 

**BY-LAWS**

December 7, 2022

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# MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the Mountain Networking Referral Group (MNRG) is to positively impact the communities we serve, promote small business success for its members by sharing qualified referrals/leads, providing educational activities, and promoting group interaction. Givers gain; the more we give the more we gain.

**OFFICERS, COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND DESCRIPTIONS**

**PRESIDENT:**

Presides over meetings of the group. Implements and enforces rules and regulations set forth within the group bylaws and operating procedures. Maintains organizational web presence. Works with all other officers in all aspects of the organization.

**VICE PRESIDENT:**

Assists the President in his/her duties. Receives and tracks leads and referrals for the group. Records and tracks member participation in referrals, testimonials/closed business, guests, one-on-ones and passes. Presides in the absence of the President.

**TREASURER:**

Receives moneys from all sources and pays expenses with the consent of the President and Members. Manages accounts receivable and payable. Maintains organizational financial records.

**SECRETARY:**

Records and disseminates proceedings of the meetings. Records and tracks group attendance. Advise Membership Marketing Committee of member attendance quarterly. Assists VP & Treasurer as needed in the conduct of their duties.

## MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

Receives and reviews membership applications to ensure they are appropriate and do not duplicate current membership categories. To determine growth or limit growth as needed. Approves new members and notifies them of acceptance. Monitors members quarterly attendance and issues related notices to lack of attendance or participation and brings to the attention of the President. Assists officers in the planning and implementation of group projects. Develops and orders promotional materials to include Business Cards, Flyers, Brochures, Rack Cards, Monthly MNRG Newsletter and Facebook pages.

## PROGRAM MANAGER/EDUCATION CHAIR

Maintains meeting calendar for guest and member presentations.

## SOCIAL CHAIR

## Coordinates social activities for the group on a Quarterly basis.

## COMMUNICATIONS CHAIR

## Responsible for the dissemination of MNRG related correspondence including, but not limited to, Meeting Minutes and related attachments, social activities and meeting calendars, special announcements, and MNRG Facebook group notices.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

The current president will appoint a nominating committee in November of each year to formulate a slate of candidates for the following positions for the coming year. Our goal is to elect each officer for an annual commitment.

PRESIDENT

VICE PRESIDENT SECRETARY TREASURER

The slate will be presented to the membership at the first meeting in December and via e-mail. Nominations from the floor at the first December meeting may be made. The final slate will appear in the minutes for all members to review.

Election of officers will be held the second week in December by secret ballot. Those unable to attend meeting may email their vote to the secretary the week of the election.

Board of Directors consists of all Officers and Committee Chairs.

# GUIDELINES FOR MEMBERS

All members of MNRG are expected to conduct themselves in a manner reflecting the quality and standards of a professional businessperson. Please silence cell phones during meetings. We encourage you to bring your good thinking, ideas, and dialogue to share with the group as we continue to grow. Guidelines for membership are as follows:

## ATTENDANCE

We encourage members to attend weekly but understand your business must come first. However, excessive absences are not beneficial to you or the other members. Members are expected to **attend meetings a minimum of twice a month** unless prior arrangements have been made.

If a member is unable to attend during a particular week, they are encouraged to send someone in their place so it will not be counted as a missed meeting for attendance. The substitute must be associated with the business they are representing. **However, only paying business owners will have voting rights.**

At the end of each quarter, attendance will be evaluated by the membership chairperson. If your attendance fails to meet the required number of meetings your participation will be reviewed by the membership chairperson and a “Notice of Intentions” will be sent. The member will be asked to respond, letting the membership chairperson know if they intend to remain with the group. If they wish to remain, their response will be evaluated, and they will be notified of the outcome. If they wish to withdraw from the group, it will be so noted.

Acceptable absences include medical and family emergencies, Inclement weather, and unavoidable business commitments. Each member will be accountable to the Membership Chairperson to apprise of their absence in advance of the weekly meetings - except for medical or family emergencies.

If you find your schedule prevents you from attending on a regular basis, you may need to evaluate the value you bring to and gain from the group. **For businesses unable to be represented on a regular basis, we suggest new members be allowed to join and your membership be retired.**

An individual may only represent two businesses. This is to ensure quality representation and allow more individuals to be active members in MNRG.

