



DISTRICT POLICIES

OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL ALABAMA MISSISSIPPI DISTRICT

APPROVED BY THE DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS, AUGUST 20, 2023

Table of Contents

District Policies

[Revision Notes](#) – iii

[Foreword](#) - 1

[ARTICLE I: DISTRICT PURPOSES](#) – 1

- General
- New Club Building
- Goals to Accomplish Purposes

[ARTICLE II: DISTRICT POLICIES](#) – 1-2

- Distribution of District Policies
- Revision of District Policies

[ARTICLE III: DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS](#) – 2-7

- District Officers and Executive Committee
- District Elections and Terms of Office
 - Governor Elect
 - Secretary/Treasurer
 - Nominating Procedures for Governor Elect
 - Nominating Procedures for Lieutenant Governor Elect
- District Board of Directors
- Duties of the District Officers
- District Offices Lapel Insignia
- District Board of Directors Meetings
- District Executive Committee Meetings
- District Executive Committee – Powers and Duties

[ARTICLE IV: DISTRICT COMMITTEES](#) – 8

[ARTICLE V: ZONES](#) – 8-9

- Establishment of Zones
- Zone Meetings

[ARTICLE VI: DISTRICT CONFERENCES](#) – 9

[ARTICLE VII: DISTRICT CONVENTION AND FOURTH QUARTER CONFERENCE](#) – 10-13

- General
- District Convention Rules and Procedures
 - Delegates
 - Adoption of Rules
 - Motions and Debate
 - Voting
 - Election of Officers
 - General Rule

[ARTICLE VIII: HOSPITALITY ROOM AT DISTRICT CONFERENCES AND CONVENTION](#) - 13

[ARTICLE IX: INTERNATIONAL OFFICER VISITS](#) – 14

- Optimist International President’s Visitation
- Optimist International Representatives to District Meetings

[ARTICLE X: DISTRICT FINANCES](#) – 15-17

- General Provisions
- District Allotment from Optimist International
- District Dues
- Finance Committee, Budgets and Annual Review
- Depositories and Signatories
- Financial Records
- Travel Expenses

[ARTICLE XI: DISTRICT PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES](#) – 17-22

- Achievement and Awards Program
- Achievement and Awards Appeals and Protests
- Youth Clubs
- Scholarships
- Contestants Personal Privacy Protection
- District Essay Contest
- District Communication Contest for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CCDHH)
- District Oratorical Contest
- District Junior Golf

[ARTICLE XII: OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION](#) – 22-23

- Convention
- Hospitality Room

[ARTICLE XIII: MISCELLANEOUS](#) – 23-24

- District Bulletin
- District Directory
- Flags, Creed, Banners
- Gifts – Mementos
- New Club Charter Presentation
- Gifts to New Clubs
- Document Retention

POLICY REVISION NOTES

August 20, 2023

PAGE	LOCATION	CHANGE
23	Article XIII, Miscellaneous, District Directory, Paragraph A	Deleted the words "all district policies and" from the last sentence in the paragraph. Policies are now in a standalone document.
24	Article XIII, Miscellaneous, Document Retention (New paragraph)	Added new paragraph "Document Retention".

FOREWORD

The intent of the Alabama-Mississippi District policies is to comply with the Optimist Bylaws and Policies (adopted by the International Board of Directors July 2019) which will promote efficient and effective District Administration. A parallel purpose is to facilitate the necessary policies of the District to maintain permanent continuity to the practices, procedures, and Administration of District affairs.

All members of District Board of Directors shall be provided a copy of the District policies at the beginning of each administrative year. **Mandatory wording is to be shown in bold face type in the District Policies as dictated by the Bylaws of Optimist International.**

ARTICLE I: District Purposes

A. General

The sole purpose of the District shall be to function as an administrative division of Optimist International in furtherance of the purposes Optimist International, these Bylaws, and Policies as established by the International Board of Directors. The District shall provide service and support to Clubs for the purpose of enhancing growth, participation, Administration, and youth service. All Clubs located within the territorial boundaries of a District shall be members of the District, except as requested by the Club or Clubs involved, and in concurrence with the District or Districts involved and the Optimist International Board of Directors. (OI Bylaws, Article VII, Section 2)

B. NEW CLUB BUILDING POLICIES

The District will promote the building of New Clubs in accordance with the Bylaws, Policies, and Guidelines developed by the International Board of Directors.

C. GOALS TO ACCOMPLISH PURPOSES

The goals of the District to accomplish the above purposes are: Provide Opportunities for Personal Growth, Provide Leadership Training, Promote New Club Building, Promote Membership Growth and Retention, and Service to Youth.

ARTICLE II: District Policies

Distribution of District Policies

The District Secretary-Treasurer shall provide Optimist International and each member of the District Board of Directors with a copy of all District policies at the beginning of the administrative year.

Revision of District Policies

- A. **The District shall adopt a set of operating policies authorized by the International Board of Directors, which will cover the items necessary to administer the District. These policies shall be adopted annually by the District Board of Directors at the Annual Convention or a specially called convention.** (OI Bylaws Article VII, Section 3, Paragraph E). These policies shall be reviewed annually by the District Executive Committee and revised as necessary. All recommended revisions in policies shall be approved by the full Board of Directors. Policies may be reviewed and revised by the Executive Committee and Board of Directors any time by a specially called convention session by the Governor.
- B. After adoption, the District Policies are to be forwarded to Optimist International for approval within 30 days, including any amendments. No adopted policy by the District shall be in conflict of the International Bylaws or operating policies of the Optimist International.

