

2010

Business Process & Organizational Assessment



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Executive Summary

The following represents a summary of the observations & recommendations of this engagement:

- **Observation:** From stakeholder interviews, MD19 Lions Clubs have a clear mission of service, with the focus being on each Lions Club's own community.
- **Observation:** The By-Laws & Policy Manual set forth a clear **administrative function** for the MD19 office (to support the elected Lions leadership); a **financial function** (to process MD19 dues and manage and report effectively for this budget); a **coordination function** (to provide direction for the Annual Convention / Fall Forum); and a **programmatic function** (to support membership growth & extension and coordinate leadership training).
- **Observation:** The challenges of MD19 as defined by stakeholder interviews are **membership retention and recruitment, particularly of a younger population**. Engagement in club service projects, participation in conventions and leadership training are significant indicators for membership retention & growth.
- **Observation:** As with all volunteer service organizations, there is continued turn-over of elected leadership positions which challenge long term planning and consistency.
- **Observation:** Budgets appear to be limited to a one year vision and financial reporting does not offer easy comparisons to budget and prior year.
- **Priority Recommendation #1:** MD 19 should establish a multi-year strategic plan/ budget that can provide for cohesion throughout the various districts & zones and ensure continuity through leadership transitions. A process for reporting on progress should be established.
- **Priority Recommendation #2:** Staff time should be aligned to address MD19's key challenges & support achievement of the strategic plan. While administrative support for elected leaders remains critical, establishing annual programmatic goals for MD19 staff will better allow MD19 to accomplish its goals.
 - **Observation:** The bulk of staff time is spent responding to requests for support via email & phone; managing MD19 statistics, processing paper, & managing seasonal workflow. Unnecessary time is spent tracking dues & roster information. Several recent changes have an un-forecast impact on staff: the integration of the Annual Convention & Fall Forum, and of the DG-Elect and ZC Elect training, & the continued evolution to electronic communication.
 - **Recommendation:** Reasonable opportunities exist to improve efficiency through reduced paper dependency, expanding email communication, improving the responsiveness of leadership, and implementing advanced planning techniques.
 - **Recommendation:** Opportunity may exist to streamline statistical data processing. This requires knowledge of Lions International requirements and data access via the website.
 - **Recommendation:** Proactive, e- communication to the zones, districts, & clubs relative to programmatic offerings which address key challenges of MD19 should be established.
- **Priority Recommendation #3.** Financial reports can be streamlined, a more future-thinking budgeting process established, and expenses can potentially be reduced in several areas.

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Section I

Description of Project

Business Process Analysis and Organizational Assessment

The intent of this project is to evaluate how the MD19 offices can accomplish the following:

- More effectively and efficiently carry out its mission
- Forecast operating budgets in a more accurate manner
- Anticipate and plan for future organizational growth/structuring
- Evaluate current and future staffing needs to ensure optimal support of the districts, zones and clubs of the Multiple District, and support the goals and objectives of the Council Chairperson and Council of Governors

The scope of this assessment does not include true business process engineering as clarified at the beginning of the engagement, nor does it provide for staff performance evaluation.

The following has been accomplished:

- Review of the MD19 Policy Manual, By-laws to identify organizational functions to be carried out by the MD19 staff;
- Creation of a “cross walk” between the MD19 Policy Manual and By-laws
- Creation of an inventory of business processes carried out by the MD 19 office staff per their actual time spent;
- Completion of interviews with the MD19 staff to identify workflow of the organization; how time is spent in supporting the goals of the organization; how workflow is affected by seasonality, as well as to seek their overall input;
- Analysis of a two – week staff time tracking to determine workflow;
- Assessment of perceived time spent / actual time spent vs. focus of MD19 Policy Manual and By-laws requirements.
- Interviews with seven identified Lions members in roles of significant leadership; with interview focus on the goals of the organization, the efficiency / effectiveness of the MD19 office in supporting these goals, the major challenges of the organization, perceived value of the MD19 office in addressing these challenges.
- Review of prior years’ budgets for identification of efficiencies.
- Identify perceived value of administrative services (member interviews)
- Document membership goals supported by administrative service provision following interviews with key leaders
- Drafting of solutions to 1) create a sustainable budget and 2) ensure MD19 support is focused on goals of organization.
- Observations and recommendations for improving and more clearly defining workflow, staff roles and responsibilities, and decision-making processes, and the preliminary action plans to implement these changes

Section II

Purpose & Scope of the MD19 office

This section sets forth the purpose and scope of the Multiple District 19 office via a cross-walk of the By-Laws and Policy Manual. **The value of this overview is found when compared to the analysis of time spent on various functions by MD19 staff and by the value perceived by the organization according to stakeholder interviews.**

By-Laws

The By-Laws provide for the position of Executive Secretary / Treasurer to be established and compensated. The By-Laws further define this position's process for performance review & how it will be filled in the event of vacancy. The By-Laws clearly establish this position as operating under the guidance of the Council of Governors. They do not reference additional positions.

The only reference in the By-laws is to a singular staff position of the Executive Secretary. The key functions required by the By-Laws may be summarized as follows:

- Maintain the financial books and records of the organization, including reports for all meetings. Financial books subject to independent audit on an annual basis;
- Track expenditures & provide for disbursement of the District accounts;
- Bill & Collect dues, properly disburse CARE funds
- Maintain the MMR for purpose of voting calculations & payment of dues
- Support the elections process (providing nominations lists, preparing ballots, ensuring the receipt & filing of required notices)
- Serve as the Director of the Annual Convention, providing follow up including a written report, updates to the policy manual, and an income / expense statement.
- Serve as Director of the Fall Forum, including distributing funds to the host club and providing financial reports on the forum
- Provide follow up to the Annual Convention(providing a written report and updating the policy manual after this event)
- Prepare and distribute monthly reports, Fall forum reports, other publications
- Submit all proposed amendments to the secretary of each club
- Provide for and bill for club paraphernalia
- Serves as ex-officio non-voting member of the COG

Policy Manual

The Policy Manual defines the MD19 Office as being administered by an Executive Secretary / Treasurer, hired and accountable to the Council of Governors. The Policy manual further notes that the office currently has an Administrative Assistant and Receptionist.

The Policy Manual expands upon the role of the Executive Secretary / Treasury to include personnel supervision, support membership retention, growth & extension, coordinate leadership training, supervise production of publications, maintain the buildings and grounds and serve as a full or ex-officio member of 14 additional committees.

The Policy Manual (Chapter X) defines the purpose of MD19 as serving as the central administrative point for MD19. It exists to provide service to the multiple district, district, zone and club officers, and

to the Lion, Lioness and Leo members of MD19. It maintains the membership and financial records for each district and MD19.

The MD Office is the networking link of the Multiple District. Under the MD19 Constitution and Bylaws, the office plans the two major MD19 conventions each year, prepares and mails bulletins to all clubs, publishes an MD19 Roster which is mailed to each club, and publishes the Contest and Awards Booklet. It is also responsible for overseeing mailings for and the organization of Council Meetings.

Other activities of the MD19 Office revolve around promotion of membership growth and retention, new club organization, and sales of MD19 paraphernalia for International Convention participation.

