Leadership Team Guidelines

Committees and Focus Areas

Leadership Team Guidelines are reviewed regularly. Changes to the guidelines are recommended to the Executive Committee and approved by the mParks Board of Directors.

Informal gatherings of interested individuals are not considered part of the Leadership Team structure. While mParks encourages members to build friendships and connect outside of regularly scheduled activities, these gatherings are independent of the organization. mParks assumes no responsibility for activities outside official platforms and events.

Committees

Advocate l Teach l Inspire l Unite

mParks Committees are vital to supporting the Association's mission and values. They create a structured way for members to share their expertise, work together on important initiatives, and ensure that mParks' efforts meet the needs of communities across Michigan. Committees are organized around the Association's four pillars—Advocate, Teach, Inspire, and Unite. Each committee is tasked with advancing the mission of mParks and ensuring its work aligns with the Strategic Plan.

Advocate – Advances the field of parks and recreation by influencing policy, engaging in advocacy, and building strategic relationships with key decision-makers. Monitors legislation, recommends positions to the Board of Directors, and champions resources that support local, state, and national priorities.

Teach – Enhances member career growth by providing training, workshops, and professional learning opportunities. Creates plans that support member development through targeted education, certification guidance, and access to valuable resources for professionals at all levels.

> **Certification Sub-Committee**
> Focuses on professional credentialing and ensures that mParks' education offerings meet certification requirements.
>
> **Conference Sub-Committee**
> Plans and executes the mParks Conference and Trade Show, fostering education, networking, and professional growth opportunities

Inspire – Elevates the profession by fostering meaningful connections, celebrating member achievements, and recognizing excellence. Facilitates peer engagement, strengthens the member experience, and oversees the awards nomination and selection process for professional, organizational, and community service awards.

> **Hall of Fame Sub-Committee**
> Recognizes and honors outstanding contributions and lifelong dedication to the parks and recreation profession. The Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony and Banquet is held every other year in October, during odd-numbered years.

Unite – Builds connection and belonging across the parks and recreation community. Promotes inclusive practices and equitable policies, creates strategies to expand diverse participation, and supports both internal and external DEI efforts to cultivate welcoming environments for all.

> **Membership Sub-Committee**
> Dedicated to advancing membership growth and community engagement by collaborating on outreach strategies, sharing best practices, and promoting the association to new audiences statewide.

Representation

Each committee includes eleven official members: a chairperson, the mParks Director at Large, regional representatives from Southern Michigan Recreation and Park Association (SMRPA), West Michigan Recreation and Park Association (WMRPA), Northwest Recreation and Parks Association (NWRPA), Northeast Recreation and Park Association (NERPA), Wayne and Monroe (WAM), Knuckles Knorth, and the Michigan Association of County Park and Recreation Officials (MACPRO), along with two Strategic Appointments chosen by the President.

Terms of Service

All regional groups and MACPRO hold permanent seats on mParks Committees to ensure broad representation across the state, maintain a consistent voice, and give professionals leadership opportunities within mParks. Each group rotates its individual representative every two years to encourage shared leadership and diverse viewpoints. The committee's terms of service align with the mParks Board leadership cycle, from October 1 to September 30, and last for two years. The President may appoint up to two Strategic members for a term of two years. The Committee Chair may recommend an mParks member for a strategic appointment to the President.

To establish staggered terms, half of the initial appointments in 2024 will be for one year, and the other half will be for two years. After that, all appointments are made for two-year terms on a rotating cycle. Even years are assigned to NWRPA, SMRPA, WMRPA, and MACPRO. Odd Years include Knuckles Knorth, NERPA, and WAM.

Representation Vacancies

If a regional group is unable to fill its designated position, the President, in consultation with the Committee Chair, may appoint a representative to serve a one-year term. Vacancies caused by non-participation or resignation can be filled by another member from the same region or by a candidate recommended by the Chair and appointed by the President. A leave of absence may be requested by a member or granted by the President when necessary, ensuring flexibility without compromising the committee’s effectiveness.

Quorum and Voting

A quorum requires two-thirds of the voting committee members to be present. Each committee position has full voting rights except the Director at Large. In case of a tie, the mParks Director at Large will cast the tie-breaking vote.

Meetings

Committee meetings are held virtually to improve accessibility. Hybrid meetings are encouraged when they boost participation, and meeting locations should never impede involvement. Committee meetings are not held monthly. The suggested committee meeting schedule is every other month or quarterly. The Advocacy Committee welcomes all members interested in policy discussions, while the Teach, Inspire, and Unite Committees are designed for more specific participation aligned with strategic priorities. Focus Areas may be asked to implement committee recommendations, ensuring consistency with the Strategic Plan.

Commitment

Active participation is crucial for the success of mParks Committees. Members are expected to attend meetings, arrive on time, and remain actively engaged. The president may declare a member’s seat vacant if they miss three sessions. Members can request a leave of absence from the President when necessary.

Subcommittees and Task Forces

Committees can establish subcommittees or task forces to facilitate their work. The President creates subcommittees based on the Chair's recommendation for ongoing meetings. The Chair can directly form task forces to focus on specific projects. Both may include members outside the standing committee, if they are active mParks members in good standing. Each subcommittee or task force must appoint a liaison who reports to the committee.

Leadership Positions

The Chair leads the Committee. Committee Chairs are part of the mParks Leadership Team but are not members of the Board of Directors. The Executive Board recommends appointing a Committee Chair to the mParks Board of Directors for approval.

The Chair provides leadership and guidance for the Committee. Responsibilities include preparing quarterly board reports, meeting with the mParks staff liaison before each meeting, setting the meeting agenda, sending meeting notifications (via group message and posting on the newsfeed) one week in advance using the mParks CommUnity, and leading and facilitating committee meetings. The Chair also collaborates with the staff liaison to share updates and help keep their mParks CommUnity informed.