ARTICLE III: District Board of Directors

District Officers and Executive Committee

- A. The District Board of Directors shall administer the Business of the District.
- B. An official representative of Optimist International at the First Quarter District Meeting shall officially install the District Board of Directors.
- C. The District Board of Directors shall consist of the Officers of the District, the Immediate Past Governor, the Past Governor, all Club Presidents, and the JOI Governor (a non-voting member).
- D. The Officers of the District shall be the Governor, the Governor-Elect, the Lt. Governors, the District Secretary-Treasurer, and Assistant to the Governor, if applicable, who shall be a non-voting member.
- E. **The Executive Committee shall consist of the Officers of the District, the Immediate Past Governor, the Past Governor, and the JOI Governor (a non-voting member).** (OI Bylaws Article VII, Section 3, Paragraphs B and C)
- F. A club delegate will be allowed to speak and act as the President in the conduct of the business coming before the Board of Directors.
- G. **The District may delegate, subject to the limitations imposed by these Bylaws, the powers of the District Board of Directors to the District Executive Committee.** (OI Bylaws Article, VII, Section 3, Paragraph C)

District Elections and Terms of Office

No one shall be eligible for election or to hold a District office unless: He/she is duly enrolled on the International roster as a member of a Club in good standing in Optimist International; and for the office of Governor or Governor-Elect they should have served all of a term of Club President. (OI Bylaws Article VII, Section 6, Paragraph A). In addition to having served as a Club President, to be eligible to serve as a Governor or Governor-Elect, one must have served as a Lt. Governor.

Friends of Optimists shall be ineligible to serve as a club officer and/or on the Club Board of Directors. (OI Bylaws Article III, Section 2)

Governor Elect

The Governor-Elect shall be elected at the annual or a special duly called convention by a majority of the accredited delegates present and voting at the time of the election. The Governor-Elect shall not serve in any other elective office in the same year he/she is Governor-Elect. (OI Bylaws Article VII, Section 6, Paragraph C). The Governor-Elect shall automatically become Governor on 1 October of the year following the year in which he/she was elected Governor-Elect. Following the District convention, the Governor-Elect shall be known as the Governor-Designate. (OI Bylaws article VII, Section 6, Paragraph B)

Secretary/Treasurer

The Secretary/Treasurer shall be appointed for a term of one year by the Governor-Elect. The appointment of the Secretary-Treasurer designate shall be confirmed at the third quarter Board meeting by the District's Board of Directors, and shall take office 1 October next following confirmation. A District Secretary-Treasurer, District Secretary, District Treasurer, of any combination thereof, shall not serve more than three consecutive years. (OI Bylaws Article VII, Section 6, Paragraph C). The term of office for the Secretary-Treasurer shall be one year. (OI Bylaws Article VII, Section 6, Paragraph D)

Nominating Procedures for Governor-Elect

- A. The District Candidate Qualification Committee prior to 1 July shall seek and receive the names and qualifications of prospective candidates for the office of Governor-Elect and shall publish such names prior to the elections.
- B. The committee shall nominate qualified candidates for that office at the District Convention. The Committee may consider prospective candidates on its own motion.
- C. The Committee shall require the following:

1. A written presentation of the proposed candidate's qualifications, including the requirement to have served as a Lt. Governor
2. A letter from the club of the proposed candidate stating their support
3. A statement from the proposed candidate's employer, if employed, indicating their understanding and approval of the anticipated commitment to serve
4. A written statement from the proposed candidate that, if elected, he/she will be able to fill an extremely important position in the organization which requires dedication, loyalty, energy, significant amounts of time, and some financial sacrifice in support of the District's Mission and Programs.

D. After elected, the Governor-Elect takes office 1 October and serves in this office until election of a new Governor-Elect, at which time he/she becomes Governor-Designate and takes office as Governor 1 October. **The Governor-Elect shall not serve in any other elected office in the same year he/she is Governor-Elect.** (OI Bylaws Article II, Section 6, Paragraph B)

1. The Governor-Designate shall appoint the chairpersons and the required number of members of all committees, with the exception of the Candidate Qualifications Committee, and shall announce such appointments not later than 1 October following his/her election.
2. At the Third Quarter meeting, the Governor-Elect shall name the Secretary-Treasurer who will take office 1 October of the year appointed.

Nominating Procedures for Lieutenant Governor-Elect

- A. The District Candidate Qualification Committee, prior to 1 April, shall seek and receive the names and qualifications of prospective candidates from the clubs within the Zone for each office of Lt. Governor and shall publish such names prior to the date of the election.
- B. In the event a candidate cannot be obtained from within the Zone, the committee shall consider candidates outside the Zone.
- C. The Committee shall nominate qualified candidates for the office of Lt. Governor for each Zone in the District at the Third Quarter District meeting.
- D. The Committee may consider prospective candidates on its own motion.
- E. The Lieutenant Governor-Elect candidates must be or have been a Club President.
- F. Nominations may be made from the floor by delegate members of Clubs in the Zone.

Duties of the District Officers

The duties of the District Officers shall be as delineated by Optimist International.

1. Governor: Under the general supervision of the International Board of Directors, it shall be the duty of the Governor to further the mission and purposes of Optimist International and promote the interest and coordinate the work of member Clubs within the District. The Governor shall function as the chief executive officer of the District, preside at all meetings of the District Board of Directors, the Executive Committee, and the annual convention of the District. They shall be an ex-officio member of all committees, and exercise general supervision over affairs of the District subject only to the Board of Directors, the delegates to the annual District convention, and the Board of Directors of Optimist International. They shall always act on behalf of Optimist International in all relations with member Clubs within the District. They shall also attend the annual convention of Optimist International and any special meetings or conferences conducted by Optimist International for Governors. The Governor is encouraged to visit clubs within the District. Notification will be given to the Clubs prior to the visit as a courtesy. The Governor or his/her representative is required to be at each New Club Charter presentation.

2. District Governor-Elect: The District Governor-Elect will be responsible for promotion and planning of training at the District convention for Presidents-Elect, Lieutenant Governors-Elect and Secretary and/or Treasurers Appointees, with the assistance of the Leadership Development Committee, utilizing the Optimist International Faculty Guide.