The functionality defined by the Policy Manual for the Executive Secretary / Treasurer includes the following:

- A. Personnel Supervision / Office Climate / Office Management
- B. Membership Retention / Membership Growth / Extension
- C. Leadership Training
- D. Convention / Forum Director – Identifies potential sites, assists host club with planning and preparation including budget preparation, arranges for screening of speakers, ensures ballots are complete
- E. Buildings & Grounds – works with the building committee to recommend a long term building improvement program; responsible for the MD 19 office building & flags
- F. Finance – annual budget planning, district conference financial reports, monthly financial statements, monthly bank reconciliations, DG escrow & operations accounts, payroll, authorize all purchases.
- G. Publications – supervises the preparation of all printed publications, including roster, contests & awards rules, constitution and by-laws
- H. Committee Membership – serves as a full member on seven committees; serves as an ex-officio member of seven committees, serves as an ex-officio member of the Council of Governors.

Specific functions identified in Policy Manual Chapter V: “*Communications*” include the following responsibilities:

- MD19 Bulletin published 6x per year
- Membership & Visitation statistics for District Governors, Zone Chairperson & clubs to be included in the MD19 Newsletter.
- Preparation of Contests and Awards data.
- MD19 roster is compiled and printed by the MD office staff from information received on the club Officer Report forms mailed to club secretaries in March.
- Receiving and entering all club MD19 dues, CARE and LCIF funds.
- Selling uniforms and pins.
- Completing all the paper work for chartering new clubs in MD19.
- Correspondence & filing.

The Policy Manual further includes detailed descriptions of position responsibilities for the Executive Secretary / Treasurer, the Administrative Assistant and the Receptionist.

Section III

Summary of Stakeholder Interviews

The following observations were identified from a series of seven stakeholder interviews. Names of Stakeholders were provided by the Council Executive. All stakeholders interviewed have been with the Lions organization for a significant period of time (11 to 40 years) and have been in a position of leadership often for nearly that full time (5 to 35 years). A full recap of stakeholder interviews is included by Exhibit.

The observations are extrapolated into common themes.

- Membership in Lions was initiated because of family history of Lion service, prior membership in other service organizations, the need to network and be involved in the community for professional work, and most importantly, a clear and consistent message of desire to give back to the community.
- The stakeholders' view of the primary mission of the Lions organization was consistent and passionate. Service above all to the local / immediate community, providing service to those less fortunate, providing service primarily through but not exclusively through the Lions programs for eyesight, hearing and diabetes.
- The MD 19 support staff provides primarily administrative support for the elected leadership positions, supporting the annual convention & fall forum, and providing resources for understanding the constitution and membership issues. Beyond these consistent expressions of how the office provides support, there were mixed commentaries: some felt there was very little support provided at a club level and this is probably why some members do not support the dues payment; and other comments indicated that the MD19 office provides the link for the entire organization with international intent.
- For the most part, stakeholders believe that the MD19 office staff is doing what is expected of them, serving the incoming requests exceptionally well, but are bogged down with clerical work and paper dependency. There was a clear indication that if elected leaders took on more responsibility for ensuring dues & roster information was submitted, that staff time could be refocused on more substantive issues.
- The most significant challenge faced across the MD19 organization is the decline of membership and the need to both retain and recruit members. There was clearly a focus on the need to recruit **younger** members as the current membership population ages in place. There were mixed commentaries regarding the role of the MD19 office staff in addressing these challenges. Some felt it was not their role, others that they do what they can and do that well, others that there should be a far greater proactive role in developing consistency of programmatic support i.e. channeling MD19 projects and Lions International information to the districts / zones / clubs in order to support the membership issue. Of note, the "Lions for Life"

project which includes solid principles for member retention has not been consistently rolled out across the organization, and may be an area in which the MD19 office can provide support.

- Methods to retain members were identified as being 1) early engagement in projects, 2) support of the district retention chairperson, 3) sponsorship / mentorship; 4) the “Lions for Life “ program which does not appear to be consistently rolled out; and 5) other programmatic opportunities that are not consistently applied across all clubs.
- Methods identified to increase membership included advance engagement in projects, hosting roundtables for clubs to learn from each other, advertising, and open houses. Commentary several times noted the need for greater consistency and sharing of information among clubs.
- A secondary challenge of the MD19 organization was clearly an organizational issue – the fact that the budgeting process has become challenging with membership dues declining and expenses staying at least at the same level.
- Identified areas for improvement in the MD19 office included the goal of supporting program consistency across all clubs; reducing the amount of time needed to follow up with districts / clubs; increase leadership training at more regionalized locations as not everyone can attend conventions; reducing time spent on clerical, membership data, statistics etc, in favor of greater evolution to use of electronic medium.
- The Executive Secretary – Treasurer is clearly valued for her dedication, commitment and historical knowledge of the MD19 organization. The Administrative Assistant is perceived as knowledgeable, competent and helpful. The receptionist, by virtue of lesser time spent in the position or visibility, is not as well known. Staff financial skills were seen to be lacking.
- The value of the MD19 “dues” tax was generally supported by most – but not all - of the stakeholders. While several thought the dues could be increased, only one suggested that the general membership would support an increase.
- Annual forums are generally considered to be very good, although recommendations were made to obtain more input from the membership as to what types of speakers / workshops would be valued. It was also recommended that the venue should be more centralized to accommodate long distance Canadian communities, and several individuals were concerned over cost of meals.
- Training is considered to be a key element of retaining members and improving upon the organization in general. Training is generally found to be valuable and productive – particularly in getting members energized – but stakeholders still saw room for improvement as well as the opportunity to offer more regional programs at less cost for members (it was noted that only 400 to 700 club members attend annual events out of nearly 14,000 members).

- Areas for improvement in MD19 office support included: 1) increased communication, 2) processing of Lions International programmatic information out to the clubs, 3) reducing paperwork and non-essential clerical work, and 4) improving the financial condition of the organization.

- It was noted through multiple questions that **at the club / member level**, there is not a clear understanding of what the MD19 office does.

Section IV

Analysis of Staff Time

Staff time was analyzed in two ways: 1) Interview with each staff person to identify where time is spent in support of requirements defined by By-Laws and Policy Manual as well as other functions; and 2) Two week time tracking (which will always include some seasonality but provides for some verification of the staff perspective of how time is spent.) The following represents a description of each analysis:

- **Actual Time Tracking.** Each person tracked time in quarter hour increments for a period of approximately two weeks. The tracking records did not provide specific elements or categories of tasks to track, but rather reflected actual work as described by the staff person, which was then tabulated and organized by type of task.
- **Perception of Time Spent on an Annualized Basis.** Interviews were held with each staff person as to where they spent their time on a weekly or monthly basis, extrapolated to annual data. The specific functions queried as to time spent were specific to the job descriptions as defined within the Policy Manual, therefore total hours did not necessarily add up to a 2080 work year.

Neither analysis is scientific, however the ratios provide an overview of how staff time is being spent relative to job descriptions. It should also be noted that both the Administrative Assistant and Receptionist appear to adhere to a standard 40 hour week with standard breaks (less so for the Administrative Assistant as the Receptionist). The Executive Secretary – Treasurer appears to blend her role as a Lions member volunteer with her paid professional responsibilities and clearly works well beyond a standardized work week.

