

Tennessee Valley Wood Club

Proposed Policy for the Evaluation and Approval of Community Projects

Background

Occasionally, it is helpful to remember the mission of the Tennessee Valley Wood Club:

"The mission of the Tennessee Valley Woodworkers is to promote woodworking skills within our group and the community and to provide a means for fellowship with other people having a similar interest. Anyone interested in woodworking is welcome."

Since the beginning of the Club, one of the ways that we have achieved this goal is by contributing our time and talents to meet the needs of our middle Tennessee and north Alabama communities. Individual Club members have donated wood crafts for auctions that benefit the Adult Literacy Program, Motlow College and others and have provided woodworking demonstrations at fairs and festivals. Larger projects, like cabinets for the Franklin County Library and window repair at Falls Mill, were completed by volunteers from the Club who organized by passing around a signup sheet at a monthly Club meeting. These events seldom required Wood Club funding.

During the past few years, the Wood Club has been asked to take on larger projects requiring significant material costs and significant labor hours. Material costs have been covered by donations, the use of proceeds from the sale of Club wood crafts or services, or the actual cost of material purchased by the Club was reimbursed to the Club by the requestor. To date, all of these large projects have been completed on schedule to the great satisfaction of the requestor. Therefore, it is expected that requests for Wood Club support to large community projects will continue.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a process that will be used to evaluate future requests for Wood Club support of large projects beyond the scope of what can be accomplished by individual Club volunteers, may require large material purchases, and may impose some liability on the Wood Club.

Going forward, before accepting any request for a large community project, we should consider it first as an opportunity to pass around the signup list for individual Club members to take it on. Only in extraordinary cases should the Club membership take on a project as a Club activity. Care must be exercised to not only ensure that the project has a benefit to the Club but also has enough support from the membership to warrant the exposure and effort. Whenever an organized volunteer group takes on a project there's the possibility that a private contractor or handyman for hire is put out of a job. Any project that falls into that category could easily become net negative for the Club.

Process

Requests for Wood Club support for community service projects may arrive from the requestor through the Club membership or directly from the requestor through the Club Web site. When a request is received, the following steps should be taken as quickly as possible. Even if the Club decides not to take on a project, the requestor will appreciate a prompt response.

- 1) Upon receipt of any request for significant Wood Club support, the request will be forwarded to the Wood Club President or Vice President.
- 2) The Club will consider any incoming request first as an opportunity for individuals or a group of individuals to take it on and to pass around a signup list at the next Wood Club monthly meeting.
- 3) If there is a compelling reason to consider this project as a worthy Club activity, the President or Vice President will first ask for volunteers to serve on the Project Committee. If no members volunteer to serve on the Committee or to contribute to the project in any way, then the Club will decline the request and respond back to the requestor.
- 4) If there are volunteers, the President will select at least three of them to serve as a Project Committee.
- 5) The Project Committee will meet with the requestor to discuss the details of the project. Worksheet #1, attached to this policy, will be filled out by the Project Committee promptly after that first meeting.
- 6) Very shortly after the meeting with the requestor, a second meeting of the Project Committee, the President or Vice President and other Wood Club Executive Council members will convene to determine whether or not the Wood Club will support this project based on the information that is available at that time. If more information is required to make an informed decision, the requestor will be contacted by a member of the Project Committee who attended the first meeting with the requestor. The new information will be shared with the other members.
- 7) When sufficient information has been collected, the worksheet will be forwarded to the Wood Club Executive Council for review and approval, or not, based on the evaluation criteria below:
 - a. Does this project benefit the community in a way that would not otherwise be possible without Wood Club support?
 - b. Is the project unusually risky to those who will volunteer to help?
 - c. Is there one Club member who is willing and able to serve as the Project Manager and the single point of contact between the Club and the requestor?
 - d. Do the skills required to successfully complete this project reside within the Club membership?
 - e. Can the Wood Club complete the project within the requestor's deadline and budget?
 - f. Will the project require building permits and will the requestor provide the permits to the Project Manager/Committee prior to work beginning on the project.
 - g. Is the Wood Club responsible for procuring the material, and if so, will the requestor provide the funds for the materials or will the Wood Club be reimbursed for all of the material costs?

- h. Has the requestor been informed and acknowledged that the Wood Club is not liable in any way for the project outcome?
 - i. What is the recommendation of the Project Committee who first met with the requestor?
- 8) If the Wood Club disapproves the project, the requestor will be notified by the Project Committee with the Club's reasons for the negative response.
 - 9) If the Wood Club approves the project, the Project Manager (4c above) will be notified to start work. The Project Manager will be responsible for the overall success of the project.
 - 10) The Wood Club will fully support the Project Manager with calls for volunteers, prompt reimbursement for expenses, publicity and recognition.
 - 11) The Project Manager will ensure pictures are taken to document progress and to show the Executive Committee that the work is meeting the requirements established by the requestor.
 - 12) The Project Manager will keep the Club informed of the project status at monthly Club meetings. A suggested format for this presentation is provided in Worksheet #2.
 - 13) Upon completion of the project, the Project Manager is requested to provide a presentation at the next Wood Club meeting including acknowledgement of members who helped, lessons learned, and requestor feedback.

Tennessee Valley Wood Club
Community Service Project Worksheet #1

Question	Requestor Response
During the meeting with the requestor:	
Who is the requestor?	
What is the project?	
Are there plans/drawings/sketches?	
Where is the project site location?	
What is the preferred start date?	
What is the preferred need date?	
Built on-site?	
Any permits required and obtained by the requestor / site preparation / demolition/clean-up/?	
Pre-fabricated and then delivered?	
Inside or outside?	
Are on-site utilities available?	
Any unusual requirements or constraints?	
Special woodworking skills required?	
Has the requestor approached anyone else about doing the project?	
Does the requestor have a cost estimate?	
Who will pay for the material and other significant project costs?	
Does the requestor have a do-not-exceed project cost?	
After the meeting with the requestor:	
Does the requestor represent a reputable organization?	
Who will benefit from this project?	
Are the project requirements well-defined?	
Is the project feasible within the required time frame?	
Are a sufficient number of Club members likely to volunteer to help?	
Does the project expose Club members to unacceptable risk?	
Who from the Club membership is willing and able to serve as the Project Manager?	
Does the requestor expect continued Wood Club up- keep, maintenance or repair?	
If the Wood Club declines to support this project, what are the requestor's alternatives?	

Tennessee Valley Wood Club
Community Service Project Worksheet #2

Item	Status
Identify the Project and Requestor.	
Identify the Project Manager and the Wood Club members who are helping.	
Need for additional support?	
Project scope:	
Provide an overview of the plan.	
Provide an up-date on the progress.	
Project schedule:	
Provide an overview of the schedule.	
Provide an estimated project completion date.	
Project cost:	
Provide an update on funds available /funds expended.	
Problems encountered, lessons learned?	
Opportunities for Club publicity?	