



**SPORTS FIELD**  
MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

[www.sportsfieldmanagement.org](http://www.sportsfieldmanagement.org)

# Leadership and Governance

## Introduction

The success of any organization is dependent on sustainable leadership and governance. Leadership is very important in a volunteer group especially in an association where different individuals cycle in and out of leadership roles. Having a structure in place where roles and terms are defined helps with continuity as the leadership changes over.

## Ideas for Consideration

### Officer and Board makeup

Many Chapters use an officers/ board set up similar to the national SFMA structure with President, Vice President/ President-Elect, Secretary/Treasurer, and Immediate Past President positions that make up the officer slate. These positions are typically elected/approved by the membership. These roles may be limited to practitioners only.

Most Chapters also have a Board of Directors. These boards vary in size and makeup. Some Chapters follow the SFMA model with a director from various membership segments plus At-Large positions. Other Chapters have only At-Large positions. Most Chapters have at least one board spot for sponsors.

### Terms and succession plans

Terms for both officers and board members vary. One way to ensure continuity of leadership for boards is to establish a succession plan much like the national SFMA whereas the Secretary/Treasurer position is voted on by the membership. Once voted into the Secretary/Treasurer position, that individual serves a one-year term, then moves into the President-Elect role for another year before moving into the President's role the 3rd year. After serving as President for a year, the individual ascends to the Immediate Past President position for a final year. This plan sets a full slate of officers where leadership has continuity over several years. The President is involved in a full

two years of understanding and involvement in various aspects of the organization before assuming the President's duties. The drawback to this system is the length of obligation; many members may not want to be locked into a minimum 4-year commitment.

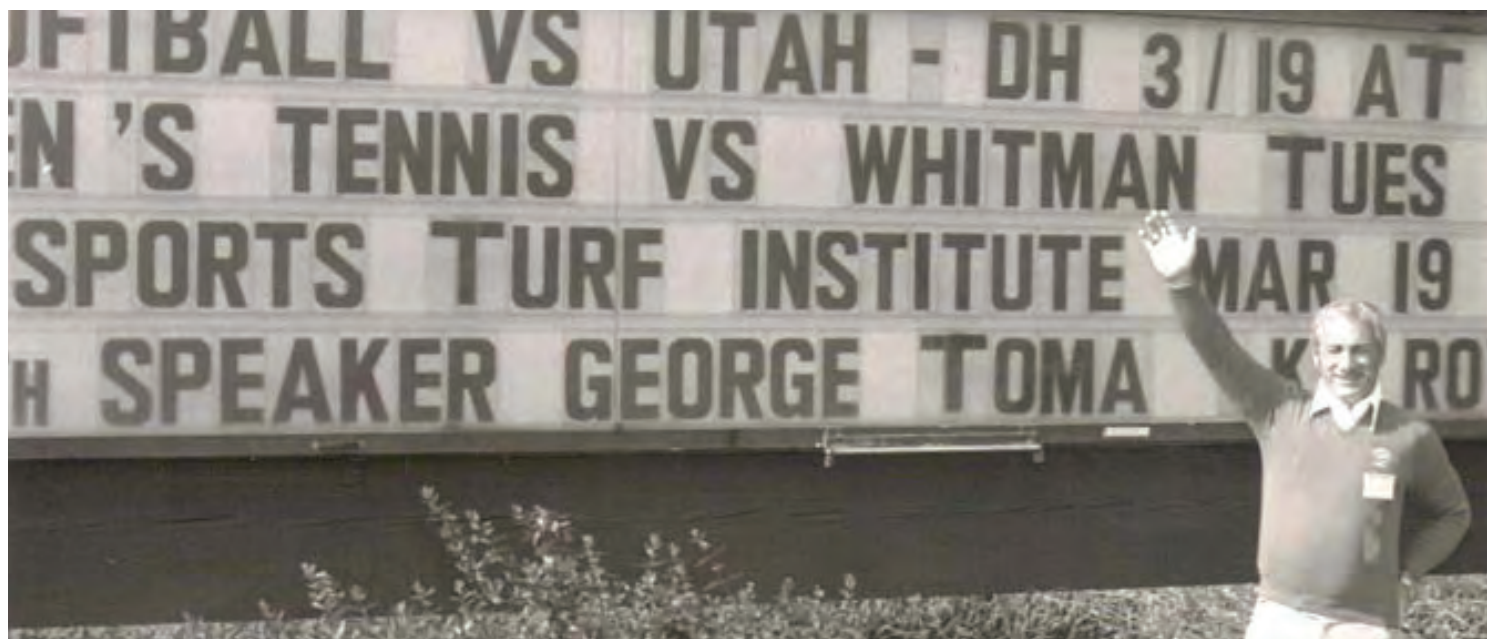
Board terms may vary from one year to unlimited.

### Sponsor involvement

Most Chapters do not allow sponsors to be officers unless there is a designated commercial position. Sponsor involvement in leadership and directing the organization is highly recommended, which is why most Chapters have one or more board spots dedicated to commercial membership. Especially important when forming a Chapter, commercial members typically have the resources to help fund the Chapter by helping with marketing materials, using salespeople to invite their clients to join the Chapter and the flexibility within their schedules and the support of their employers to focus on Chapter development.

### Committees

Committees are a great way to spread the workload while engaging more membership in leadership roles. Committee work is a great way for members to get a taste of leadership roles before stepping into board or officer service.



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