The following observations may be helpful:

- **On a Time Tracked basis, the Receptionist** spent the majority of her time on General Support (43%), Work on the Fall Convention (14%), MMR Data (12%).
- **On a Perception basis, the Receptionist** spends the majority of her time on General Support (43%); Supporting Publications (21%) Clerical support (18%) and Bills/Banking support (10%).
- **On a Time Tracked Basis the Administrative Assistant** spent more than 20% of her time on the Fall Convention, nearly 16% of her time on Certificates & Awards, 12% of her time on the Roster, and 14% of her time on general support.
- **On a Perception basis, the Administrative Assistant** spends nearly 40% of her time on statistics, 18% of her time on bills/banking support; 10% of her time on the roster, 6.5% of her time on Certificates & Awards and about the same on council & committee meetings.
- **On a Time Tracked basis, the Executive Secretary / Treasurer** spent 22% of her time on the Fall Convention, 21% of her time on Council & committee meetings, 14% of her time on travel to these meetings, and 9 % of her time on property / maintenance – primarily getting the Memorial Garden ready for the September service.
- **On a Perception basis, the Executive Secretary** spends about 25% of her time in executive support for the District Governors, 25% of her time in general support across the board; 17% of her time attending, prepping for or traveling to meetings, and about 8% of her time on each of Bills/Banking, Property / Maintenance, and the Fall Convention.

Based on the observations of the time tracking analysis, interviews with staff members and input from the stakeholders, the following recommendations have been formulated:

- **Recommendation:** The MD19 office staff appear to continue to gravitate towards paper workload and there appears to be some duplication of efforts. For example, the receptionist spends about 40% of her time spent on general support. About 16% of her time overall is spent on opening the MD19 email, triaging the email to forward to the appropriate person, printing a hard copy of the email and filing the copy. It also includes support responses to emails that the Receptionist is in a position to answer. This is an area that offers opportunity for greater efficiency:
 - Individual email addresses might be provided to key leadership positions to directly contact either the Executive Secretary or Administrative Assistant, when they know who they need to contact. This would eliminate the duplicate opening / processing of emails directed at specific people.
 - Email files could be established on line thus eliminating the need to print, collate and then file the email record.
- **Recommendation:** The Executive Secretary – Treasurer spends about 17% of her time prepping for, attending, completing following up from meetings. The By-Laws call for her position to be an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Council of Governors. The Policy Manual extends this requirement to eight committees as a full member, and seven additional meetings as an ex-officio member. The Policy Manual also requires her to attend meetings to approve those persons who serve as committee chairperson. Consideration should be given as to whether her attendance is required at all of these meetings.
- **Recommendation:** There may be greater efficiency achieved in consolidation of functions. The Receptionist, the Administrative Assistant and the Executive Secretary all spend time on bills / banking (8-18% on a Perception basis). An external accountant may look at this process and suggest a streamlined approach with the work more consolidated to one person (perhaps the Administrative Assistant).
- **Recommendation:** Time spent by the Executive Secretary / Treasurer literally on grounds work, such as preparing for the Memorial Garden service, could be avoided by advance planning and utilization of the Building Committee and pre-planned work parties.
- **Recommendation:** Buried in the general support category is what is described to be “extensive time” by the staff to follow up on the collection of dues and roster data from elected leadership. Key timeframes could be incorporated into leadership training. Routine messaging regarding the cost to the organization for this lack of follow through should be implemented. Cascading communication from District Governors to Zone Chairman to Club Presidents should be utilized with follow up provided back to the MD19 office.
- **Recommendation:** Opportunity may exist to streamline statistical data processing. This requires knowledge of Lions International requirements and data access via the website, as well as a significant conversation and challenge to “the way we’ve always done it.” In order to evaluate this process, a small team of knowledgeable Lions in leadership positions who currently access and value the data should work proactively with the Executive Secretary to determine areas for improvement. Stakeholder interviews indicated that MMR processing could be significantly reduced from its monthly processing. One stakeholder indicated that all membership data required by the districts could be pulled from the website, and that the only need for monthly

processing was for billing purposes (and billing only occurs twice a year). Stakeholders who clearly understand what access to data is available and what processing is required by Lions International should be involved. In the same way, the processing of statistics should be analyzed as to whether this work is truly required on a monthly basis, or whether staff time can be transitioned to other areas.

- **Recommendation:** Stakeholder commentary included recommendations for the MD19 office to continue to transition to electronic medium. Proactive, e- communication to the zones, districts, & clubs relative to programmatic offerings which address key challenges of MD19 should be established. Staff notes that 100 % of District Governors, Vice Governors and Second Vice Governors are on e-mail; that all Zone Chairmen are on email, and that email addresses are on file for 80-85% of the Club Presidents / Secretaries. It is recommended that a concerted effort be made to obtain 100% of email addresses for correspondence.
- **Recommendation.** What appears to be missing in reviewing the job descriptions, particularly for the Executive Secretary / Treasurer, and in considering the input from stakeholder reviews, are two areas of focus:
 - Time focused on programmatic support for membership retention and growth.
 - Time spent to provide for consistent, proactive communication regarding concepts, programs, ideas, etc. to support this growth.
 - These areas are addressed in the overall recommendations section.

Staff Time Analysis

	Actual Time Tracked			Perception of Time Spent		
	Recept.	Admin Asst.	Exec. Sec / Treas.	Recept.	Admin. Asst.	Exec. Sec / Treasurer
General Support	23.5 hrs 43.5%	9.0 hrs 14.2%	7.5 hrs 5.5 %	1129 hrs 39%	96 hrs 8 %	520 hrs 26%
Minutes/Reports Typing		1.0 hrs 1.6%	3.75 hrs 2.7 %		72 hrs 6%	
Clerical / Filing / Mail	2.5 hrs 4.7%	2.25 hrs 3.5%		518 hrs 18%		
Bills / Banking	0.75 hrs 1.4%	1.75 hrs 2.8%	8.25 hrs 6%	282 hrs 10%	220 hrs 18%	156 hrs 8%
Prop / MT/ Memorial Garden	0.25 hrs 0.5%		13.25 hrs 9.0 %			160 hrs 8%
Certificates / Awards	3.0 hrs 5.5%	10 hrs 15.7 %	3.75 hrs 2.7 %	140 hrs 5%	80 hrs 6.5%	
Fall Convention	7.75 hrs 14.4%	13 hrs 20.5%	30 hrs 22%	16 hrs 0.5%		160 hrs 8%
Executive Support / Admin			12.25 hrs 8.8 %			520 hrs 26%
Travel			19.5 hrs 14%			
Council / Committee Mtgs	1.25 hrs 2.3%	1.25 hrs. 2%	28.5 hrs 21%		80 hrs 6.5%	340 hrs 17%
Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner	5.5 hrs 10%	3.25 hrs 5.1%	9.25 hrs 6.7%			
Membership (MMR)	6.5 hrs 12%				12 hrs 1%	
Dues	1.5 hrs 2.8 %	1.5 hrs 2.4%				
Voting		3.75 hrs 5.9%			36 hrs 3%	
Roster	0.25 hrs 0.5%	7.75 hrs 12.2%		43 hrs 1.5%	120 hrs 10%	
Other Publications		1.0 hrs 1.6%		606 hrs 21%	5 hrs 0.4%	44 hrs 2%
LCIF / Care	.5 hrs 1.0%	1.75 hrs 2.8%		129 hrs 4.5%		
Statistics	.75 hrs 1.4%				480 hrs 39%	
Programmatic			1.75 hrs 1.3%		15 hrs 1%	105 hrs 5%
Unassigned		6.75 hrs 10.6%	0.75 hrs 0.5%			

