



**ZONTA**  
**INTERNATIONAL**  

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**EMPOWERING WOMEN**  
**THROUGH SERVICE & ADVOCACY**

# Chartering a New Club

Step-By-Step Guide



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# For the successful organization of a new Zonta club

**T**his guide is meant to be a practical overview of the official procedure that can be found in the Marian de Forest Membership Manual. The manual, as well as all other documents referenced in this guide, can be found under the Chartering a New Club section of My Zonta's Membership Tools page (<http://membership.zonta.org/tools/membership-tools>).

It is our hope to show that it is not difficult to start new clubs, but that it does require hard work and a certain stubbornness. The content of this guide will have to be adapted according to the country and culture.

## Background

The group of members taking the initiative and willing to do the work becomes a Sponsoring, Organization and Mentoring (SOM) Committee. Members of the SOM Committee can be members of a single club or members of different clubs.

The number of members in the SOM Committee is for the committee to decide. Experiences from several countries show that a group of approximately four to six members works effectively. The Committee can draw on the rest of the club as needed. It is good for the group to have:

- A member with extensive knowledge of Zonta's organization at club, area, district and international levels.
- A member with extensive knowledge of Zonta's local and international programs and projects.
- A member with extensive knowledge of Zonta's advocacy initiatives and tools.
- A member willing to tell her personal story of "why I am a Zontian."

When the SOM Committee wants to start a new Zonta club in an existing area, the district governor, lieutenant governor and the area director of the particular area must be informed and agree. The SOM Committee should be prepared to cover the expenses for doing the work as a service project (sponsor). However, in some districts, the district/area may have set aside money for this activity.

### A key to success

Identify beforehand one or more potential service projects in the local community where the new club is going to be chartered.

If the work and funding is divided between several clubs and members from different clubs, a clear division of responsibilities must be agreed upon.

Clubs cannot be started in a new country without special permission from Zonta International. To receive permission, the club must submit the Authorization for Entering a New Country Form.

## Work starts

The SOM Committee Chairman is appointed by the SOM Committee or the sponsoring club(s). The chairman should be an energetic, hard-working and knowledgeable Zontian. The SOM Committee chairman is responsible for all the work of the committee and ensures that the club, district governor, lt. governor and area director are informed of the progress.

The SOM Committee fills out and the governor signs the Authorization Request for Organizing a New Zonta Club Form. Please review the Naming Club Policy document when selecting the name of the club.

After the Zonta International President-Elect has approved the proposed club's name, the Authorization Request Form is sent to Headquarters (HQ) electronically to [memberrecords@zonta.org](mailto:memberrecords@zonta.org). HQ will then send an Organization & Extension (O&E) Kit via email to the SOM Chairman with a copy to the district governor and lt. governor. The kit includes:

- O&E letter notifying the SOM chairman that the application to organize the proposed Zonta club was approved by the International President-Elect and district governor.
- Club Officers Contact Information form
- Form B - Member Report Form for Charter Clubs
- Zonta website links to locate the manual to help organize a new club

The SOM chairman calls then the first committee meeting to:

- A. Review this step-by-step guideline, the O&E Kit from HQ and other relevant material
- B. Appoint a secretary who will be responsible for organizing and arranging the committee meetings and transcribing and distributing the minutes of meetings.
- C. Appoint a member responsible for maintenance of the potential member list file.
- D. Define a goal to organize a club in the city of XXX by the date YYYY
- E. Prepare an action plan. This plan shall include, but not be limited to:
  - The number of potential members needed
  - The meeting frequency and schedule
  - The date, time, location and program for the first information meeting, when to send out invitations and to whom will they RSVP
  - The follow-up procedure after the first orientation meeting, including date, time, location and program for other orientation meetings if needed
  - The date, time and location for the organization meeting
  - The date, time and location for the charter celebration ceremony
- F. Develop the budget for the expenses.
- G. Help develop the first budget for the new club, including the international, district and club dues and fees.

### **Zonta International Dues and Fees (in U.S. Dollars) 2016-2018**

Per-Capita Dues	\$80.00
Young Professionals Member Dues	\$40.00
New Member Fee	\$15.00
Charter Member Fee	\$15.00
Reinstated Member Fee	\$15.00
Z Club/Golden Z Club Charter Fee	\$25.00
Z Club/Golden Z Club Annual Renewal Fee per Sponsored Z/Golden Z Club	\$5.00

Names of potential members come from different sources and all possible contacts should be used. This includes:

- Members' families, friends, colleagues and their friends and families.
- Contacts from business organizations, associations and the Chamber of Commerce.  
Call the mayor and inform of the activity and ask for well-known women's names including leaders in the community.

Whenever a contact of a prospective member is made, immediately get as much information as possible such

as their name, profession, age, private and business address, phone numbers and email addresses. Always have your own Zonta business cards available to hand to prospective members.