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Dedication to the group is a priority. At each meeting during the “I HAVE” section, each member is required to participate in one of the following ways:

1. **REFERRAL:** A legitimate “warm” referral of business for another member of the group.
2. **TESTIMONIAL/CLOSED BUSINESS:** A legitimate compliment for another based on a previous business transaction. A report of closed or completed business from a previous referral.
3. **ONE-ON-ONE:** Time spent between two members discussing business to learn more about one another both on a professional level as well as on a personal level. One on one meetings are very

important as it is difficult to make referrals to someone whose business you don’t know or who you don’t know personally.

1. **GUESTS:** Bringing a guest is great as it affords the opportunity to introduce potential members. A guest may come twice before becoming a member. Habitually bringing a guest instead of participating in one of the other options will be addressed by the Membership Chairperson.
2. **PASS:** Though it is not preferred, simply saying PASS will eliminate awkward situations. If you have nothing, just say “PASS.” We do not need to know the particulars of why you are passing, just say “PASS.”

# NEW MEMBER APPLICANT INFORMATION

We are a group of business minded people, business owners, administrators and professionals working together to achieve the common goal of growing our business and having a positive impact on the communities we serve.

We take pride in selecting businesses that are devoted to growing their business. We are exclusive to our members and thus the organization is a “closed group” style organization. This allows members to be more aware of others in the group, their needs, their customer base, etc. By being a closed group, the feeling of competition with the group is virtually eliminated.

Individual members develop a professional relationship, as well as a personal relationship with each other. This ensures members are more confident in recommending the services of others within the group.

The membership chairperson is responsible for deciding if a particular business, in their particular service category, is going to be beneficial to our organization, and will our organization be beneficial to them? Is the particular category already filled by another business in the group? Determine our growth to limit membership or to grow our membership.

Our weekly meetings are important, and we encourage you to attend each week – but at least **twice per month**. During the weekly meeting we exchange referrals, experiences, and welcome new guests. The group offers educational opportunities for you to participate in (if interested) and share community events that we may want to participate in to grow our business. As a member we encourage you to bring a referral, testimonial, guest or share a one-on- one.

Mountain Networking Referral Group meets every Thursday at 8:00 am and ends at 9:00 am at locations determined by the group. We follow the Union County school guidelines for closures in the event of inclement weather, holiday schedule and will not meet on weeks when school is not in session. During the summer, the group will meet every other week.

# NEW MEMBER APPLICATION & FEES

Non-members are welcome to attend two meetings as our guest before submitting an application. We thank you for your interest in the Mountain Networking Referral Group. Applications are available from any member of the group and fees to be paid at the time of acceptance.

Application Fee (one-time): $50.00

Quarterly Dues: $37.50 ($150.00 annually) \*\*\*

Additional Business Annual/Quarterly Dues: $75.00 / $18.75

**\*\*\*We encourage all members to pay for an annual membership at the beginning of the calendar year when a 10% discount will be applied when pair in full prior to January 31st of each year.**

Returning Members that have left the group and wish to rejoin, if within 6 months of departure, will need Committee approval. Upon approval, there will be no application fee required and all back quarterly dues will need to be fulfilled. After 6 months a returning member will be treated as a new member.

# CORE STRUCTURE OF MNRG

## ONE MINUTE “ELEVATOR” PRESENTATIONS

Members will present a weekly “elevator” presentation, length of time determined by the President, to intro- duce themselves and their business to the group. The weekly presentations allow members to become familiar with each other and their business. We encourage all members, particularly new members, to schedule one- on-one time with each member of the group to get to know them better.

## TEN-MINUTE PRESENTATIONS

“Ten-minute” presentations typically introduce your business in greater detail. Any member of the group can request time on an up-coming agenda to have ten minutes of floor time. New members will use these presentations to introduce their business to the group, and we will schedule your business showcase for time on the agenda during the first 30-60 days of joining. Members can also use the Ten-Minute presentation time to give the group updates about their business or introduce a new product or service.

## EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Our group occasionally hosts educational sessions on topics the group has agreed would be beneficial. An Educational Chairperson provides a motivational “thought for the week” during meetings and manages requests for topics, including helping the group to arrange for training. Any session, either during the meeting or after-hours, is optional. Some after hour sessions may charge a fee; if you elect to participate you will be responsible for payment. These sessions are intended to grow our skills and benefit our businesses, be sure you submit topics you are personally interested in directly to the Educational Chair.

## MARKETING

The MNRG is a member of the Towns, and Union County Chamber of Commerce. A MNRG “Rack Card” is available at each Chamber. The cards include a list of all members of the group. These cards will be updated quarterly as new members join and made available to you as a member as well. We encourage you to put these on display in your businesses to help promote the MNRG. We will have these racks cards delivered to each Chamber of Commerce for inclusion in their “Welcome Packets.”

# BY-LAWS

We have had many years of experience with other types of networking groups. We encourage a competition free environment by restricting membership to only one company selling a specific product. The requirements may appear to be stringent, but they are done in this fashion because it works. **Joining our group requires a very real commitment from you. The commitment that you make is really a promise that we all make to each other.**

The Bylaws will be reviewed each year by the then elected Bylaws Review Committee. Any revisions will be submitted to the Board for review and then ultimately to the Members for a vote of approval.

What we provide for our members:

* + Structured training and meeting formats
	+ Referrals from other trusted members
	+ Exposure to people outside of your county
	+ We serve the mountain area of North Georgia and surrounding areas
	+ Your profile on MNRG website
	+ Your profile in our professional brochure.
	+ Your profile distributed by other members
	+ Brochure also distributed by other groups, chambers, Department of Economic Development, etc.
	+ Cross-links on the websites of other members where applicable
	+ The best, most cost-effective way of growing your business

# MEETINGS

## TIME AND LOCATION

Mountain Networking Referral Group meets every Thursday at 8:00 am at locations determine by the group (every other Thursday at 8:00 am in the summer months).

* + All government holidays are observed
	+ We follow the Union County school system closures for inclement weather

## ATTENDANCE

Every member is expected to attend every meeting, but at least **two** meetings every four weeks is mandatory.

## CONDUCT

Our meetings are structured by agenda and all members will conduct themselves professionally and respectfully. Please be respectful of other members by:

* + Turning off your cell phone or putting it on vibrate
	+ Not texting during the meeting
	+ If you must make a call or text, please leave the room to do so
	+ Please do not have side conversations during the member presentations

## MEETING AGENDA

8:00am – Meeting starts Welcome/Prayer

Pledge of Allegiance

Guest Recognition

Review and approval of Minutes

Reports: Treasurer, Membership, Referral & Income Generated Elevator Speech presentations

Referrals, Testimonials & One-on-One Reports Guest Presentations

Old Business/New Business Adjournment

Networking

# REFERRALS

Referrals are the most important part of the Mountain Networking Referral Group and as such, we will be tracking them one of two ways:

## Paper (carbonless) Form

* + The white copy goes to the member receiving the referral
	+ The yellow copy goes to the member tracking referrals for MNRG
	+ The pink copy is retained by the member making the referral

The member making the referral completes the information on the left side of the form. The member receiving the referral completes the information on the right side of the form, noting whether a sale was made, the date of the sale, and the amount of revenue generated. For recurring revenue, estimate the amount received over 12 months. Recurring revenue is only tracked for the initial 12-month period. The completed white copy is then returned to the member tracking referrals for MNRG. It will be matched with the pink copy previously received and entered as a completed referral.

## Online Submission (member login required)

**GUIDELINES FOR A CHARITABLE GIFT FROM MNRG**

* + Complete Application to Treasurer
	+ Officers review the requests
	+ 2-week notice of vote to membership
	+ Secretary notifies requesting entity of decision equaling “yes” or “no” to funding
	+ Treasurer mails check if decision is “yes” to funding

Criteria for all applicants:

* + Applicant must be a 501(c)3 business or a “community recognized charity” in Towns, Union, or Fannin counties.
	+ The entity must make a presentation to the officers of how the funding will be used.
	+ There will be a $250 limit per year for any one entity.
	+ The Board will make the recommendation and final vote will be by membership.