

# PRESCRIBED BURN ALLIANCE OF TEXAS OPERATING HANDBOOK

Version 1.1 June 17, 2014)



PBAT

Prescribed Burn Alliance of Texas

---

*Taking the WILD out of Fire*

# **PBAT OPERATING HANDBOOK**

## **Table of Contents**

A: VISION AND MISSION

B: DUES

C: BOARD MEMBERS

D: DUTIES OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

E: STANDING COMMITTEES

F: AD HOC COMMITTEES

G: ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

H: OPERATING POLICIES

I: CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

J: ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT OF THE OPERATING HANDBOOK

# PBAT OPERATING GUIDELINES

## **A: VISION AND MISSION**

### **Vision**

The Prescribed Burn Alliance of Texas aspires to be a premier organization that significantly impacts the application of prescribed fire on the Texas landscape.

### **Mission**

Our Mission is to support member prescribed burning associations in promoting and protecting the right of Texas landowners to use prescribed burning as a safe, economical, and effective management practice.

## **B: DUES**

- 1) Establishment of Dues. The Board of Directors, in accordance with the provisions of the Bylaws, may set and change the amount of the annual dues payable to PBAT. The Board of Directors must notify all voting members no more than 60 days prior and no less than 10 days prior to the general meeting that the subject of increased dues will be brought before the convened general membership for action.
- 2) Dues Schedule. Dues shall be payable in advance of the first day of January in each fiscal year. If dues are not paid by March 31 in each fiscal year, then all privileges afforded a member (PBA) are rescinded until dues are paid.
- 3) Dues Amount. Annual PBAT dues are established annually by the Board of Directors and assessed to each member (PBA).

## **C: BOARD MEMBERS**

The Board members shall be the officers of PBAT and the Standing Committee chairs. Standing Committees and the chairs of those committees may be appointed by the Board, or the Board can delegate the authority to appoint Standing Committees and chairs to the President.

1. Chair – Education Committee
2. Chair – Finance Committee
3. Chair – Insurance Committee
4. Chair – Legislative Review Committee
5. Chair – Publicity and Website (Communications) Committee
6. Chair – Nominating Committee
7. Chair – Burn Standards and Technology Committee
8. Chair – Membership Committee

## Prescribed Burn Alliance of Texas – Operating Handbook

**D: DUTIES OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS**

1. President
  - a. Preside at all meetings of the Chapter.
  - b. Serve as Chair of the Board of Directors.
  - c. Appoint, subject to the Board's approval, committees and committee chairs.
  - d. Be an ex-officio member of all committees.
  - e. Sign all Board-approved documents that may be legally binding on the Chapter.
  - f. Co-sign checks with another Officer in the absence of the Treasurer.
  - g. Present an annual report at the annual meeting of PBAT.
  - h. Votes when there is a tie.
  
2. Vice President
  - a. Assist the President and act for the President in his absence.
  - b. Assist any Committee as requested by the President.
  
3. Secretary
  - a. Conduct all necessary PBAT correspondence for conformance to the Bylaws.
  - b. Record, publish and preserve the minutes of all meetings of the Board of Directors, General Membership meetings or special meetings.
  - c. Furnish the minutes to all Board members and make them available to other PBAT members when requested.
  - d. Keep a record of attendance at each meeting and whether a quorum is present.
  - e. Maintain a hard copy file or electronically secure and easily accessible copy of all minutes and correspondence.
  - f. Bring to each meeting the minute book or electronic equivalent, a copy of the bylaws, rules and policies, a list of all committees and a copy of the parliamentary authority adopted by the Corporation.
  - g. Publish notice of membership meetings.
  - h. Coordinate with the Publicity and Website (Communications) Committee and assist that committee's efforts as needed.
  
4. Treasurer
  - a. Maintain budget and accounting records.
  - b. Receive all dues and monies for the association and maintain them in a separate bank account.
  - c. Keep an account of all income, expenses, disbursements and other financial matters.
  - d. Keep a list of all donated or purchased inventory, equipment or other property. Update list, monthly or as needed.
  - e. Pay all bills upon receipt of a written statement or receipt. Treasurer or President and one other Officer shall sign all checks, drafts or other instruments for payment of money or notes of the Chapter.

## Prescribed Burn Alliance of Texas – Operating Handbook

- f. Make bimonthly reports to the membership.
  - g. Develop an annual budget for approval by the Board of Directors.
  - h. Present the financial records upon request for internal or external audit on or before the last day of the fiscal year.
  - i. Submit all annual financial records and audits as required by law.
  - j. Prepare or provide oversight in preparation of, Chapter's annual IRS 990 submission and other regulatory reporting forms, as required.
5. Directors
- a. Attend Directors' meetings or arrange for alternative representation.
  - b. Serve on committees as needed.
  - c. Keep a record by county of each prescribed burn and its outcome in their PBA
  - d. Report on burn data kept by county at least annually and at such other times as may be requested by PBAT officers

**E: STANDING COMMITTEES**

1. Education Committee
  - a. Assists with the development of a web based training program developed by IRNR.
  - b. Develops programs, literature, and links to inform the general public, elected officials, Volunteer Fire Departments, and youth on the benefits of prescribed burning.
  - c. Assists Member PBAs with continued training of their members by including links to Prescribed Burn Training Opportunities statewide or recommending individuals to assist with training.
  - d. Updating the PBAT website to contain information to update the Member PBAs on current issues that affect Prescribed Burning.
  - e. Work on other education opportunities that may be recommended by the PBAT Board.
  