Committee members choose a Vice Chair and a Secretary during their first meeting of the year. The Vice Chair supports the Chair and steps in when necessary. The Secretary is responsible for maintaining a record of the meeting and communicating to the mParks Staff Liaison. The Vice Chair and Secretary positions are for a one-year term (October 1 – September 30).

Pathway to Leadership

Members interested in serving as a Committee Chair must submit a Letter of Interest or Application to the mParks Executive Board. Applications open in April and close at the end of May. Candidates must have served on the committee for at least one year to be eligible for this award. The Executive Board recommends appointing a Chair to the mParks Board of Directors. After Board approval, the President will notify all applicants of the final decision.

Focus Areas

Focus Areas are an essential part of engaging the Association's membership. They provide networking and information exchange space while ensuring members remain connected to the Strategic Plan. Focus Areas also serve as a sounding board for the Association, creating opportunities for professionals in similar roles or interest areas to collaborate, share best practices, and support one another.

Focus Area Leadership

Focus Areas are organized around specific topics, roles, or professional interests. Each Focus Area is responsible for aligning its work with the Strategic Plan while fostering a welcoming and inclusive community.

Representation

Focus Areas are inclusive and accessible to all mParks members in good standing, providing opportunities for active engagement and leadership within the Association.

Terms of Service

Focus Areas have no terms of service for mParks members.

Quorum and Voting

The number of members present at the election meeting constitutes a quorum for the election. Decisions are made by majority vote (50% + 1).

Meetings

Focus Area meetings are held virtually or in hybrid formats to maximize participation and engagement. Focus Areas will not meet in June, July, August, or March. The Fall and Spring Joint Meetings will serve as the November and April meeting dates for all focus areas.

Leadership Responsibilities

The Chair provides leadership and guidance for the Focus Area and is a member of the mParks Leadership Team. Their responsibilities include meeting with the mParks staff liaison before each meeting, setting the meeting agenda, sending meeting notifications (via group message and posting on the newsfeed) one week prior using the mParks CommUnity, leading and facilitating discussions. The Chair also collaborates with the staff liaison to share updates and help keep their mParks CommUnity informed.

Focus Area chairs are responsible for submitting quarterly reports to the Board of Directors and organizing at least three sessions at the conference and tradeshow. Additional responsibilities may include recommending speakers, identifying topics, or presenting sessions. Focus Areas also collaborate with committees, staff, and other Focus Areas to strengthen connections and ensure alignment with the Strategic Plan. Recommendations for professional development must be submitted at least six months before the proposed date. All financial activities, contracts, and sponsorships must be reviewed and approved by the mParks staff to ensure compliance with fiscal policy.

Focus Areas will choose a Vice Chair and a Secretary during their first meeting of the year. The Vice Chair supports the Chair and steps in when necessary. The Secretary is responsible for maintaining a record of the meeting. The Vice Chair and Secretary positions are for a one-year term (October 1 – September 30) and are eligible for re-election.

Elections are held yearly. Nominations open in March, ballots are finalized in April, and voting takes place in May. Terms start in October and end in September of the following year. If a Chair position becomes vacant, the Vice Chair steps in until the next scheduled election.

Leadership Vacancies

The president may declare a Chair's seat vacant if the Chair misses three consecutive sessions. Members can request a leave of absence from the President when necessary.

In the event of a vacancy, the Vice Chair assumes the role of Chair until the next scheduled election. If a focus area cannot fill its designated positions, it may appoint a representative to serve a one-year term. A leave of absence may be requested by a member or granted by the President when necessary, ensuring flexibility without compromising the committee's effectiveness.

mParks Focus Areas

Focus Areas may be added, retired, or name changed based on the needs of mParks members and alignment with the Association's Strategic Plan. The Board of Directors must approve these changes.

Leadership Team Guidelines

Committees and Focus Areas

Active Aging
Focuses on programs, resources, and strategies to promote active lifestyles and engagement for older adults in parks and recreation.

Adaptive
Supports inclusive recreation opportunities for individuals with disabilities by sharing best practices, resources, and program innovations.

Aquatics
Addresses the needs of aquatic facility managers and program providers, covering safety, training, and emerging trends in water-based recreation.

Archery
Bring together professionals to expand and enhance archery programming, facilities, and community engagement within parks and recreation.

Athletics
Provides a forum for discussing trends, challenges, and best practices in youth and adult sports programming and facility management.

Directors
Connects high-level park and recreation administrators to discuss leadership, management, and industry advancements.

Facilities
Explores strategies for effectively maintaining, developing, and managing park and recreation facilities.

Marketing
Shares strategies, trends, and tools that promote park and recreation programs, services, and events.

Middle Managers
Provides support, education, and networking opportunities for mid-level professionals advancing their careers.

New Professionals
Supports those new to the field by offering mentorship, learning opportunities, and career guidance.

Park Maintenance
Focuses on natural resource management, conservation, and sustainability practices in parks and open spaces.

Past Presidents
Engages former mParks presidents to offer mentorship, historical insights, and continuous industry support.

Programming
Supports the development and implementation of innovative recreation programs for diverse communities.

Students
Connects students pursuing careers in parks and recreation with networking, education, and professional development opportunities.

Trails
Promotes trail development, maintenance, and advocacy to enhance outdoor recreation opportunities.

WIRED
A network for women in recreation to support leadership, empowerment, and professional growth. This focus area is dedicated to topics that impact individuals who identify as women, although everyone is welcome to join and engage.

Youth, Teens, & Camps
Shares best practices and program ideas that engage young people in recreational opportunities and leadership development.