

**OWS - Niagara Chapter
Policies and Procedures
Issue 0.38**

Revision number	Date	Reason for revision
0.1	May, 2006	Policies and Procedures received from Yvonne.
0.2	Jan 8, 2007	Update suggestions submitted for review by Executive.
0.3	Jan 9, 2007	Added a few more items for review by Executive.
0.4	Feb 1, 2007	Changes made after meeting about by-laws Jan 22, 2007.
0.5	Feb 6, 2007	Changes made based on minutes of Jan monthly meeting.
0.6	Mar 12, 2007	Changes made based on minutes of Jan monthly meeting.
0.7	Mar 20, 2007	Changes made based on discussion at March monthly meeting.
0.8	April 10, 2007	Added awards section.
0.9	May 6, 2007	Changes made based on discussion at April monthly meeting.
0.10	June 5, 2007	Changes made based on discussion at May monthly meeting.
0.11	Aug 8, 2007	Changes made based on discussion at July monthly meeting.
0.12	Nov 13, 2007	Changes made based on discussion at Oct monthly meeting.
0.13	Jan 2, 2008	Changes made based on discussion at Nov monthly meeting.
0.13a		Added question about need for statement on privacy protection.
0.14	Feb. 5, 2008	Changes made based on discussion at Jan monthly meeting.
0.15	March 10, 2008	Changes made after review meeting with Fred, Sue, Yvonne, Bruce, and Debbie
0.16	March 12, 2008	Changes made based on discussion at Feb monthly meeting.
0.17	April 12, 2008	Changes made based on discussion at March monthly meeting.
0.18	May 3, 2008	Changes made based on discussion at April monthly meeting.
0.19	Aug. 1, 2008	Changes made based on discussion at July monthly meeting.
0.20	Sept. 22, 2008	Changes made based on discussion at Aug monthly meeting.
0.21	March 19, 2009	Changes made based on discussion at Feb monthly meeting.
0.22	April 8, 2009	Changes made based on discussion at Mar monthly meeting.
0.23	May 1, 2009	Changes made based on discussion at April monthly meeting.
0.24	June 9, 2009	Changes made based on discussion at May monthly meeting.
0.25	Nov. 2, 2009	Changes made based on discussion at Sept. monthly meeting.
0.26	Nov. 26, 2009	Changes made based on discussion at Nov. monthly meeting.
0.27	Jan 13, 2010	Changes made based on discussion at Dec. monthly meeting.
0.28	Feb. 8, 2010	Changes made based on discussion at Jan. monthly meeting.
0.29	June 7, 2010	Changes made based on discussion at May monthly meeting.
0.30	July 28, 2010	Changes made based on discussion at July monthly meeting.
0.31	August 20, 2010	Changes made based on discussion about fees for planners.
0.32	Dec. 8, 2010	Changes made based on discussion at Nov monthly meeting.
0.33	April 26, 2011	Changes made based on discussion at March monthly meeting.
0.34	June 19, 2011	Changes made based on discussion at May monthly meeting.
0.35	January 23, 2012	Changes made based on discussion at by-laws review meeting held on January 17, 2012. Elected Officers and Membership Coordinator were present.
0.36	March 13, 2013	Changes made after discussions via email with Elected Officers.
0.37	March 19, 2013	Change made after meeting on March 19, 2013
0.38	Sept. 2, 2013	Change made after meeting on August 13, 2013

Policies and Procedures

This document outlines items which are outside of the scope of the By-laws of the Ontario Wine Society – Niagara Chapter (OWSNC) but guide the operation of the Niagara chapter of the OWS.

Definitions of terms:

Elected Officers – The people in the Niagara chapter holding the following positions: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Director of Events.

Operating Committee – The people who meet regularly to plan events and conduct the administrative business of the OWSNC. The Committee is made up of the Elected Officers, the Event Planners, and other interested people.

OWSTC – Ontario Wine Society – Toronto Chapter

The Secretary of the chapter will be responsible for maintaining updates decided upon at meetings and keeping the Policies up to date.

A. Due Diligence

1. Events:

We do our best to protect people at events.

a) Pourers are Smart Serve certified

- Pourers understand the effects of alcohol, how to identify a person who has had too much to drink, how to prevent people from becoming inebriated, and how to deal with a person who is inebriated.

b) Event planners are trained and know how to minimize risks.