Section V

Staff Compensation

As part of this project it was requested that current compensation levels be evaluated. It should be noted that staff competency was not evaluated. This is the role of the Council of Governors as prescribed by the By-Laws through a defined practice and timeframe. A short-time observer would not provide the same level of comprehension. However, from stakeholder interviews, the Executive Secretary – Treasurer is clearly valued for her dedication, commitment and historical knowledge of the MD19 organization. The Administrative Assistant is perceived as knowledgeable, competent & helpful. The receptionist, by virtue of lesser time spent in the position or less visibility, is not as well known.

Current Compensation. Current compensation levels are as follows:

Position	Annualized - Net	Annualized - Gross	Hourly Net
Executive Secretary / Treasurer	\$ 43,389	\$47,055	\$ 20.86
Administrative Assistant	\$ 25,272	\$27,420	\$ 11.84
Receptionist	\$ 19,160	\$ 20,788	\$ 9.25

It should be noted expenses in the MD19 budget line have separate lines for salary and the employers portion of FICA (6.2% of gross), Medicare (1.45% of gross), & FUTA taxes (0.8% of gross), The pay listed in the MD19 budget must be grossed up by 8.45%. This is reflected in the center column. Additionally, a health plan and pension plan have been established.

Competitive Data. Comparative data is most typically segregated by type of industry, profit vs. not for profit, and size of organization in terms of employees or revenues. The following publically available data is representative of all types of companies (Not specific to not for profit - it may be high):

Position	25 th Percentile	50 th Percentile	75 th Percentile
Executive Secretary / Treasurer	\$ 45,000	\$ 51,000	\$ 58,000
Administrative Assistant II	\$ 32,892	\$ 41,852	\$ 46,220
Receptionist	\$ 26,765	\$33,813	\$37,240

Note: the Administrative Assistant II position includes responsibilities related to finance/budget. The data for Executive Secretary / Treasurer is difficult to obtain and is based on an Executive Assistant position with similar type of responsibilities.

Penetration into the range would depend upon education & experience, skill set, and how much of the job performance was done independently without immediate review. Penetration into the range in many companies is also dependent upon tenure with the organization and more importantly, performance review.

Company Size Consideration. Data for comparative salaries should also take into consideration size of organization. It is difficult to assess organizational size with respect to the MD19 organization, which is large in terms of club membership (nearly 14,000) but small in terms of employees (3). There is probably an interim calculation for the number of “direct” service hits for the organization that falls between the number of employees and the full membership – approximately the size of the elected leadership (those the staff work with directly). Median salary levels for the three staff positions based on “employee” size is noted below.

Position	< 25 empl	25-100 empl	100-500 empl
Executive Secretary / Treasurer	\$ 39,000	\$ 45,900	\$ 48,200
Administrative Assistant II	\$ 33,300	\$ 34,400	\$ 35,300
Receptionist	\$ 23,200	\$26,300	\$27,500

This scale provides some reference for size of organization – all scales need to be taken into consideration along with performance.

Summary:

- Caveat – this summary has been prepared based on management experience observations only and not those of a seasoned HR executive, for data drawn from publically available sources.
- Current compensation is not far out of line for the Executive Secretary / Treasurer but may be low for the Administrative Assistant.
- Consideration may be given to an incentive plan for the two primary positions based on the development of a strategic plan and progress towards these goals.

Section VI

Review of the Financials

As part of this project, the MD19 Budget, financial reports and support schedules were reviewed. The purpose of this section is to provide recommendations for improved budgeting and financial reporting, and identify potential cost savings to explore.

General Comments

- Financial management and reporting is identified as a priority for the position of Executive Secretary by both the By-Laws and Policy Manual of the organization. Therefore, the annual budget and monthly financial statements should be well tuned and provide timely, substantive focus on the financial health of the organization.
- Current financial reports should be streamlined to a single page with supportive documentation as required.
- The monthly financials should be refined to a single page document. They should further include MTD & YTD budget to actual comparisons, as well as Year over Year actual comparisons.
- There is inconsistent use of line headings; and they are presented in inconsistent order.
- Subtotals need to be added following each classification.
- The Budget and Finance committee should prepare a 3 year budget that gets updated and rolls forward each year. Estimates of membership should be taken into consideration, as well as any expense changes identified.
- MD19 should take care to continue to adhere to Policy Manual Chapter II: Budget & Finance:
 - **Paragraph D:** The MD19 Executive Secretary / Treasurer shall not exceed any budgeted line item without approval of the Budget & Finance Committee in conjunction with the Council and;
 - **Paragraph E:** The MD19 Executive Secretary Treasurer shall provide members of the Budget & Finance Committee with an actual and a budget income and expenditure statement for the immediately preceding month, no later than twenty (20) days following the end of said month. *(Note: it is recommended this section and MD19's actual practice be amended to provide a singular income/expense statement as noted above, and that this report should be provided within 10 business days.)*

Recommendations for reporting format

The financial statements represent the story of an organization's financial health. The management and preparation of the financial statements is clearly one of the top three focus points for the MD19 office. The financial statements should be streamlined for easy review and identification of issues as they occur.

Income

- Present Dues income on a District –wide basis (consolidated for the nine districts).
- Dues Income should include Billed Dues, Paid Dues, Unpaid Dues / Bad Debt .
- Line items should be consistent between the budget and financial statements.

- Billed Dues should be staggered in the Budget to reflect payment deadlines twice per year.
- Monthly financial statements will show actual dues collected under paid dues; dues billed but not collected under unpaid dues and a separate line for truly uncollectable / bad debt.
- A separate support schedule can be included to show dues billed to dues paid by district. This schedule should also include an unpaid dues / bad debt line. (It is understood that dues may be uncollectable due to membership decline or simply uncollected.)
- Other Income should be simplified
 - Postage Recovered and Printing Recovered should be shown as credit against expenses, with a net postage / printing expense line shown.
 - Interest income should be the final line item under income.
 - Consider consolidating some of the detail (all new club paraphernalia and sales in one line; all subscriptions in one line)
- Income should be Totaled at end of Income Rows (and bolded)

Expense Lines

- The District accounts should be consolidated to a single line. (Note, it is assumed this line item is just a reflection of those monies allocated to an account).
- A support schedule could be created to show the District account funds by district along with singular reimbursement line for funds spent out of these accounts.
- Several line items under Expenses should be consolidated.
 - Consolidate maintenance contracts for other equipment , copiers and printers - the budget can be prepared to show when expected outlay of funds will occur.
 - Consolidate sales / pins / uniforms to single line item
 - Organize like topics – ie. Maintenance contracts, Insurance ... so they appear together.
 - Consolidate items within meeting expense items
 - Consolidate payroll, FICA, Medicare, FUTA, etc.,
 - Pension should be noted as a separate line item (as it currently is) but aggregated for all three FTEs.
 - Totals should be included at bottom of any category of expense (i.e. salary / pension etc totaled for total personnel expense)
- Expenses should be totaled at bottom of expenses lines and bolded.