When the required number of names has been collected, send out the first invitation letter via email no later than three weeks before the first orientation meeting will be held. The invitation letter shall inform the potential member that there is a plan to start a new Zonta club in XX city, and that a member of the SOM Committee will follow up with them by phone if the committee does not receive a response before a certain date. The email should conclude with the following:

Please respond to this email with “Yes, I will attend,” “No, I will not attend, but I am interested and would like to be invited to future meetings,” or “No, I am not interested at this point.”

The people who respond that they are not interested at this point should be sent an email thanking them for their initial interest and welcoming them to join in the future.

After the deadline passes for prospective members to reply to the invitation, the telephone work will begin. The members who are good at telling others about the “wonders of Zonta” by phone will call all the potential members who have not responded. It is quite normal that there are very few answers before the phone campaign begins. We all receive so much mail that a follow up by phone is normally necessary. If the candidate is interested, remember to ask for the name of somebody he/she knows who might be interested as well and get all the information you can.

Have a prospective member packet available, which can include a brochure that introduces Zonta, a summary of the international and local service projects of the sponsoring club(s), as well as a prospective member application. This work is very important and essential for the success of the new club.

## Information meeting(s)

If there are 15 potential members coming to the first orientation meeting, it is good for approximately seven members from an existing club to attend to mingle and talk about Zonta in smaller groups. A proposed program for the meeting is:

- Welcome by the SOM chairman
- What is Zonta International? (by the district governor, area director or another member with the necessary knowledge)
- What does a Zonta club do and how does it work? Discuss potential service projects in the local community.
- What does it mean to become a member of a Zonta club? Discuss benefits, time and money.
- Tentative time schedule for the organization of the new club including a potential date for the chartering.
- Questions

Before leaving the orientation meeting, the participants are encouraged to fill in and sign the Prospective Member Questionnaire Form.

Remember to ask every participant to provide names, addresses and other information of other people they think could be interested in joining. Last, but not least, agree on a new date for a second orientation meeting if there are less than 15 potential members signing the form during the first meeting.

The SOM Committee sends out invites for the second orientation. The invitation and follow-up work is repeated each time there is an orientation meeting. Depending on the level of interest, it may be necessary to have several meetings.

If possible, the most interested women are asked to form a group and become the active core of the new club during the first orientation meeting, but not later than the second meeting. It is important that this core group be

formed then because it increases the rate of success if this group helps organize the new club. They can look for potential names and find interested women in their own community.

The meetings may be smaller then, but the SOM Committee still has to attend to provide information and answer questions about Zonta. In some cases, a meeting with all interested parties may be arranged where the program is almost like a normal Zonta meeting and where a SOM club member is then a guest speaker. After that speech, the organization meeting may be held.

## Organization meeting

The SOM Committee continuously reviews the information collected from potential members that have signed the Prospective Member Questionnaire Form. These potential members are classified according to the classifications found in the document How to Implement the Classification of Occupations.

When a minimum of 15 potential members have signed the Prospective Member Questionnaire Form and have been approved by the SOM Committee as qualified to become Zontians, the formal organization meeting can be held. The SOM Committee invites the prospective members to this meeting and instructs the participants to bring money or a check for dues and fees. The purpose of this meeting is to complete the organization process of the new club. This meeting is comprised of the following basic agenda:

- Agreeing to the club being established
- Agreeing to abide by the ZI Bylaws and Rules of Procedure
- Setting of the annual club fee
- Collecting monies for dues and fees
- Electing club officers
- Calling for volunteers for optional positions within the club
- Announcement of the first club meeting
- Announcement of the first board meeting
- Committee assignments
- Any other business
- Meeting closure

The SOM Committee Chairman mails the following to Headquarters.

- Member Report Forms (Form B)
- Club Officers Contact Information Form
- FEIN Information – USA Clubs Only

The charter date is the date when all four items above are processed at Zonta Headquarters. Headquarters sends the new club a notification letter, charter certificate and gavel.

## Charter ceremony

### Charter presentation

- **Setting the date** – in consultation with the governor, who usually will present the charter and gavel. Allow four to six weeks for receipt of gavel and charter from Zonta Headquarters.
- **Organization** – responsibility of the club president with guidance from SOM Committee, governor and area director. The club treasurer or finance chair should be part of the organization.
- **Budget** – the function should be self-supporting.

**Agenda and purpose:**

- To formally welcome the new club to the Zonta family through the presentation of the charter and gavel and the attendance of current and past district and international officers and Zontians from neighboring clubs
- Induction of members as Zontians and installation of the new club officers
- Introduction of the new club to the community by inviting representatives of the community to the presentation
- Suggested program about what Zonta is, other facts about our organization's goals and objectives and what our benefit to the community will be
- Attainment of maximum publicity