- Stations are always manned. Wine is never left unattended so people pour for themselves.
- 1- 2 oz tasting portions are poured.

c) We send pre-event warnings about drinking and driving to attendees

- We always have that information on the registration form.
- Drives home will be arranged if the attendee has had too much to drink.

d) Activities at the event ensure utmost care:

- Everyone in attendance signs a waiver before they enter (states they're 19 or older and responsible for their own actions).
- We have spit cups, water and bread, along with other food available at all events.

2. Privacy protection:

- a) We strive to protect our members' identities. The OWS web site outlines the privacy protection policy.
- b) The Membership Coordinator sends notices to members using bcc (blind copy) to hide the email addresses from other recipients.

3. Financial

a) Expenditures:

- We follow the OWSNC By-laws regarding decisions on spending OWSNC funds. Requests for votes on financial issues may be done using email. Email replies are considered to be the same as voting in person.
- Decisions about expenditures on unique items, such as awards, are to be made before the end of a fiscal year.
- The OWSNC phone bill is paid from the same kind of funds that the Toronto Chapter uses to pay its phone bill (ie. if the Toronto Chapter uses Corporate funds, the Niagara chapter does too).

B. Event Planning

1. Refer to the Event Planning Guide for details on the Policies and Procedures regarding event planning.
2. Our goal is to break even financially each year. (For Toronto that is: + or - \$200. For Niagara that is: + or - \$100.)
3. The Director of Events keeps a running list of wineries that want to host an event and the wineries that we feel would be good settings.
4. Events can be held at non-Corporate member wineries; however, we favour Corporate Members to host our events.
5. We keep track of wineries that have hosted our events so as not to overuse or underuse wineries.

6. Events:

- a) At a tasting, introduce the following people to those in attendance:
 - the featured speaker[s]
 - honoured/special guests
 - new OWS members
 - staff of the winery hosting the event
 - event planner[s]
 - Operating Committee members
- b) At events, encourage responsible behaviour by:
 - o Making an announcement at the start of each event about the Smart Serve program and the responsible drinking policies that are in effect.
 - o Having non-alcoholic beverages available and pointing them out.
 - o Limiting tasting line-up limit to 8 - 10 tasting portions per person.
 - o Handling any problem attendees during the event (by a Smart-Serve certified attendee).
 - o Arranging a lag time between tasting and driving.
 - o Positioning a chapter representative at the exit door to screen people who are leaving to ensure intoxicated people do not drive.

C. Event Administration

1. If an event has a net-profit, we will not reimburse attendees. The funds become part of the OWSNC funds to be used as directed by a vote of the Elected Officers.
2. An event planner should be one of the following: a member of the OWS, an employee of a winery that is an Industry Member Winery, or a student at Brock University or Niagara College taking event planning or wine related courses.
3. The event planner (up to 2) attends the event they planned for free (up to a limit of \$40.00).
4. Vouchers are not to be accepted for fixed cost events. Planners of these events will pay for the fixed cost event but get free admission to the next event they attend free (up to a limit of \$40.00).
5. No shows or late cancellations – registration money will not be returned after the advertised last date to cancel. However, if a replacement attendee can be found with little effort, the member who has cancelled will be refunded their fee or if circumstances warrant, the fee will be returned minus expenses.

6. Allocation of funds to our event speakers may be made to a maximum of \$75 to spend on their expenses and/or gift certificate. Planner is to ask the Op.Comm. for funds over \$50, where needed. Guest speakers at OWS dinners do not get a complimentary gift certificate because they get dinner at the event.
7. OWS members and one guest are guaranteed attendance at events up to one week before the event. After that, the event is open to non-members.
8. A person who is considering joining is allowed to attend one tasting event at the member price in order to get a feel for the club.
9. Event planners must try to contact the Director of Events prior to the monthly Operating Committee meeting to give an update on planning activity so a report can be made by the Director of Events to the Operating Committee. Reports at meetings should entail: outstanding items, problem areas and questions. The notice for the next event can be read to the group for input.
10. Pictures taken at the event may be forwarded to our photographer to be posted on the web site. The OWSNC photographer (or delegate) will be allowed to attend events at 50% off the normal member fee up to a maximum of \$20.00.
11. The Director of Marketing will send notices of events to Industry contacts who might like to attend. This position may be held by someone in the Toronto chapter.
12. People involved with businesses which are tangential to the wine industry (for example, manufacturers of cheese, jelly, and chocolates or retailers or makers of wine cellar accessories) may be invited to attend the reception part of an event to talk to members about their products.
13. If event planners choose, they can be reimbursed for mileage incurred when picking up wine and supplies for events. The rate is \$.35 per km. The Treasurer can reimburse them, if less than \$20. The Op.Comm must approve charges greater than \$20. This policy will be reviewed at Business Plan review meetings.
14. People must be of legal drinking age to attend events.
15. We must get approval from Toronto if a wine writer wants to attend an event. The Wine Council pays for them through the Toronto chapter.