Goal for Financial Statements

- The monthly financials should be refined to a single page document. They should further include MTD & YTD budget to actual comparisons, as well as Year over Year actual comparisons.
- Columnar headings should be Budget MTD, Actual MTD, Variance MTD, Budget YTD, Actual YTD, Variance YTD; Prior YTD, Variance over Prior YTD.
- The budget should be prepared in the same format.

- Where required or helpful, detail can be provided in support schedules
- Monthly financials (that include month comparisons and YTD comparisons) should be completed and distributed appropriately by the 10th of the month for month prior.
- It is recommended that external accounting expertise be hired to help set up more refined financial reports, and to train the Executive Secretary / Treasurer and Administrative Assistant as necessary.
- This formatting should be able to be accomplished on the current Quick Books platform; otherwise an upgrade is recommended.

Potential Improvements to the bottom line

Revenue

- There is the potential to add revenue through advertising sales for roster & bulletin (Border Crossing). Easy targets for advertising funds are the hotels / locations where Lions congregate (and presumably spend money for meals or room expense).
- Key stakeholder interviews suggested that an independent increase in dues to the MD19 office would not be well received. It is recommended that the MD19 office increase its focus on programmatic growth (membership recruitment, retention and extension); on leadership training that is made available to all club levels; and on providing consistency of programmatic availability from Lions International (i.e. educate clubs on materials / support available for their use). It is also recommended that MD19 become more visible through communication outreach to all clubs via more frequent e-mails.
- As the MD19 office becomes more visible with its outreach, and focus on programmatic growth, it may become possible to increase support for a cost-of-living adjustment to dues and build this into the by-laws.

Expense Considerations

- Of the \$235,000 annual budget, approximately 50% is spent on salaries for the 3 FTEs.
 - MD19 office functionality has changed over the past year, which should result in a reduced need for and/or refocusing of staff. Specifically:
 - The annual convention has been rescheduled to be held in the fall of each year, and a determination has been reached that the Fall Forum will not be held for the next five years. This has resulted in a reduction of 3-4 weeks of the Executive Secretary/Treasurers' time with related staff support.
 - Publications have increasingly been converted to electronic medium with a decrease in staff workload relative to printing supervision and mailing.
 - The District Governor Elect and Zone Chairman Elect training sessions have been consolidated which should result in decreased workload.

- There appears to be opportunity to further reduce staff workload. These need to be analyzed by a team of MD19 Lions in leadership positions in conjunction with the staff – and it is important that the “this is the way it has to be done” is challenged by people who understand the Lions system. These areas are addressed in the staff analysis of time.
- Car lease & insurance is \$6450. Current mileage reimbursement is \$0.50 per mile. This represents a decision point at 12,900 miles. The Finance committee should check how much mileage is being accrued, and otherwise reimburse staff for mileage vs. managing a car.
- The expense budget currently includes a Pitney Bowes postage meter lease at a cost of \$2700 per year. Consideration should be given to reducing this amount by outsourcing remaining printing / mailing service projects of any significant size to a local mail shop. This saves not only the postage meter lease but also staff time associated with the continued mailing.
- As noted above, consideration should be given to outsourcing the printing / mailing of roster – get bids from 3-5 different sites (can be emailed or on flash drive). This represents a savings of staff time.

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Section VII

Detailed Recommendations / Initial Action Plans

- **Priority Recommendation #1:** MD 19 should establish a multi-year strategic plan/ budget that can provide for cohesion throughout the various districts & zones and ensure continuity through leadership transitions. A process for reporting on progress should be established.
 - **Action Plan.** A comprehensive (but still simple) strategic plan should be created to address the overall goals and challenges of the MD 19 organization. It should be linked to a 3-5 year financial plan that is then updated each year to create an annual budget.
 - A budget / strategic planning cycle should be created to coincide with MD19's fiscal year.
 - The Council of Governors should be empowered to create a strategic plan. It should be based on the mission of the organization, and address the key challenges of membership.
 - Specific Action plans for each segment of the plan should be identified with roles and responsibilities of the elected leadership.
 - Staff assignments / support should be clear and annual goals should be created to support the plan implementation
 - The plan should have a clear cut communication plan to for cascading throughout the organization (i.e. club members should receive information on the MD19 strategic plan and how it will be accomplished.
 - Significant consideration should be given to how the passion of Lions for community service can be fully integrated into the strategic plan and its communication to the membership.
 - The final strategy should be capable of engaging membership support.
- **Priority Recommendation #2:** Staff time should be aligned to address MD19's key challenges. While office support for elected leaders remains critical, establishing annual programmatic goals for MD19 staff will better align MD19 to accomplish its goals.
 - **Action Plan:** With 50% of the budget committed to three staff positions, it is understandable that one expected result from this engagement may be to identify the ability to cut staff positions or hours in order to balance the budget. Considering the recommendations made in the staff analysis section coupled with the un-forecast impact on staff time from recent changes (the integration of the Annual Convention & Fall Forum, the integration of DG-Elect and ZC Elect training, & the continued evolution to electronic communication) it may be possible to eliminate / cut back on the Receptionist position. However, it is recommended that the strategy for the organization first be identified and put into place, working to free up staff time through the elimination of redundancy and paper dependency. When the strategic plan is in place and staff is refocused on more programmatic functionality, then staff skill sets can be evaluated, and training provided to enhance skill levels, or other changes considered at that time. The following should be considered:
 - Recommendations set forth in the Staff Time Analysis should be reviewed and acted upon.
 - A small ad hoc committee of Lions in leadership positions with solid knowledge of data needs, the website, Lions International rules, should be tapped to work with the office staff for a period of 1-2 days to establish areas of routine that can be changed.

- A focus on obtaining email addresses for all levels of the organization down to Club President/Secretaries and committee chairs at the Club level should be made a priority.
 - A process for cascading communication should be created and engaged throughout these levels so that everyone understands the importance of passing critical information along.
 - When the strategic plan is complete, specific goals by staff position should be created to support the implementation and achievement of the strategic plan.
 - A reporting process (monthly overview of accomplishments, progress to goals) should be established. This report can be sent to the Council of Governors.
 - Consideration to provide incentive compensation at year end relative to the achievement of staff goals should be made.
- **Priority Recommendation #3.** Financial reports can be streamlined, a more future-thinking budgeting process established, and expenses can potentially be reduced in several areas.
- **Action Plan.** Financial statements should be streamlined and the budget to actual comparison included on a monthly basis (see Review of Financial Statement section for more detail). These statements should be able to be created on the Quick Books software currently in place.
 - It is recommended that external support (qualified accountant) be engaged to support the set up and streamlining of the financials.
 - Concurrently, the external resource should be asked to review the banking / financial processes shared by all three staff persons and make recommendations on streamlining / consolidating these areas.
 - A three to five year budget should be established as part of the strategic planning process.
 - Expenses identified in the Financial Overview section should be evaluated with a specific timeframe for reporting. The Executive Secretary, or the external accounting consultant, should be engaged to look at these issues via written report and a short timeframe.
 - Car lease & insurance is \$6450. Current mileage reimbursement is \$0.50 per mile. This represents a decision point at 12,900 miles. The Finance committee should check how much mileage is being accrued, and otherwise reimburse staff for mileage vs. managing a car.
 - The expense budget currently includes a Pitney Bowes postage meter lease at a cost of \$2700 per year. Consideration should be given to reducing this amount by outsourcing remaining printing / mailing service projects of any significant size to a local mail shop. This saves not only the postage meter lease but also staff time associated with the continued mailing.
 - As noted earlier in this report, consideration should be given to outsourcing the printing / mailing of roster – bids should be obtained from 3-5 different shops (can be emailed or on flash drive).