3. District Secretary and/or Treasurer: It shall be the duty of the District Secretary/Treasurer to: (i) attend all meetings of the District Board of Directors, the District Executive Committee and the annual District convention, and to act as Secretary thereof, (ii) keep true and correct minutes of such meetings and transmit a copy to the International Office and to others so designated by the District Board, within 30 days after the close of any such meeting, (iii) receive and deposit all moneys due the District. (iv) disburse moneys within the limitations of the District budget or by specific instructions of the District Board, the District Executive Committee, or the accredited delegates at the District convention, (v) keep an accurate and complete record of all financial transactions and submit financial statements and records required by the District Board of Directors and as set forth in the Bylaws & Policies of Optimist International, (vi) keep books of account open at all times to the District and International Board of Directors, with such books to be subject to annual review as of 30 September of each year, (vii) shall issue and cause to be delivered to each member Club in the District an official call for the annual convention at least 30 days prior to the date thereof, in which notice the time and place of the holding of said annual convention shall be set forth, (viii) shall issue and cause to be delivered to each member Club in the District, at least 20 days prior to the date of said special convention a written notice of the time and place of the holding of same together with a general statement of the proposed business to be transacted, (ix) issue and deliver notice of all meetings of the

members of the Board of Directors at least 30 days prior to said meetings, and (x) perform such duties as prescribed in these policies. **A Secretary and/or Treasurer shall, at the end of his or her term of office, deliver all District records to the incoming Secretary and/or Treasurer.**

4. Lieutenant Governor: Each Lieutenant Governor shall function as a representative of Optimist International and the Governor in his/her assigned Zone, and generally conduct their office in a manner contributory to the attainment of all objectives of the District and Optimist International within each Zone. Each Lieutenant Governor should make at least two visitations to each Club in their Zone during the administrative year. The Lieutenant Governor must make every attempt to visit each newly affiliated Club in their Zone within 90 days following its official organization. They shall make the prescribed report of each visitation within 30 days. Each Lieutenant Governor should schedule and conduct meetings in the Zone as often as needed and at least each quarter. They should not conflict with any District meeting. Notice shall be given to the Zone Club Presidents and Club Secretary-Treasurers at least 15 days prior to such meeting. They shall make the prescribed report of each meeting within 30 days.

5. Assistant to the Governor: It shall be the duties of the Assistant to the Governor to: (i) cooperate with and act as representative for the Governor-Designate in preparation for the year, (ii) act as liaison between a certain number of Lieutenant-Governors and/or committee chairs and the Governor, and (iii) attend all District Board of Directors meetings and Executive Committee meetings as well as the annual convention.

District Offices Lapel Insignia (ACCOUNT 400)

The District Administration shall provide official lapel insignia for all District Officers to be presented at the time of their installation. The recipients and identification of insignia shall be as follows:

- Governor's insignia
- Governor-Elect's insignia
- Lieutenant Governor's insignia
- Assistant to the Governor
- District Secretary-Treasurer's insignia

District Board of Directors Meetings (ACCOUNTS 130 AND 360)

- A. The District Board of Directors may meet quarterly, in person or virtually, at such time and place as may be determined by the Governor and Executive Committee. (OI bylaws Article VII, Section 3, Paragraph F) The schedule of meetings shall be presented during the 4th quarter meeting prior to the**

Governor-Designate taking office in the new fiscal year.

- B. Notice of all meetings of the District Board of Directors shall be sent by the District Secretary-Treasurer to all members of the Board, with the agenda prepared by the Governor and the District Secretary, at least thirty (30) days prior to said meetings. (OI bylaws Article VII, Section 3, Paragraph F) Board meetings shall be budgeted and conducted under Accounts 130 and 360 and operated on a break-even basis. Fees for registrations, meals and gratuities will be collected by the Convention and Conference Chair and submitted to the District Secretary-Treasurer.**
- C. Most recent financial statements and minutes will be distributed two weeks in advance of any District meeting.**

District Executive Committee Meetings (ACCOUNTS 130 AND 360)

- A. The District Executive Committee shall meet, in person or virtually, immediately prior to meetings of the District Board of Directors, or at a call of the Governor, or a majority of the members of the Executive Committee. (OI Bylaws Article VII, Section 3, Paragraph C)**
- B. Most recent financial statements and minutes will be distributed two weeks in advance of any District meeting.**

District Executive Committee-Powers and Duties

A. The Executive Committee is authorized to make purchases and pay expenses, travel allowances, reimbursements and obligations as provided by and within the limitations of the budget, make plans and establish policy furthering the objectives of the District, and exercise general control over plans, budget and program of the District convention. (OI Bylaws Article VII, Section 3, Paragraph C) The Executive Committee shall fill any vacancies of the District in accordance with OI Bylaws.

B. For good cause or upon death, resignation or incapacitation of any elected or appointed officers or any officer-designate of a District, or in the event of the failure of any officer to carry out the duties of the office, the incumbent District Executive Committee may declare said office vacant and shall select a successor to fill the remainder of the term. Should the Immediate Past Governor(s) be unable to serve as members of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors, the next Immediate Past Governor shall automatically become a member of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors in his/her place and stead. The foregoing shall apply to any individual who has been elected or appointed to office but for any reason does not assume or carry out the duties of the office. (OI Bylaws Article VII, Section 3, Paragraph D)

ARTICLE IV: District Committees

The District Board of Directors shall establish committees as it deems appropriate to carry out the Administration of the District. (OI Bylaws Article II, Section 3, Paragraph G)

- A. The Governor-Designate shall appoint the chairpersons and the required number of members of all committees, with the exception of the Candidate Qualifications Committee, and shall announce such appointments not later than 1 October their year of service.** (OI Bylaws Article VII, Section 3, Paragraph G)
- B. The Candidate Qualification Committee shall seek, qualify, and nominate the best-qualified candidates for elected offices. The Committee membership shall be composed of the last five active Past Governors and the Governor-Elect as of 1 October. The Chairperson of said Committee will be the longest tenured Past Governor. Written qualifications of the Governor-Elect and the Lt Governor-Elects will be disseminated to all Club Presidents.