D. Membership

1. New members receive a voucher with a one year expiry date for 50% off a tasting event, worth no more than the price of membership. Referrals from Winery to Home do not receive a voucher.

2. If a new member registers after the August tasting, their membership extends for the rest of that year and the next.
3. The third reminder to renew membership includes:
 - a) a warning stating “Your renewal is past due.”
 - b) a list of events they’ll miss if they don’t renew.
4. Once the third renewal notice has been sent, a current membership count is done and presented at the next meeting of the Operating Committee.
5. **Complimentary memberships:**
 - Given to Niagara College Award recipient each year, and other people whom the Elected Officers approve of by a vote (such as retiring Officers who are given Life-time memberships).
 - No limit per year but given out with discretion.
 - OWSTC gives complimentary memberships to wine writers and industry contacts, etc. We honour their complimentary members and they honour ours.
6. **Honorary memberships:**
 - Chiltern club (UK)
7. **Exchange memberships:**
 - Winetasters – we can attend their events at member prices and vice versa.
8. A Rejoining member (a person who allowed their membership to lapse before renewing) can rejoin for \$30 (\$25 with email only). They do not get a free tasting voucher like a new member does.
9. **New Member Welcome package** includes:
 - a) Welcome letter from the President
 - b) Assortment of tasting vouchers we’ve gathered from wineries
 - c) OWS tasting event voucherThe Treasurer informs the Membership Coordinator when registration payment has been received so the Welcome package can be sent.
10. **First event**
 - when a new member attends their first event, they are given an OWS pin. People who are not members of our chapter may purchase a pin for \$5.00.
11. Members who refer 1 new member are given a voucher with a one year expiry date for 50% off a tasting event.
12. Applicants for membership will be asked if they belong to a Corporate member winery before joining. If so, they may wish to attend events at the member price as part of the Corporate member agreement. They may still choose to become an individual member for the following reasons:
 - Receive postings, newsletter and extra postings directly from us in a timely fashion

13. New members can indicate if they do not want their photos published (posted to OWS web sites etc.). Waivers will be part of Membership renewal forms and registration at events.
14. Niagara College Student membership - \$20 fee. No winery tasting vouchers and no 50% off a tasting event voucher are included with that.

E. Industry membership

- **Benefits:**
 - a) Information about them is positioned first in newsletter, ahead of non-Corporate members' notices.
 - b) Extra postings about them will be passed along to members by the Membership Coordinator between issues of the newsletter.
 - c) We try to use the wines from Corporate member wineries that don't have the facilities to accommodate a tasting at the Social Event where we have a variety of wines for our members to try.
- Corporate membership fee is either:
 - per winery (fee is \$150)
 - for wineries that belong to an umbrella corporation (fee is \$250)
- Niagara College Corporate membership includes the faculty, employees, and students of the Viticulture program.
- 4. Marketing Director in Toronto handles winery requests to join program. If we are approached by a winery, we are to let our President know and he/she'll forward request to Toronto.
- 5. Industry member award - to recognize individuals at wineries who have stood out in their relationship with us. We will invite recipient(s) to an event with a guest for presentation of the award certificate. Awards will be given when we feel recognition is appropriate.

F. Meetings

1. A designated Elected Officer is responsible for making every effort to notify Operating Committee members and confirm their attendance at monthly meetings.
2. Elected Officers must attend a minimum of seven Operating Committee meetings per year.
3. All Operating Committee members should host at least one Operating Committee meeting annually, if possible.
4. Hosts of an OWSNC meeting will be reimbursed up to \$7.50 per attendee for food and can buy up to 3 bottles of wine (costing no more than \$15 per bottle) for use at a meeting. However, OWS cellar wines are to be used, if there is suitable wine available. The host submits receipts to the Treasurer for wine and food purchased.

5. The standard agenda of the meetings of the Operating Committee should include:
 - a) reports from the Treasurer, Membership Communications Coordinator, Director of Events, and Cellar Master
 - b) an update on any info coming out of the Toronto chapter
 - c) an update on distribution of OWS brochures at wineries and which wineries need brochures
 - d) Business Plan review – to occur three times a year (Feb, May and November)
 - e) Request by new committee members for copies of By-laws etc.
6. Agenda and previous meeting minutes will be emailed to members of the Operating Committee at least one week before each monthly meeting. All event planners need not attend each meeting. The planners of the past event and the next event are expected to attend.
7. Op. Comm members can be reimbursed for mileage incurred when travelling a great distance to meetings. The rate is \$.35 per km. The Treasurer can reimburse them, if less than \$20. The Op.Comm must approve charges greater than \$20. This policy will be reviewed at Business Plan review meetings.

