

REGION XIII CHAPTER HYBRID MEETING PLANNING HANDOUT

2020-2021 MOWW ACTIVITY SEASON – REGION XIII EDUCATION & TRAINING PROGRAM PRODUCT

This training handout provides an overview and summary on planning and executing a Chapter combined conventional and Hybrid online meeting event. Excerpts provided in this document were sourced from the Greater El Paso Chapter “Guide for Hybrid Chapter Meetings” paper submitted for organization sharing and reference use by all Regional fellow Chapters. It also serves as a conceptual reference source for further training activity considerations for the Region XIII Education & Training Program (ETP) and creation of associated training module presentation package development. We are most grateful to the Greater el Paso Chapter for their invaluable assistance in compiling the information provided in this Region XIII ETP handout document.

Concept Development:

When the Greater El Paso Chapter of MOWW wanted to start meeting again when the Covid-19 restrictions allowed, we had only a general idea of how to go about it. Most of the Staff had used Zoom video conferencing software and one member of the staff had used the software to instruct his students. We had some fits and stumbles, but we believe we have devised a system which allows our Companions to meet either in person or join the meeting via Zoom. Here is a short description of what we use and how we conduct our hybrid meetings:

Resources:

Software: Paid Zoom subscription which allows unlimited sessions and many users. Two members of the staff have either personal or work paid Zoom subscriptions.

WiFi Source: You must have a GOOD internet connection. Spotty connections cause the software to reboot, freeze, or loose sound. We first used the Applebee’s WiFi but have moved to an iPhone WiFi Hotspot.

Meeting Room: Since the Staff will be meeting in person with Companions, we used the meeting room at our local Applebee’s Grill and Bar. The room is separate from the restaurant, is quiet, and allows a bit of social distancing besides allowing us to eat from the restaurant’s menu. The lighting in the room must be controllable to prevent too much light from washing out the video images streamed on Zoom.

Hardware:

1. A laptop computer or tablet that can run the software and use external portable speakers.
2. Portable computer speakers hooked to the computer. This allows companions who are on Zoom to be heard by those in the meeting room.
3. A USB Webcam with directional microphone. The webcam hooks into the computer/tablet to provide video of the meeting space instead of the person behind the computer. We center the camera on the area where the Chapter Commander will conduct the meeting.
4. Wireless headset microphone with amplifier. The Commander wears this headset which amplifies his voice so the USB directional mic can receive good sound quality which can be heard on-line and in the room.
5. Smartphone with WiFi hotspot. We tried using the restaurant WiFi connection, but it was too spotty. The Zoom conference uses a lot of data, but tests indicated that it was not too data intensive for a normal phone plan if used just once a month.
6. Extension cord with multiple outlets to power computers and speakers.

Producer: One person must direct the in person and the Zoom meeting. He is the Zoom meeting host or cohost. The director tells the Commander when to start, mutes Companions on-line until they need to speak, focuses the Zoom meeting on the person speaking or the video feed from the meeting room. In case of WiFi problems, the director pauses the in-person meeting until the internet connection is restored.

The Schedule:

1. A week before the meeting date the Jr. Vice sends email reminders to all Companions who have provided email addresses about the upcoming meeting. This email contains the Zoom meeting address and password. This address and password are NOT posted on the website or in the newsletter to prevent unwanted participants from gaining access.
2. A day before the meeting a second email reminder about the meeting is sent.
3. On meeting day, the Staff arrives at Applebee's about an hour prior to the meeting start time (normally 12 noon). We arrange the room, put up our flags, order lunch and set up our equipment that is listed above.
4. We eat lunch, visit, and take care of last-minute business.
5. At approximately 15 minutes before the meeting start time, we bring our equipment on-line, check sound levels, and visit with our Zoom companions as they sign in.
6. If our speaker is via Zoom, we use this time to check his connection, remind him of his place on the agenda and introduce the speaker to the Staff.
7. At the scheduled start time, the meeting kicks off with our standard meeting agenda: Commander's Welcome, Benediction, Pledge of Allegiance, the Order's Preamble and introduction of guests.
8. The meeting continues as a normal meeting and where applicable, pauses are taken to request comments or questions from the Zoom companions or the companions in the audience.
9. Once the meeting is complete, the producer signs off the meeting on Zoom and the equipment is broken down. We return the meeting room to its original table arrangement and we are finished for the month.

Equipment:

This is the actual equipment we use, but any similar equipment should work fine.

1. Microsoft Surface Book II with WiFi network connection
2. Webcam with Microphone for Desktop, 1080P HD USB Webcam Live Streaming Laptop PC Computer Web Camera by Samcorn (purchased on Amazon for \$30.00)
3. iPhone 11 to use as a hotspot.
4. ZOWEETEK Voice Amplifier with UHF Wireless Microphone Headset, 10W 1800mAh Portable Rechargeable PA system Speaker (available from Amazon for about \$40)
5. Wired laptop speakers with 3.5mm jack from Walmart (around \$10)
6. We would like to be able to project the Zoom meeting on a large screen or TV so in person Companions can view the Zoom participants.