Exhibit I

Re-cap of Stakeholder Interviews

These interviews have been recorded in neutral format to provide confidentiality for the stakeholders.

How long have you been in Lions?

- Ranging from 11 to 40 years

How long spent in position of leadership?

- Ranging from 5 – 35 years

Why did you first join?

- Because parents were Lions; family history of Lions membership
- Prior membership in other service organization
- Job required networking and community involvement
- Went through Depression, saw how people helped out community
- Wanted to give back to community

What do you view as the primary mission of the Lions Club?

- Service above all. What we can do to make community better place to live (e.g. adopt low income neighborhood, improve parks, eyeglasses/ hearing aids; support local NFP organizations)
- Serve as a Beacon of Hope.
- Provide service to help those less fortunate than ourselves. Mandate for sight very strong but not exclusive.
- Service the needs of our community. Looking for those individuals in community who need help.
- Do what we can in our communities – very involved in sight and hearing – try to keep all money we make in the local community – vision testing and glasses for children (primarily)
- Primary focus is the immediate community. Clubs established to look after specific areas in the community – help improve the livability of area, living conditions, address various circumstances.
- Service to mankind in the ways that Lions do it – Eyesight, hearing, diabetes. Eye conservation.
- Lions are out there to help in community and help others.

What are the primary support functions currently fulfilled by the MD 19 District Office?

General

- Most valuable services provided by MD19 office: assembling manuals, paying attention to Lions International rules. Each district has own constitution & bylaws. Some have their own policy manuals (why?) Supporting District conferences. Supporting the voting process.

- The Office staff functions under the guidelines they have to go by.
- Frequently get emails inviting clubs to various events or dedication of new club. Most of it comes through MD Border crossing & roster
- Roster comes out once per year. Use this for visitations.
- MD19 unique in several different respects – Canadian province plus two states. Ask staff to do a lot of work – promote Lionism and what its all about.
- The office is there for advice, to process reports and let clubs know how they're doing. Help DGs flow thru system and advice on stats. Help president / secretaries compare efforts to other clubs.

Support for COG / Committees / Leadership

- MD office supports / accommodates district governors and zone chairs and committee members.
- Supports COG and council of committees.
- They're there when I need them. Phone call to MD19 offices produces mailings, mailing labels, additional information. Lions members have work, family and Lions responsibilities – couldn't get job done without MD19.

Support for Clubs

- Very little support provided at Club level. Clubs phone on a limited basis – perhaps they don't realize the office is there. Mostly regarding dues and reports.
- Very administrative.
- To some degree supports what the Lions are trying to do in their communities thru clubs. Provides resource for understanding constitution & membership issues.
- Clubs themselves go about their own business – if approaching new area, they find out how things are being done elsewhere.
- Keep us posted on what is going on – send Pres / Sec the rosters & Border Crossing – that keeps people aware of what's going on. I can't think of anything else for the club.
- Primary function to communicate with the club – but don't know how other than the two above.
- Office is focal point for 500 Lions clubs. Office is absolutely necessary – functions performed tie together entire operations keeping it in focus with international organization and intent – keep us on track with what should be done, tell us how we are doing. Provides composite of membership levels, as organization need to be aware of problems that other districts might have. Learn from other districts as to success etc.

How well do you feel the office provides this support ?

- Administrative Services – 4.5 on scale 1-5.
- First impressions when joined was that members felt there was not much in the way of service but found that to be sour grapes. They were getting service but maybe not as fast as they could.

Clubs needed to know seasonality of getting ready for convention i.e. not as accessible during those times

- Probably enough communication through Border Crossing. Letters /emails.
- Do as well as any group could. Could accomplish more if we could afford another person. Record keeping and status is quite important to all of us.
- Not doing what should be done. MD office is bogged down with clerical work – that could probably be streamlined or eliminated – and the office could become more of a focus and resource site.
- Programs to draw upon – what is available. Stakeholder spends time on international website and this is a function that should be served.
- Membership reports shouldn't have to be filed any longer – this is a make-work project. Data can be drawn from LCI site. Only reason membership numbers are required by MD 19 office is to bill –June / December. Not certain as to validity and value – what this adds to the MD. Numbers tracking growth / decline can be accessed through LCI website. This could be done by committee members.
- This is a critique of Lions as a whole – focus on today – whatever is the flavor of the day – do not seem to have any long term vision as to where we are going and how we are going to get there. Don't see a business plan.
- Clubs may carry people unnecessarily to save face.

General Comments on staff

- “Patty bleeds Lions - if she got scratched, she would bleed Lions blood. Very dedicated – Lions means a lot to her. She wants to be sure everyone is accommodated.
- Patty finds herself stretched pretty thin – needs to be able to cross train – pass on responsibilities to Michele or Cindy. Not sure Cindy is up to handling it.
- Patty has 10 bosses – all expect something done at once. Nine seated governors and council chairman – nine immediate past governors and council chairman.
- Do we need size of staff with declining membership? If you want things to continue to be done, then need staff.
- If governors want to take on more responsibility, then could reduce staff. Each year, get different class of governors – some gung ho and willing to handle, others are not.
- May be able to cut costs as become more electronic.

What are the most significant challenges facing your district and facing MD19 as a whole?

- Membership. Caused by difficult economic times - people look for places to cut back. Many people drop out. Not attracting younger population and need to address this. Young people so involved with kids / school – they don't become interested until later in life.
- Significant challenge – getting more members. Membership is getting older and not replacing with younger members. Older members are tired and don't' do as much – need younger.