G. Incoming phone calls and email

1. The person who receives Wine Line calls will forward any messages about events to the Membership Coordinator and the Director of Events as appropriate.
2. Whenever the Wine Line will be unattended, the Treasurer will check for messages and deal with them.

H. Awards

1. Toronto chapter

- a) Brock University
- b) OWS Pioneer
- c) Winemaker of the Year

2. Niagara chapter

- a) OWS Niagara Chapter: Faculty Award
Rules: (see the *Terms of Award* document given to Yvonne Trout when the program began)
 - Amount of award to be voted on each year by Elected Officers
 - To be given before end of OWSNC fiscal year

- Candidates are: second year students in the Winery and Viticulture Technician program, who intend to continue, with good academic grades and who contribute to the program and to the class. The recipient cannot have received another monetary award during the previous academic year.
- Winner chosen by Niagara College Faculty
- Niagara College administers the award. It is not given directly to student by the OWSNC.

b) Exceptional Hospitality Award

- given ad hoc to staff at wineries who support us and provide exceptional service to us. We give a framed plaque and a gift which will be approved by the Operating committee.

I. Miscellaneous

1. Elected Officers must attend a minimum of 3 tastings or events per year. The first tasting they attend must be within four months of being elected so they better understand the planning and execution of OWSNC events.
2. Elected Officers can, at their discretion, have their names posted on the OWS web site.
3. Elected Officers who resign or are not re-elected should spend time with the person who fills their role to make sure the new person understands the background and current issues of the OWS.
4. All Operating Committee members should be responsible for planning an event or performing a task for the OWSNC in order to remain on the Operating Committee.
5. The President gives a welcome package to new members of the Operating Committee. It includes:
 - a) Previous meeting minutes which are relevant to current issues. The By-laws, Policies and Procedures, and Event Planning Guide are also available on request.
6. **OWS brochures:**
 - a) If a restaurant offers a good selection of Ontario wines, Operating Committee members can ask the owner/manager if they want to display OWS brochures. Inform the web site editor, if they accept. Their name will be posted on the OWS web site.
 - b) Operating Committee members can distribute brochures to wineries when they visit them and report this to the person who is tracking brochure updates at wineries. That person can report the wineries which most need brochures at monthly meetings.
7. **Presentations at AGM/Social Event:**

Awards may be presented to members or others, such as:

 - a) **Presidential award:** For a person on the Operating Committee who consistently goes the extra mile. Maximum \$75.00.

b) Attendance: To the OWSNC member who has attended the most events. Gift worth \$25.00 and a voucher for a free tasting event.

8. Donations to organizations

We prefer to donate wine or money to charitable organizations rather than private groups.

9. When an Elected Officer attends an official function such as the Cuvee Awards, half of their hotel room fee, if any, will be reimbursed by the Niagara chapter or the price of a taxi ride home, up to a limit of \$40 with receipt.

J. Cellar

1. Every year the Operating Committee will propose long term goals for the cellar with future tastings in mind and then acquire wine with at least one of these goals in mind.
2. Members of the Operating Committee should assess cellar wines for “ageability” by visiting the wineries that produced them regularly.
3. Buy up to 4 bottles at a time (3 for an event and 1 for tasting/spare).
4. Disposition of wines to be reviewed at Cellar Committee meetings.
5. Cellar Committee to meet twice a year, before Social event and after yearly event planning meeting, usually held in Sept.
6. Cellar inventory lists are to be brought to every meeting of the Operating Committee.
7. Corporate funds are allocated yearly for the purchase of wines for the cellar and other items. Each year, the Operating Committee will decide how to spend the money with advice from the Cellar Committee.
8. According to the By-laws: The Treasurer will prepare annual financial statements and inventories of wine and other assets according to current accounting practices (as per the by-laws). The Cellar Master will perform an annual inventory of the cellar with the Treasurer.

9. Buying wine:

a) Cellar-valued wines:

- Two members of cellar committee must approve before we purchase a wine for cellaring
- No price ceiling per bottle
- No wine cellar value cap

b) Non-cellar-valued wines:

- No price ceiling per bottle to be used for an event; however, \$15 limit, if bottle to be used at a meeting.
- No purchases are needed until further notice
- Must be purchased for events planned within next fiscal year

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