2. Burn Standards and Technology Committee
  - a. Keeps up with industry standards for safe burn practices & report to Board.
  - b. Keep up with improvements in technology for safe burning.
  - c. Advise as to best practices and procedures for safe burning.
  - d. Update "Burn Plan" template as needed.
  
3. Finance Committee
  - a. Develop financial plan for self sustainability with or w/o dues assessments.
  - b. Apply for appropriate grants from donors and/or foundations and corporations.
  - c. Coordinate governmental agency grants and programs.
  - d. Market PBAT goods and services.

## Prescribed Burn Alliance of Texas – Operating Handbook

4. Insurance Committee
  - a. Obtain and retain adequate liability, Errors & Omissions, Officer and Director or other types of insurance as the Board may direct, when adequately funded.
  - b. Monitor all claims against PBAT, et al, and coordinate with private counsel.
  - c. Recommend legal action on any insurance matter to the Board.
  - d. Prepare budget requests for annual costs.
  
5. Publicity and Website Committee
  - a. Responsible for the PBAT outreach and marketing activities including press releases in any form.
  - b. Maintains the PBAT website, publications and all media presentations.
  - c. Prepares and maintains a display panel for use at any appropriate events.
  - d. Responsible for collecting PBAT news, producing and distributing a PBAT newsletter.
  - e. Provide photos, updates, and/or artwork to Members and the media.
  
6. Legislative Review Committee
  - a. Monitor state and Federal legislation for issues of concern to PBAT and report to the Board any findings.
  - b. Coordinate preparation of any communications to legislative bodies or others who may be interested to protect and ensure that PBAT does not violate political restrictions on 501(c)(3) organizations.
  - c. Coordinate with the Board and the Publicity and Website Committee.
  
7. Nominating Committee
  - a. Prepare recommendation for election of officers prior to the annual membership meeting.
  - b. Prepare recommendations to fill committee vacancies when requested.
  - c. Develop PBAT leadership program.
  
8. Membership Committee –
  - a. Assist existing PBAs with membership development.
  - b. Assist with new member development for PBAT.
  - c. Coordinate program development between PBAT and community organizations.
  - d. Liaison with PBA officers and members to facilitate effective communication.
  - e. Mediate intra-member disputes when requested by the Board.
  - f. Publish a Quarterly News Letter to individual members.
  - g. Maintain an up to date mailing list of all PBA Members.

## Prescribed Burn Alliance of Texas – Operating Handbook

**F: AD HOC COMMITTEES.** Ad Hoc committees are formed for a particular and specific short-term purpose. Ad-Hoc committees executing Board of Director activities must contain at least two Board members.

1. Audit Committee. Responsible for conducting the annual audit of the financial records of PBAT. Members will include the vice-president, secretary, and one other standing committee chair.
  - a. Reports annually at least 2 months before liability Insurance policy is to be renewed (more often if need to comply with 2 mo. requirement).
  - b. Reports to whole Board.
2. Other Ad Hoc Committees. Can be formed by the Board as needed to address specific tasks or purposes.

**G: ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP**

Active members are those members who pay the PBAT dues for the current year and/or indicate that they wish to remain active members. Lack of contact with PBAT through attendance at one or more meetings or PBAT activities during the preceding year or lack of communication to a PBAT Board Member or officer that they wish to remain an active member will indicate that they do not wish to remain active members.

**H: OPERATING POLICIES**

The Board of Directors approves and maintains Operating Policies for the effective management and oversight of PBAT business. Approved policies become part of the PBAT Operating Handbook.

**I: CONDUCT OF MEETINGS**

Robert's Rules of Order shall govern procedures not covered in PBAT Bylaws or, PBAT Operating Guidelines. Board of Director, Committee and, General membership meetings will follow Robert's Rules of Order (latest edition) for parliamentary procedures and the routine conduction of PBAT business.

**J: ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT OF THE OPERATING HANDBOOK**

1. Adoption. Initial adoption and ratification of the Operating Handbook is by a majority vote of those present at a general meeting following written distribution of the proposed Operating Handbook to the general membership at least ten days before the meeting with notice that the ratification vote will be held at the general meeting. Written distribution may be via conventional mail, email or other equivalent means.

Prescribed Burn Alliance of Texas – Operating Handbook

2. Amendment. Changes and amendments may be made by the Board of Directors at a regular Board meeting with a two-thirds vote of the Board members in attendance. The general membership must be notified in written form of the proposed changes or amendments at least ten days before the meeting and be given an opportunity at the Board meeting to voice any concerns about the changes or amendments. Written form may be via conventional mail, email or other equivalent means.