ARTICLE V: Zones

Establishment of Zones

- A. Pursuant of the International Bylaws, the number and boundaries of Zones, for any administrative year, if subject to revision, shall be determined by the Board of Directors prior to its meeting held in the third quarter of the preceding year to accommodate selection of Lieutenant Governors to serve during the next administrative year.
- B. All proposals for a realignment of Zone boundaries shall be submitted to the Governor not less than thirty (30) days prior to said meetings. No Zone shall be created with less than three (3) Clubs. New Clubs shall automatically be assigned to Zones in which they are geographically located and services thereto shall be the responsibility of the Lieutenant Governor of such zone.

Zone Meetings

- A. Each Lieutenant Governor shall be responsible for the conduct of a Zone meeting in each quarter of the administrative year and notice of such meetings shall be sent to the President and Secretary-Treasurer of each Club in the Zone, as well as the District Governor, at least fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting.
- B. All Zone meetings shall be conducted on a no-host, no-registration fee basis. If fees for use of the facilities for Zone meetings are anticipated or incurred, such expenses shall be budgeted and paid by the District Administration with written prior approval by the District Executive Committee.

C. The Lieutenant Governor shall be responsible for preparation and distribution of each Zone meeting program and completion and filing of a report on each meeting on the form provided by Optimist International. Because Zones are not legislative bodies, minutes are inappropriate and are not required.

ARTICLE VI: District Conferences (ACCOUNTS 130 AND 360)

A. District Conferences shall be planned and conducted by the District Administration, at the time and place of the quarterly meetings of the District Board of Directors. Such conferences shall invite and encourage the attendance of Club Officers and Committee Chairpersons, District Officers and District Committee Personnel, and such others as may benefit from the conduct of such conferences. The District Board of Directors shall establish a quorum of one third of eligible members to accomplish the necessary business of the Conferences. The District may hold Super Zone Meetings at the Regional level in lieu of a District Conference in either the first or second quarter.

B. The program for such conferences may include the introduction and promotion of Club and District goals and objectives, buzz sessions, forums, round tables and leadership development events.

C. The Third Quarter Conference shall include the election of Lt. Governors for the incoming year.

D. The Third Quarter Conference shall also include District finals for the Oratorical contest.

E. All such conferences will be budgeted and conducted by the District Administration on a break-even basis. Income includes fees for registration, meals and gratuities. Expenses include fees for hospitality and meeting rooms, Governor's accommodations, meals, printing, postage and other expenses approved by the Finance Committee. Notice of such conferences shall accompany the notice of District Board of Directors meetings.

F. Alcoholic beverages shall not be served at any official function of the District Conference. The official functions of the District Conference are:

1. Training Sessions
2. Executive Committee Meetings
3. All Official Meals
4. The Board of Directors Meetings

G. All guest speakers at the conferences (i. e., at meals, training sessions, and/or special sessions) shall be obtained on a voluntary basis. No fees shall be paid to the speakers. Gratuities limited to a meal, if speaking at a meal function, and a small token of our appreciation.

ARTICLE VII: District Convention and Fourth Quarter Conference (ACCOUNTS 120 AND 350)

General

- A. The District Convention and Fourth Quarter Conference shall be held annually between the dates of 1 August and 30 September, said date to be established by the District Board of Directors at the recommendation of the District Convention and Conferences Chairperson. The Convention location shall be recommended by the Governor and approved by the Board of Directors at the time of said Convention. (OI Bylaws Article VII, Section 4)**
- B. The Convention and Fourth Quarter Conference will be budgeted by the District Administration on a break-even basis. Income includes fees for registration, meals and gratuities. Expenses include fees for hospitality and meeting rooms, Governor's accommodations, meals, printing, postage and other expenses approved by the Finance Committee.
- C. The Convention and Fourth Quarter Conference shall be not more than a four (4) day event ending on Sunday.
- D. No fees shall be allocated from District dues to supplement registration cost.
- E. Convention and Fourth Quarter Conference Programs:
1. The Governor, through consultation with the Governor-Elect, shall prepare the agenda and/or curriculum for all business sessions, leadership development events, forums, and meal services.
 - 2. The schedule and program shall be distributed to all District Officers, Chairpersons, Lt. Governors, Club Presidents, Secretary-Treasurers, Lt. Governor-Elects, Club President-Elects and Secretary-Treasurer Designates not less than thirty (30) days prior to the meeting.**
- F. The meeting schedule shall include as a minimum:
1. All Leadership Development events for Club and District Officers as prescribed by Optimist International

2. A Convention business session to accomplish the business of the Convention including election of the Governor-Elect.
3. Executive Committee Fourth Quarter Meeting.
4. A Recognition Banquet to provide the official OI Representative an opportunity to address assembled delegate and guests and to install the new District Officers.
5. District Board of Directors Fourth Quarter Meeting. (OI Bylaws Article VII, Section 4)
6. A time for conducting a Memorial Service for members who died during the past year.

G. All guest speakers at the Conferences, i.e., at meals, training sessions, and/or special sessions, shall be obtained on a voluntary basis. No fees shall be paid to the speakers. Gratuities limited to a meal, if speaking at a meal function, and a small token of our appreciation.