- Challenge : continue to work on recruitment of new members but encouraging retention of current ; focus on getting younger members. Past president attended conference– club president, came back really pumped up. Good feedback on quality of programs and workshops. When we do that, encourage more people
- Collecting dues. Easier to start a new club than rebuild an old one. Older members don't want to do the work to rebuild – it's an aging group – fine if somebody else does it. Takes 20 to start club – many have 10-12. Same projects doing for 15 years, every meeting is business meeting. Not enough hands to do projects.
- Membership – affects everything we do and everything MD19 does.
- Biggest issue for the MD19 office is its finances. Budgetary process and info is lacking – skill lacking. Financial reports lacking – no comparisons - \$30k deficit. Line items on the financial statements don't correlate to the budget –people don't have good knowledge or understanding. Dues & A/R – know you won't collect 100%. – Budgets should reflect this – and that the membership will change during the year. Budget is out of balance before you start. Financial report has not been reported 3 months in – MD 19 should be able to provide info to committees to work with. Office should be concerned with running the office and let committees function on their own with some support.
- Executive Secretary /Treasurer provides continuity – needs to be actively involved in convention – but does she need to be at every District conference and meeting?
- Half of money collected by MD goes out in salaries and benefits. Membership is upset by this.
- Most challenging in district is size of district – over 1000 miles long – to be district governor or vice district governor, you almost have to have your own business or be retired – you must have a flexible schedule. Could be gone 2-3 weeks at time or even a month. But no one wants to give up international relationship across border. International Lions don't fund enough money for district governor for travel expenses. Economic situation makes it tough to find governors.
- All membership organizations are suffering from lack of membership – don't really know why. The whole platform for service is based on getting and keeping members. Seem to do okay getting members but not keeping them. Members must have feeling of worth and achievement.
- Big difference in attitude of people over last 25-30 years. More people are concerned with “me” and computer / technology than helping their friends & neighbors.

What are the best ways to address these challenges?

- MD19 office more focused on programmatic activities and providing for consistency across operations. Too administrative and focus on not necessary work.
- Things they do that could be done by hierarchy in district.
- Officers themselves could do more – making sure new officer annual reports are correct, all information is there, office staff should not have to call officers for information. Pres / Sec / Treasurer – all data should be correct by that level – not having to get back to someone.

- Clubs currently pay directly to MD19 – burden should be put on district. District Governor should be responsible. Eliminate wasted time in follow up.

How does the MD office support these efforts?

- MD office support – being there to provide resources. As an example, Patty attended membership meeting – had all info there with her. They serve the resource piece – information and help facilitate clubs getting signed up for program.
- Not aware of any financial support. Will help you otherwise in any way you can. Expenses are the primary thing plus gas.
- There is no way they can directly support retention other than provide good records for those who are attempting to do so. Patty very good at helping by going out to talk with people and get them enthused. Extremely capable person. Their purpose is to provide us with tools to establish a good retention program. They do provide the tools and Patty provides whatever backup she can but MD19 is vast.
- Good leadership training is provided, all tools for district

What is the best way to retain membership?

- Ok at getting members in but tend to lose before 2 years and have to change this. Must get new members involved, busy on work of the clubs, have ownership in projects. Lions for Life has been launched in this area.
- Each district appoints retention chairperson – to look into why people are leaving. And to create atmosphere throughout district where people want to stay and be involved. Share desire to serve.
- Some clubs get too involved in personalities / cliques – if someone feels left out, they get out. Sometimes overlook personal feelings of members so they leave.
- Retention is critical – we have tools – but they are not used. Exit interviews should be done.
- Ideally somebody would be sponsor for the member– but they may not have been around for long. Trying to put mentor with new member.
- Ideally membership chair in club plus Secretary –should be designated to talk to member who is leaving. Need to encourage to transfer to another club if moving out of area. Help make introductions.
- New members need to become active immediately. Involvement is the key. Membership committee of 3-4 people right now – only been in Lions < 2 years. They still have contacts and develop program for new members.
- Membership has been steady in this club but declined last couple of years. Every member is active – attendance 80-90%. Being active is key.

What is the best way to increase new membership?

- Likes what Lions International President said at last conference – stressed inviting potential members to work on projects first to show what the Lions organization is all about. MD19 promotes concept – good response from clubs.
- Need to look at message for membership – can ask people to become a member and do ok in this regard – but no response if not interested.
- Find out what is interesting to someone in a project and use project to “close” the push for membership.
- Members don’t know how to recruit – many clubs have 20-30 members who have been there for 20-30 years. Need roundtables to talk about it. Idea of new club with 3-5 members and knocking on the doors to expand – this fails within 2 years.
- Advertising – Lions International should have television program directed at people. Lots of people won’t go on line –Advertising for Rotary and other clubs but not for Lions – need to get names out there – esp. North America
- Have open houses – expose new prospects to Lions members.

Are there support functions not being provided by the MD 19 office that you feel should be supported?

- MD office should provide for consistency – have program consistency across the clubs. They can eliminate confusion by offering rules and guidelines.
- Can’t think of any – great office
- They spend too much time on having to follow up with districts / clubs.
- Staff role is to bring information to volunteers so they can be good workers.
- Patty needs to get out / or delegate someone to promote training and retention
- Need to get out to clubs more – do leadership workshops. Can’t get motivated by just attending conferences – many people can’t afford. On both sides of border. Not just directed at cabinet but further down to clubs.
- Provide the latest communication.
- Can’t think of any because any information we want – history of district or current list of clubs can download from site. If not on site can send it to us.
- We download membership data from website – LEMPRR Jim McCollum excellent about sending out monthly membership.
- No – can’t think of any. All of the important roles are covered. Give us the facts, provide us with information necessary – it’s up to various districts to move forward
- It would be nice if we could afford to have FT person working on nothing but extension – new Lions clubs.

- Any failings come about downstream as people in leadership positions may not have full skills needed.

Does the relative value of the dues “tax” paid to the MD19 district office reflect the value of service provided?

- I think so – think there may be an issue in how it’s presented. A \$2 increase should be presented as per month amount. Most Lions understand what the MD 19 office does – clearly more so at Leadership level. Thinks memorial garden is important.
- To a very small extent. Out of dues ½ of money goes to that office – what do we get from that? From the salaries that the club members pay. Not a lot of value. The other ½ for conventions, publications, and that is fine.
- I think so – don’t suppose it’s enough to support everything they want to do but we feel we get our money’s worth.
- Think we get an awful lot for a very little. Wish we could increase this – Hope we provide them with the tools they need to do their jobs.
- Getting good value for \$16.60. Think probably needs to be increased.
- When you get down to nuts and bolts – we are getting way more than what the dollars are paid. For same job description would be paying more.
- There are some groups that feel we could do fine on our own.
- For leadership, essentially a 4 year commitment moving through the stages. Need office support – some feel like it’s taking too much of their time.
- Yes – many people balk at it but think that’s fine. Membership would not support increase.

General Comments on dues

- \$65 cheapest set of dues.
- Clubs should have dues of \$65 at a minimum. Can be more.
- Probably not general support for an increase in MD19 tax (multiple comments)
- Took 3 years to sell Lions International increase.
- Budget has really been cut to bare bones. Staff chose a year ago to forego their pension for a year. Should not have foregone pension.
- Dues paid on semi annual basis, billed twice a year. Some get very lax about paying their dues. Majority of clubs get dues paid to international but not MD19. As of June 30, dues in best shape from insistent that they get paid.
- Would think Lions would support increased dues tax to increase staff – everyone loves Patty & Michelle.

Have you been to the MD19 office? Do you have any thoughts on staff / organization ?

