership chair is responsible for receiving and reviewing applications to establish any possible conflicts. He/she will also reach out to the applicant and have a one-on-one conversation and if needed ask another leadership member to do the same. The membership chair will send the applications to leadership for a formal vote. When the vote is approved, they will then submit the application to the treasurer for invoicing. Responsibilities include contacting Harford County Chamber to ensure all HBN members are current and paid chamber members.

v. SECRETARY

The Secretary will take attendance at meetings and then he/she will draft a meeting minutes summary to share with all HBN members.

Vi. EVENT COMMITTEE

The Event Committee's goal is to plan and implement 1 - 4 networking events annually. They will send out weekly reminders about the upcoming meeting to all the HBN members. This committee can operate with a chairperson.

vii. TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

The Technology Committee's goal is to provide updates to the
- HBN website. They will provide support and training.

iii. PROCEDURES

1. WEEKLY MEETINGS

The President of HBN facilitates the weekly meetings based on the designated week's topic (i.e. spreadsheet, open networking, speakers, etc..) Material issues (such as operational changes, spending of reserve dues, or large-scale projects) are voted on, and decided by, a majority vote of the general membership, where each member present can cast one vote, regardless of how many seats they are representing that day. In the event of a tie, the President shall be the tiebreaker. If member ideas or suggestions require additional information for a decision to be made, then the committees will gather and organize the information for a presentation so that a membership vote can take place.

11. COMMITTEES

Committee and Leadership members may step down at any time for any reason and a substitute volunteer member may be voted in by the majority vote of the HBN members.

Committee positions are held for a two-year term limit unless there are no new candidates, then an incumbent may run for additional years.

Elections will be held every December for all Leadership positions. To be eligible for a Leadership position, you must be a member of HBN for 90 days and must be a member in good standing with HBN dues and Chamber dues. If a member is unopposed for the position, then the three-month time period is waived.

iii. Disbursement of Money

Membership dues are deposited and held in a sole account at a bank within 10 miles of the meeting location. The Treasurer is responsible for the collection and disbursement of HBN money. The Treasurer, the President, or the Vice President is responsible for depositing money with the bank. Any disbursements require the signature of the Treasurer, the President, or the Vice President. If a member is authorized to spend money on behalf of HBN and uses his or her personal money, receipts may be turned in to the Treasurer for reimbursement. These expenditures must be approved in advance by HBN President and Vice President.

iv. MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

- i. Membership is held through the business entity.
- ii. Companies must be a member of the Harford County Chamber of Commerce, and in good standing with the Chamber. (Chamber dues paid).

HBN is associated with, but not sponsored by the Chamber.

XI. ATTENDANCE

Members are expected to attend all meetings, which are held every Wednesday morning at 8:00 am. Attendance is taken at each meeting.

Members are allowed to have 4 meetings unexpected absences from meetings during the January-December term providing this does not include the Chambers' Coffee and Connections monthly gathering. Professional development, business travel, ongoing projects, and other business-oriented events, that are approved by leadership are considered excusable absences. Attendance is tracked at every meeting by a member of the leadership. Members are required to have a substitute whenever possible, and doing so would excuse an absence. The substitute cannot be a current member of HBN or have any industry conflict with an existing member. If a member cannot attend a meeting, they are also required to contact the Secretary or President before the meeting commences. If the member fails to do this, then the meeting missed would be counted as a non-excused absence.

The meetings start at 8:00 AM with networking beginning at 7:50 AM. The meeting ends at 9:00 AM or 9:30 am, depending on the week.

Leave of absence, may be granted on a case-by-case basis for extenuating circumstances such as medical issues, military leave, HLA, or immediate family member death. This must be communicated to the President and Secretary immediately to be approved.

If Harford County Schools are delayed or closed, no meeting will take place.

iii. CHANGE OF EMPLOYER

If a member leaves their employer, the member must re-apply for membership for industry representative and has to re-pay dues. The member's previous employer may send a new representative with no additional dues owed until the membership is up for renewal. If a member leaves the employer, the incumbent company has first right of refusal as to if they are sending a new representative, only then can the exiting member then apply under the same category.

v. INDUSTRY RESTRICTIONS/ CONFLICTS

Members of HBN lock out their competition because they are the only representative of their industry. The Membership Committee reviews potential members for possible conflicts with existing members' industries. When a potential conflict exists, then the affected member is consulted to determine the extent of the conflict. If the affected member communicates that there is a conflict and his or her reasons are reasonable (solely determined by the Membership Committee), the application will be denied. On a case-by-case basis, overlap may occur within industries. These situations are the exception and only exist because an agreement was reached between the existing member, the potential member, and the Membership Committee.

If more than one application is submitted for the same industry, the Leadership Committee will review applications and decide on membership approval.

Members may apply for a second business they own. Leadership will review the application and approve the dual membership, with the understanding that second business must also be a Harford County Chamber member and is responsible for both dues. (Chamber dues and HBN dues)

VI. COMPLAINTS

Any Complaints about other HBN members must be received in writing (letter or email) by Leadership. Once Leadership receives the complaint, both members are interviewed to resolve any issues. Leadership will review the situation and determine appropriate action which could be revoking membership. If a complaint is filed by a member against someone in leadership, the leadership committee will meet and decide on appropriate action. If there are several complaints from multiple HBN members about one particular member and a recurring issue, the leadership will meet and decide how to best resolve the issue.

VII. DUES

Members are charged a yearly membership fee of \$100.00. If a potential member joins after January, then whatever date they joined will be their anniversary date and that date will be the date used the following year for their renewal date. Dues are used to support members through such activities as networking events, HBN marketing materials and networking materials. Dues are non-refundable if a member decides to leave the group whether voluntarily or involuntarily.

VIII. REVOCATION OF MEMBERSHIP

If a member does not meet the membership requirements listed above over a six-month period (January- June or July- December), then the Leadership committee will bring this to the attention of the member. The member is given another six months to meet the HBN requirements. If the requirements continue not to be met, then the membership may be revoked.

IX. GUESTS

attend at least two meetings before submitting their application. Once the application is submitted and while awaiting approval attendance is required.

X. ANNUAL REVIEW OF BYLAWS

By signing below, the member agrees, without prejudice, to honor the rules and bylaws set forth by HBN and agrees to all the expectations and conditions detailed in this Membership Agreement. For membership to stay in good standing, it is required that all members sign this agreement and provide a copy to The President or Vice Present in a timely manner.

Name: _____

Business Name: _____

Date: _____