District Convention Rules and Procedures

A. DELEGATES

1. The Convention shall be composed of registered Optimist delegates.
2. A delegate is a member of an Optimist Club in good standing, who has registered at the Convention and been certified by the Credentials Committee, which consists of the District Conference/Convention Chairperson and the District Secretary-Treasurer. Good standing indicates the delegate's Club is not in arrears in financial obligations.
3. The number of delegates of an Optimist Club shall be one (1) vote for each ten (10) members or a fraction thereof (+6).
4. Credentials Committee shall report at the beginning of the Convention session. The report shall include only those Clubs with properly accredited delegates.
5. An individual holding membership in more than one club may be a delegate for each Club provided he/she has paid the required registration fee from each Club for which

he/she intends to vote.

B. ADOPTION OF RULES

- 1. The first order of Convention Business shall be the adoption of the Convention Rules by a majority vote of delegates present. The Convention Rules may then be amended, suspended, or rescinded by a two-thirds vote of the delegates present. (OI Bylaws Article VII, Section 4)**
- 2. The District Board of Directors shall establish a quorum of one third of the members of the Board to conduct the business of the Convention. (OI Bylaws Article VII, Section 4)**

C. MOTIONS AND DEBATE

1. Delegates shall be seated in the front of the room.
2. Any Convention registrant who is a member of an Optimist Club may speak on any question provided he/she addresses the Chair, is recognized by the Chair, and states his/her name and Club affiliation.
3. Only accredited delegates may make or second motions.
4. No motion shall be entertained by the Chair unless seconded, after which debate can begin.
5. Debate on a given motion shall be limited to two minutes per speaker with a limit of ten (10) speakers, five (5) on each side of the issue.

D. VOTING

1. The vote on any question before the Convention shall be taken following completion of debate.
2. All voting shall be based on total number of votes cast by accredited delegates.
3. At the discretion of the Chair, a question shall be decided by a voice, hand, rising, roll call, or ballot vote.
4. A ballot vote may be directed by a majority vote of the delegates.
5. When a ballot vote is directed:

- i. The Chair shall announce the composition and chair of a committee of tellers to count the vote.
- ii. The Chair shall declare a recess to permit clubs to caucus and mark/deposit their ballot.
- iii. Delegates shall caucus as Clubs, decide on the distribution of votes to which the Club is entitled, and designate one delegate to mark the ballot. A Club may split their vote, but only whole votes may be cast.
- iv. After completion of voting, the ballot boxes shall be removed to a designated place, counted, and report the results in writing to the Chair. The ballots shall be destroyed immediately after the results are announced by the Chair.

E. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1. The Candidate Qualifications Committee shall make its report of nominations to the Convention during the business session. Following the report, the Chair shall call for additional nominations from the floor.
2. Floor nominations shall be limited to a statement of the candidate's name and club affiliation.
3. Campaign speeches, if any, shall be made immediately after nominations close, prior to election. Each candidate will be allowed five (5) minutes; time may be used by the candidate or split among designated speakers.
4. Voting shall take place immediately after close of nominations and/or speeches.
5. In the event that there are more than two nominees and no one receives more than 50% of the vote, the candidate with the fewest number of votes shall be removed from the ballot and voting proceed until a nominee attains more than 50% of the vote.

F. GENERAL RULE

1. Roberts Rule of Order shall govern the Convention proceedings in all cases not covered by Optimist International Bylaws or these Convention Rules.
2. Delegates to the Convention will receive a copy of the Convention Rules at the time of the Convention Session.

ARTICLE VIII: Hospitality Room at District Conferences and Convention

Hospitality rooms, or other accommodations serving a like purpose, shall be available at District Meetings and Conferences. They shall be closed during business and training sessions at the request of the Governor.

ARTICLE IX: International Officer Visits

Optimist International President's Visitation (ACCOUNTS 130 AND 360)

A. International President's visit may be to one of the regular quarterly or Convention Meetings.

B. If the visit is at a time other than the regular scheduled meetings, the Governor, at the request of Optimist International, shall provide preferred and alternate locations for the International President's visitation.

C. All plans and arrangements for the International President's visit shall be under direct supervision of the Governor and District Administration and include the provision of complimentary accommodations, customary courtesies, and a suitable gift or memento. The event shall be budgeted and conducted under Accounts 130 and 360 and operated on a break-even basis. All Clubs in the District shall be invited, at least thirty (30) days in advance, to send representatives to the event. Clubs in city or area of the visitation, under the leadership of the Lieutenant Governor, may be invited to provide manpower for the conduct of the event. The Governor and his or her spouse, or a Past International or District Officer and his or her spouse, shall be designated as official host to the International President and his or her spouse.

Optimist International Representatives to District Meetings

In keeping with the policy of Optimist International to provide an official International Representative to the District Board of Directors' meeting held in the First Quarter of each year, and to the annual District Convention, the Governor shall issue an invitation, at his or her earliest convenience, to such individuals as soon as their identities are established. Courtesies traditionally provided to the International President, including complimentary accommodations and registration, shall be provided to such official International Representatives.

ARTICLE X: District Finances

GENERAL PROVISIONS

The conduct and administration of District business shall be financed by District dues, payable by Clubs for each of their members enrolled in the office of Optimist International, from convention fees, and as hereinbefore provided from the general fund of Optimist International. The amount of each District's dues, and dates on which such dues shall be payable, shall be established by the Board of Directors of Optimist International. Districts may reduce or eliminate dues for a college member. A District, by resolution adopted by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast by the accredited delegates to its annual convention, may petition the Board of Directors of Optimist International, in the form and manner prescribed by that Board, for adjustment of the amount of its annual dues. No financial obligation or assessment, of any kind, other than provided in these Bylaws, shall be placed upon or requested of the Clubs or their members by the District. (OI Bylaws Article VII, Section 5, Paragraphs A, B, and C)

District Allotment from Optimist International

Districts have one year to submit all requirements in order to receive a District allotment for that period, after which time the allotment will be forfeited. The documentation required for the November allotment must be submitted within one year from the end of that period or the allotment will be forfeited. The documentation required for the May allotment must be submitted within one year from the end of that period or the allotment will be forfeited.