### Preparations

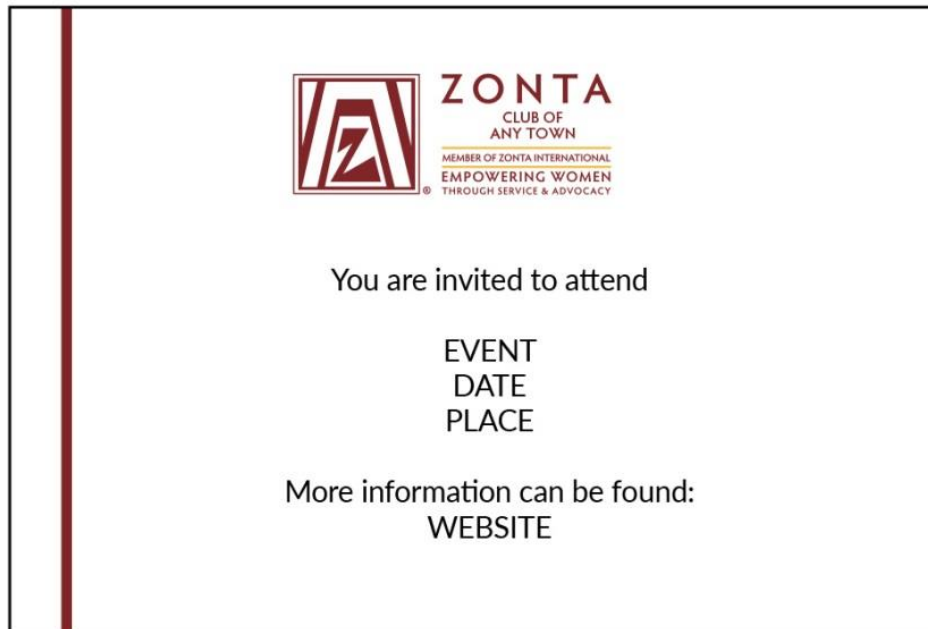
The first step is to set up a budget for the event. Items in the budget should include:

- Printing the invitations (if applicable)
- Postage (if applicable)
- Printing the programs
- Telephone use (for follow-up calls)
- Rental of premises (if any)
- Table decorations
- Club banner(s)
- Meals or refreshments and gratuities
- Costs for invited guests

When considering total costs, it is a good idea to set the price of the event high enough to cover all expenses, including the invited guests. Another possibility is to sell tickets for the event. This method has been used by some clubs, enabling them to defray all expenses while starting their first service fund.

### Invitations

The following is a suggested invitation:



## After charter

It is the responsibility of the SOM Committee and the board of the new club to develop and conduct a sustainability plan for the new club. Some practices have shown success in the past.

The SOM Committee Chairman attends the board meetings if needed. The first decision of the board is to set a date for the Charter Celebration Ceremony of the club. The district governor and area director should agree on the date, as it is important that at least one of them can attend. The date should be at least a few months away from the payment reaching Headquarters, as this allows time for the charter and gavel to arrive.

The SOM Chairman helps with the preparations for the Charter Ceremony Celebration. It is important to invite representatives from the local community, including the mayor, so the community will know what a Zonta club is.

The SOM Committee chairman will be in contact with the new club if needed and receive the minutes, attend meetings and make sure that any questions will be resolved. This will continue as long as needed in order to make sure that the club functions. For some clubs it could be a couple of months, others up to two years.

During the first year, minutes of meetings of the new club are typically sent to the area director and to the district governor so they can follow the club in its progress.





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## Example Letter

Dear XXXXX,

Zonta International is in the process of organizing a new Zonta club in XX. As the chairman of the Sponsoring, Organizing & Mentoring (SOM) Committee, I would like to invite you to the first orientation meeting for the new club, which will be held

Date and time  
Place

Zonta International is a global network of nearly 30,000 professionals in 66 countries working to empower women through service and advocacy.

Zonta International envisions a world in which women's rights are recognized as human rights and every woman is able to achieve her full potential. In such a world, every woman is literate and has access to education, health care, legal and economic resources on an equal basis with men. In such a world, no woman lives in fear of violence.

Since 1919, Zonta International has contributed to the empowerment of women and internationally we have distributed more than US\$31 million in service projects, fellowships, scholarships and awards. The efforts in all Zonta communities at local level can cover a variety of topics/issues from economic growth, equal rights, access to health care, educational opportunities, self-sustainability, self-esteem, personal support, domestic violence issues and comfort during difficult situations.

Although we proudly celebrate that we have changed the lives of millions of women and girls around the world, we all know that we need to continue working to achieve the world we all dream about in Zonta.

Chartering a club in XX is therefore a very important milestone for our organization. We have identified unique opportunities for service projects in this community and we would like to share how Zonta International makes a difference in the lives of many women close to you through this new club.

We hope that this letter interests you in our organization and that you will come to this first orientation meeting. Please answer this email no later than XXXXXX by selecting one of the options in the attached table:

	Yes, I am coming to the orientation meeting on the XXXX, at XX.
	I am interested on learning more about Zonta International, but I cannot attend this particular meeting. Please send me an invitation to another orientation meeting.
	No, I am not interested in Zonta at this moment.

Looking forward to hearing from you,

*Name and signature of SOM chairman*