- Office could be streamlined – could be much more functional. We produce a tremendous amount of paper – put manuals and training materials on line and force the districts to use communication system of the internet and website.
- At the District level , leadership needs to make sure data correct and dues in.
- Found staff very helpful – both Michele and Patty – know them. Lovely office – enjoy their fireplace. No problem with it
- In my experience it is fine. I don't know what kind of additional training they receive unless they pay for it themselves.
- Should free up additional time for staff to be of focus to the clubs.
- Very cordial, hospitable – right there for you; materials as requested are ready to go
- Commend Patty Allen for tremendous amount of hours – knowledge and understanding of MD is second to none. In that regard, she is invaluable. Michele is good subordinate. Cindy is an office lady / telephone answerer. Whether we need that body? Roles and functions – could be operated with 2 people. May have needed 3 when everything was done manually but perhaps not now.
- Couldn't say enough good for caliber of staff – as is the case in every office, small mistakes made here and there but know they are dedicated and care. Patty has been there since we bought building – worked with her dad. Wouldn't trade her for 5 anybody's. Michelle and Cindy are nice people – Cindy is newest and knows the least therefore, works hard and does what she is asked to do.
- All excellent – Michelle and Patty make you feel comfortable very nice, cordial. Great staff. Think they do a great job - could use more staff. Patty spends a lot of time on the go out of town to work with conventions etc.
- Best use of MD19 staff time – for staff to be able to send information to club Presidents & Secretaries and ZC - keep them informed –
- Be more proactive rather than reactive. MD19 would send out tip sheets on things that should be done this month. Could be done for President / Secretary – help w/ consistency across clubs.
- Need friendly reminders to help with planning process. Half of clubs do not attend any form of training – so this would be added benefit. All need to be prodded a bit.

From your attendance at the annual forums, how would you rate the value and quality of these programs?

- Very good – good workshops, good time to connect with Lions from other clubs, new ideas get generated. Once someone goes to forum / convention, they become involved and excited.
- Pretty good. Anything has room for improvement. Very little activity in officer training until recently. Trying to improve in district.
- Feedback from those who attended was very positive
- Think they could be better – workshops offered could be better – would get more attendance.

- Food costs exorbitant for what you get. (multiple comments)
- Venue should be more centralized (Recent forum in Pasco is a long way for Canadians to go.
- MD19 handles large area but should have picked more central location for forum.
- Would like to see different workshops offered and see staff ask the clubs what the workshops should cover.
- Forums are good for exchanges – learn something from them each time – Go because of exchange with other district – only time I get to know what is happening.
- Attendance of conferences is about 400-700 out of 14k members. Cuts across all levels of organization. Of 500, 15% regular Lions come to workshop – good time for Lions to renew old friendships.
- Forums are excellent – primary educational, where conferences have some education but probably more social.
- Likes to hear about what’s going on within MD – and sight and hearing and how we work within those timeframes.
- Don’t pay much attention to motivational speakers (wouldn’t be here if needed that)

Comments on Training

- Training is great – Leadership 101, one day training focusing on public speaking, club organization, conflict resolution. This is springboard to NW Lions Institute – 3 day intensive leadership course. Impressed to see people who are tentative about Lions become super excited – Foundation pays half of \$350 tuition which covers hotel & meals
- We try to put too much into the time allotted for programs. Biggest beef is cost of programs – cost is major hindrance for attendance. Some people don’t mind what they spend but will cost \$1k for self/spouse to attend fall forum. Meal costs that we are paying is not worth money. If didn’t have to go for some of the meals would not do it (\$16 / breakfast ; \$18-20 for sandwich, cookie and lunch). It’s supplementing the rest of the conference.

What would you like to see improved?

- Clubs don’t even know what the COG team is – need to be educated.
- We pay more attention to the international president’s theme – gets published in magazines. Each DG will expand upon this theme. Clubs more aware of international side than MD19.
- Lack of communication. General population now can see Border Crossing on website – but doubts the average Lion reads it
- Eliminate wasteful activity such as following up on dues. Send bill to members, pay by certain date, then it gets paid to MD by DG. Some clubs don’t bill on time. District doesn’t know it’s not paid. Restructure so rather than clubs paying MD19 directly, they pay to District and District is accountable.

- MD19 – biggest issue is financial condition. Budgetary process and information is lacking – skills are lacking. Financial reports lacking – there are no comparisons - There is a \$30k deficit. Budget process – line items – don't correlate to the budget. People don't have good knowledge or understanding of what is happening. Dues & A/R – know you won't collect 100%, and the budgets should reflect this, reflect that the membership will change during the year. Budget is out of balance before you start. Financial report has not been reported 3 months. MD 19 office should be able to provide info to committees to work with.
- Office should be concerned with running the office and let committees function on their own with some support. Executive Secretary / Treasurer provides continuity – needs to be actively involved in convention – but does she need to be at every District conference and meeting? Half of money collected by MD goes out in salaries and benefits. Membership is upset by this.
- In MD 19 office – more staff would be appropriate – Patty seems quite far behind. If more qualified staff would help them get their paperwork done.
- Would like very much to see districts and groups pay attention to what is made available. On the whole, MD operation provides / makes available everything that is desirable but people don't take advantage of it.
- Reduce paper back and forth. Would like to see MD19 as more than an office – focus on putting on workshops in various areas, developing leadership skills, developing leaders and getting them motivated.

What do you hope to learn from this engagement?

- Hope there would be an effort if suggestions made by folks like me were honestly looked at – some way of streamlining and getting District Governors take on more responsible.
- I'd like to see what others feel about MD19 – these are the questions and here are answers.
- Interested to see what others say.
- Interested in seeing financial health. Budget for MD is \$250k. Examples given of self-sustainability.
- Curious as to what might come from it. It's possible that we accept too many things as the way we always done it.
- Comfortable with MD office and how it functions, - likes structure and Council with current and past, elect officials from those we feel are most competent.
- Just don't like the fact we lose members and don't know why.

Are there any other thoughts you would like to share ?

- District Governors are appointed by Zone chairs vs. being elected by clubs as is done in other organizations.
- ZCs tough to find – they have to spend money out of pocket.

- Roster could be electronic; although some complications where rural areas still on dial up.
- District governor – should provide one sheet saying all dues paying up on time. Districts need to be more responsible for what they're doing.
- Zone chairman expenses get turned in more as economy is down.
- Budget committee has reps from each of 9 districts and council chairman. Looks at past year performance and where income generated – and try to manage within that.
- Bottom line on income and bottom line on expenses. Review by accountant showed \$39k –last year – didn't have that many dues uncollected but fair amount. Track on profit / loss statement. Quicken program for accounting. Should use comparison.
- Theme is "Strong Leaders make Strong Clubs. Training supports secession planning – have Associate ZC and Associate- Associate ZC.
- Have not tried accessing border crossing on computer. Photos are difficult.
- One other club extremely active – 60 members – 3-4 clubs in district working in community. In B.C. a lot of clubs relied on gaming –service clubs and NFP made application to get money \$5k to \$30k per year – use to write checks to whoever they support – but not visible or out in communities.
- Think you've covered most of issues. Don't think that at the district level the people understand what the MD office provides for us. Don't take advantage of what they can accomplish. Very valuable and viable resource. Some people aware of that fact and use these resources. It's a Value added operation – not throwing money away.
- Lack vision – need business plan. Any business would make sure they were running efficiently.
- We don't receive feedback as to what is working. MD office could be a lot more assistance in that regard.
- Hope for something very meaningful and that recommendations are acted upon.