District Dues

- A. Each Domestic Club in the District shall pay \$16.00 annually for each member in all membership categories enrolled in the International Office. Dues will be paid quarterly, based on the number enrolled as of 30 September, 31 December, 31 March, and 30 June.
- B. The amount of dues and when payable is established by the International Board of Directors. To change this, the District must abide by Article VII, Section 5 of the International Bylaws.
- C. Annual dues for a newly organized club shall commence on the first day of the third month after officially being organized, based on the members on the roster at the International Office on that day.
- D. College Clubs dues will be \$5.00 annually for each member. Dues will be paid quarterly.

Finance Committee, Budgets and Annual Review

- A. The three-person Finance Committee shall preferably consist of one member from each of the regions in the District. That person shall preferably have an Accounting or management background.
- B. The Finance Committee, consulting with the incoming Governor and Secretary-Treasurer, shall prepare an annual budget to be presented for approval by the District Board of Directors at the First Quarter Meeting. **Such budget shall be submitted to the Board of Directors of Optimist International for final approval. The budget shall include income only from authorized sources for the current fiscal year, any accumulated surplus, and shall not authorize the expenditures of any money in excess of such income and surplus.**
- C. Budgets shall employ the Standard District Chart of Accounts, Account numbers, definitions and required supplements established by the Board of Directors of Optimist International.
- D. The District Secretary-Treasurer shall submit quarterly statements of receipts and disbursements for approval by the District Board of Directors at the quarterly meetings of the Board.
- E. The District Secretary-Treasurer shall submit quarterly statements of receipts and disbursements for the period 1 October to 31 March to Optimist International by 31 July.

Annual Review

An annual review of the books of Account of each District as of 30 September shall be performed by an independent Certified Public Accountant, a Certified Managerial Accountant, a Certified General Accountant, a Chartered Accountant, or a review committee, and a report thereon shall be submitted to the District Board of Directors not later than 30 November of each year. The District Form 990 will be forwarded to Optimist International. (OI Bylaws Article VII, Section 5, Paragraph E)

Depositories and Signatories

The District Board of Directors shall annually determine the official depositories for District funds and designate officers authorized to endorse, execute and sign checks or orders for the payment of money and such shall be Co-signed by two such officers. (OI Bylaws Article VII, Section 5, Paragraph F) The co-signers shall not be members of the same family, household and/or business partners.

Financial Records

- A. The District Secretary-Treasurer shall submit, and make available, quarterly to the Finance Committee at/or before each District Conference and/or Convention reports to include all bank statements, check book registers and receipts for their review.
- B. The Secretary -Treasurer shall, at the end of his or her term of office, deliver all District records to the incoming Secretary-Treasurer.

Travel Expenses (ACCOUNTS 200 THROUGH 265)

Authorized individuals shall be reimbursed for expenses incurred in travel on District Administration business upon receipt, by the District Secretary-Treasurer of a properly completed and signed voucher accompanied by a copy of any required report in writing, such as a visitation report, Zone meeting report, or Committee Chairperson report. District business includes attendance at all required Executive Committee meetings and all required District Board of Directors meetings. All reimbursements shall be made within the limitations of budget and available funds

ARTICLE XI: District Programs and Activities

Achievement and Awards Program (ACCOUNT 410)

- A. The District may budget, maintain and conduct an annual Achievement and Awards Program which shall be prepared and evaluated by the Chairperson of Achievement and Awards with the collaboration of the Governor, Governor-Elect, Secretary-Treasurer, and through consultation with their predecessors, shall be presented to the District Board of Directors for final approval at its first quarter meeting.
- B. It shall be the responsibility of the District Administration to promote and encourage participation in both District and International Achievement Awards Programs. Pursuant to the Achievement and Awards Program and policies of Optimist International, the District Administration shall refrain from offering or conducting any awards competition, personal or Club, for any activity or performance embraced by Optimist International's Achievement and Awards Programs. The District Achievement Awards Program shall conform to the District Program advocated by the International Board of Directors.
- C. The District Achievement and Awards Chairperson shall be reimbursed for authorized travel and other expenses incurred in the performance of the A&A Program as budgeted.
- D. The A&A Chair will retain all records for one year.

DISTRICT ACHIEVEMENT AND AWARDS APPEALS AND PROTESTS

A. Any appeal or protests of the final published standings of Clubs or individuals in the District Achievements and Awards Programs, to be considered, must be in the hands of the District Secretary-Treasurer no later than thirty (30) days following publication of the standings.

B. The District Executive Committee shall have power and authority to review and adjudicate any such appeal or protest and its decisions shall be final. To be eligible to receive any award or recognition, all financial obligations of a Club to the District shall have been met by the closing day of the administrative year.

Youth Clubs (ACCOUNTS 143 AND 373)

- A. The District shall conduct a conference for Junior Optimist and Octagon Clubs each year.
- B. A planning committee comprised of the District Youth Clubs Chair, Youth Club Governor, Youth Clubs Board of Directors and Youth Clubs sponsors and advisors, as the committee deems necessary shall be responsible for organizing all phases of the conference.
- C. Elections for District Youth Club officers must be held on accordance with guidelines in District Youth Club Bylaws.
- D. The costs of all District Youth Clubs Conference items, and all other authorized District Youth Club receipts and disbursements shall be budgeted under Accounts 143 and 373 as a statement separate from other District operations and reported quarterly. They will be combined with other District Accounts on Form 990 reporting. All such items shall be supervised by the chairperson and Accountable to the District Secretary-Treasurer who shall make purchases and expenditures.

Scholarships

Contestants Personal Privacy Protection

- A. It is of utmost importance to protect the personal privacy of the contestants competing for scholarships in the essay, oratorical, and junior golf contests. The entry forms for these contests at the club and District levels require that a copy of birth certificates, passports or driver's licenses be attached.
- B. The Club Contest Chair is responsible for obtaining and retaining a copy of the contestant's birth certificate, passport or driver's license and forwarding it on to the next level of the contest
- C. After the District winner has been determined, a copy of the birth certificate, passport, or driver's license will be submitted to Optimist International by the District Chair. The birth certificate, passport, or driver's license for each non-winner will be returned to the contestant or shredded by the District Contest Chair.

District Essay Contest (ACCOUNTS 147 AND 390)

- A. The District shall conduct an Essay Contest each year. The required information regarding the District winner shall be forwarded to the International Office no later than required by Optimist International.
- B. All phases of the contest shall be conducted in strict compliance with Optimist International Essay Contest rules.
- C. A District Chairperson shall be appointed by the Governor to administer all details pertinent to the conduct of the District contest.
- D. A copy of the club winner's birth certificate, passport, or driver's license must be forwarded with the contestant's application packet to the District Chair.
- E. An entry fee of \$30.00 made to payable to the District shall be paid by Clubs sponsoring an entrant. The club shall send a copy of the District Essay Contest form along with a copy of the essay to the District Essay Chair no later than 28 February.
- F. The cost of all District awards and certificates and all authorized receipts and disbursements, including the Chairperson's authorized expenses, shall be budgeted and audited under Accounts 147 and 390. All such items shall be supervised by the Chairperson and Accountable to the District Secretary-Treasurer who shall make all purchases and expenditures.

District Communication Contest for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CCDHH) (ACCOUNTS 142 AND 371)

- A. The District shall conduct the CCDHH contest each year. The District finals will be held at a time and place as established by the Chair with the Governor's approval. Preliminary Regional Contests (one in Mississippi and two in Alabama) will be held on Saturday not later than two weeks before the District contest (if required). In the event there are less than three total contestants, the contest will be canceled by the District CCDHH Chairperson with the approval of the Governor.
- B. Pursuant to the policies of Optimist International, all phases of the District Contests shall be conducted in strict compliance with International CCDHH rules.
- C. When seeking judges, the District Chairperson shall work with the Lt. Governor whose Zone comprises the city in which the District finals are held.
- D. Zone contests are to be conducted under the supervision of and coordinated by the District CCDHH Chairperson, and responsibility for the actual conduct of Zone contests assigned to Lt. Governors or Zone Chairpersons.
- E. An entry fee of \$30.00 made payable to the District along with the Zone-District registration form and a copy of the speech shall be sent to the Lt. Governor by all clubs one week prior to the scheduled Zone contest. The cost of all transportation, food and lodging while at or in-route to or from such contests shall be at the discretion of the sponsoring clubs.

- F. If no entry fee was paid at Zone level, it will be required of clubs sponsoring an entrant in Regional or District contests. The costs of food, lodging and transportation while at or in-route to or from the Regional or District Contests shall be at the discretion of the sponsor clubs. Costs of food for participants in the District finals may be funded under Account 371.
- G. The costs of all District, Regional and Zone trophies, certificates, frames, and all authorized receipts and disbursements, including the Chairperson's authorized expenses, shall be budgeted and audited under Accounts 142 and 371. All such items shall be supervised by the District CCDHH Chairperson and Accountable to the District Secretary-Treasurer who shall make all purchases and expenditures and record all revenue and expenses.
- H. Winner must verify birth certificate prior to accepting scholarship award.
- I. It shall be the responsibility of the District CCDHH Chairperson to submit required materials and information of contest winners to the International Office within the time-frame required by Optimist International. The presentation of the official scholarship award provided by Optimist International shall be made by the Governor or designate when possible.

District Oratorical Contest (ACCOUNTS 140 AND 370)

- A. The District shall conduct an oratorical contest each year. The District finals will be held on Saturday at the time of the Third Quarter District Conference awarding \$5,000 in scholarships (\$2,500 to first place contestant, \$1,500 to second place contestant and \$1,000 to third place contestant). Preliminary Regional Contests (one in Mississippi and two in Alabama) will be held on Saturday not later than two weeks before the District Conference.
- B. Pursuant to the policies of Optimist International, all phases of the District contests shall be conducted in strict compliance with International Oratorical Contest rules.
- C. When seeking judges, the District Oratorical Chairperson shall work with the Lt. Governor, whose Zone comprises the city in which the District finals are held.
- D. Zone Contest shall be scheduled in every zone (complying with the District calendar) and conducted under the supervision of the District Oratorical Chairperson. The responsibility for the actual conduct of the Zone contest shall be assigned to the Lt. Governor or Zone Chairperson.
- E. An entry fee of \$30.00 made payable to the District, along with the Zone-District registration form and a copy of the speech, shall be sent to the Lieutenant Governor by all Clubs for each entrant sponsored at least one week prior to the scheduled Zone Contest. The cost of all transportation, food and lodging while at or in-route to or from Zone contests shall be at the discretion of the sponsoring club.

- F. In the event that there are less than three total contestants for a Zone Contest, the contest will be canceled by the Lt. Governor with the approval of the Governor, and any remaining contestants are automatically entered in the Regional Contest. If there are less than three contestants for a Regional Contest, any remaining contestants are automatically entered in the District Contest.
- G. No entry fee shall be required of Clubs sponsoring an entrant in Regional or District Contest unless there was no Zone Contest. The costs of food, lodging and transportation while at, or in-route to or from the Regional or District contests shall be at the discretion of the sponsor clubs. Costs of food for participants in the District finals may be funded under Account 370.
- H. The costs for all District, Regional and Zone trophies, certificates, frames, and all authorized receipts and disbursements, including the Chairperson's authorized expenses and District participant's meals, shall be budgeted and audited under Accounts 140 and 370. All such items shall be supervised by the District Oratorical Chairperson and Accountable to the District Secretary-Treasurer who shall make all purchases and expenditures and record all revenues and expenses.
- I. A copy of each contestant's birth certificate, passport or driver's license must be forwarded with the contestant's application packet to the District Chair.
- J. It shall be the responsibility of the District Oratorical Chairperson to submit required materials and information on contest winners to the International Office within the time frame required by Optimist International. The presentation of the official scholarship award provided by Optimist International shall be made by the Governor or designate at the District Convention when possible.
- K. If a Club does not hold an oratorical contest, the District encourages the Club to make a contribution of \$25 to \$100 to help defray the District expenses in having Zone, Regional and District Contests.
- L. The District will support the District winner to attend the World competition in the amount not to exceed \$1000. Clubs will be asked to contribute toward this amount.

District Junior Golf (ACCOUNTS 145 AND 380)

- A. The District may conduct Junior Golf Tournament (s) each year. The District qualifier(s) shall be conducted, and the number of contestants provided to the International Office by the required date.
- B. All phases of the contests shall be conducted in strict compliance with Optimist International Junior Golf rules.
- C. A Chairperson shall be appointed by the Governor and shall be responsible for all details pertinent to the conduct of the contest.
- D. A District specified entry fee must be paid by all entrants in the District contest(s). The costs of all transportation, food and lodging in relation to District contests shall be at the discretion of the sponsoring clubs. Entrants may be received from any youth residing in the District without a sponsoring club.
- E. The costs of all District awards and all authorized receipts and disbursements, including the Chairperson's authorized expenses, shall be budgeted and audited under Accounts 145 and 380. All such items shall be supervised by the chairperson and Accountable to the District Secretary-Treasurer who shall make all purchases and expenditures.
- F. Dates and place of District tournament(s) shall be published in the District Directory.

ARTICLE XII: Optimist International Convention (ACCOUNTS 500, 510, 540, 550 AND 570)

Convention

- A. With due respect to the location and duration of the International Convention, the Governor, Governor-Elect, Secretary-Treasurer and Secretary-Treasurer-Designate shall receive an amount, to be budgeted annually, toward the expense of attendance at the International Convention, excluding those expenses reimbursable by Optimist International. To qualify for this amount, each must attend and be registered at the Convention, attend respective training sessions, and show evidence thereof when submitting his or her expense voucher.
- B. With due respect to the location and duration of the International Convention and available funds, each Lieutenant Governor-Elect who attends the International Convention shall participate in the distribution of available funds budgeted annually for the purpose of financial assistance to those Lieutenant Governors-Elect who attend Lieutenant Governor-Elect training and are registered for the Convention.
- C. With due respect to the location and duration of the International Convention and available funds, the following District Chair Designates: Growth,

Membership, New Club Building, Leadership Development and Club Fitness who attend the International Convention shall participate in the distribution of available funds budgeted annually for the purpose of financial assistance. They must attend the training and register for the Convention.

Hospitality Room (ACCOUNT 560)

The District Administration may maintain a District Headquarters or Hospitality Room at International Conventions. The rental of which, only, shall be budgeted and chargeable to Account 560 of the Standard District Chart of Accounts.

ARTICLE XIII: Miscellaneous

District Bulletin (ACCOUNT 330)

A. The District Administration may publish a District Bulletin under the direction of the Governor and edited by the District Bulletin Editor appointed by the Governor. Costs of producing, mailing and Chairpersons authorized expenses, plus publication frequency and distribution shall be established by the District Administration from year to year according to budgetary provisions and available funds.

B. At a minimum, the bulletin shall be published and distributed to all District Officers, District Committee Personnel, Past Governors (on active rosters), Club Presidents, Club Secretary-Treasurers, and the International Office and Officers. The District Bulletin will be on the District Website.

District Directory

A. The District Administration shall publish, at the earliest possible date after the beginning of the administrative year, a District Directory. The Directory shall contain the names, addresses, email addresses and telephone numbers of all District Officers, District Committee Chairpersons, Club Presidents and Secretary-Treasurers, and International Officers. The Directory shall also include the dates and locations of all District Meetings and Conferences of the administrative year.

B. The District may publish directory information on the District website. Such information shall be password protected and its use is restricted to Optimist International business by authorized representatives of Optimist International. Directory information will not be shared with any party outside of Optimist International.

Flags, Creed, Banners

At all District Meetings, the District Administration will display appropriate national flags, the District banner, and the Optimist Creed banner in the room in which business is conducted.

Gifts-Mementos (ACCOUNT 450)

- A. This District will present a gift and/or memento to the Retiring Governor and to the Official International Representatives, the cost of which shall not exceed the budgeted amounts.
- B. The Past Governor (Immediate to the Retiring Governor) shall be responsible for the selection of such gifts or mementos to the Retiring Governor and the Governor shall be responsible for the selection of a gift or memento to the International Representatives.

New Club Charter Presentation

Dates and programs for the charter presentation events of new clubs shall be established by joint action of the new club, the new club's sponsor club, and the Governor or the Lieutenant Governor of the Zone in the Governor's behalf. Charters shall be presented by the Governor or his or her appointee. In the event of a charter presentation occurring after the end of the administrative year in which the new club was established, the then Immediate Past Governor shall have the prerogative of presenting the charter

Gifts to New Clubs (ACCOUNT 440)

The District Administration shall provide each new club with a complimentary pull up club banner, pull up creed banner, gavel and sound block and shall budget an estimated amount for such purposes annually. The sponsoring club may share the expense of the gifts.

Document Retention

The following guidance should be followed regarding the retention of district documents.

1. Meeting minutes and contest documents – Current fiscal year and the two preceding fiscal years.
2. Achievement and Awards documents– Current fiscal year and the preceding fiscal year.
3. Form 990-N – Current fiscal year and the three preceding fiscal years.
4. Financial Statements – Current fiscal year and the three preceding fiscal years.
5. Bank statements – Current fiscal year and the three preceding fiscal years.
6. Other documents – Current fiscal year and the preceding fiscal year.