

Commissioners, Who are they and what do they mean to you!

Lee Barnes

Wood Badge Training Ticket Item

S5-420-15

Prepared. For Life.®



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®





The Goal

- **The goal of this presentation is to inform scouts and leaders about commissioners, their role, and how they will be able to assist you and your units.**
- **Most units are unaware of the resources they have at their disposal. This is one of the resources units have and will help units understand how they can help.**





The Commissioner Concept

- **The commissioner is the liaison between the local council and Scouting units. The commissioner's mission is to keep units operating at maximum efficiency, maintain regular contact with unit leaders, coach leaders on where to find assistance, note weaknesses in programs, and suggest remedies.**
- **The commissioner is successful when units effectively deliver the ideals of Scouting to their members.**

Prepared. For Life.®





Commissioners

- **Commissioners are district and council leaders who help Scout units succeed. They coach and consult with adult leaders of Cub Scout packs, Boy Scout troops, and Venturing crews. Commissioners help maintain the standards of the Boy Scouts of America.**
- **Retention Mission Statement**
 - The retention mission of the commissioner corps is best achieved by providing an adequate number of trained unit commissioners who provide a link to district committee resources in support of a quality unit program.
- **Administrative Commissioners:**
 - Include the council commissioner, assistant council commissioners, district commissioners, and assistant district commissioners. Their primary responsibilities are recruiting, training, guiding, and evaluating the commissioner staff.

Prepared. For Life.®





Commissioners (cont.)

- **Unit Commissioners:**

- Are assigned to one or more units, which they coach and mentor to ensure unit success. The unit commissioner's service is based on a philosophy of friendship and coaching.
 - Supporting unit growth through the Journey to Excellence.
 - Contacting units and capturing their strengths and needs in Commissioner Tools.
 - Linking unit needs to district operating committee resources.
 - Supporting timely charter renewal.

- **Roundtable Commissioners:**

- Provide resources such as program skills and other help for unit personnel at regularly scheduled roundtables or program forums. Roundtable commissioners should have a good background in Cub Scout, Boy Scout, Varsity Scout, or Venturing skills as well as a lively teaching ability

Prepared. For Life.®





Commissioner Trademark's



Prepared. For Life.®





Roles the Commissioner Plays

- A commissioner plays several roles, including friend, representative, unit "doctor," teacher, and counselor.
 - The commissioner is a friend of the unit. Of all their roles, this one is the most important. It springs from the attitude, "I care, I am here to help, what can I do for you?" Caring is the ingredient that makes commissioner service successful. He or she is an advocate of unit needs. A commissioner who makes himself known and accepted now will be called on in future times of trouble.
 - The commissioner is a representative. The average unit leader is totally occupied in working with kids. Some have little if any contact with the Boy Scouts of America other than a commissioner's visit to their meeting. To them, the commissioner may be the BSA. The commissioner helps represent the ideals, the principles, and the policies of the Scouting movement.

Prepared. For Life.®





Roles the Commissioner Plays (cont.)

- The commissioner is a unit "**doctor**." In their role as "doctor," they know that prevention is better than a cure, so they try to see that their units make good "health practices" a way of life. When problems arise, and they will even in the best unit, they act quickly. They observe symptoms, diagnose the real ailment, prescribe a remedy, and follow up on the patient.
- The commissioner is a "**teacher**". As a commissioner, they will have a wonderful opportunity to participate in the growth of unit leaders by sharing knowledge with them. They teach not just in an academic environment, but where it counts most—as an immediate response to a need to know. That is the best adult learning situation since the lesson is instantly reinforced by practical application of the new knowledge.
- The commissioner is a "**counselor**". As a Scouting counselor, they will help units solve their own problems. Counseling is the best role when unit leaders don't recognize a problem and where solutions are not clear-cut. Everyone needs counseling from time to time, even experienced leaders.

Prepared. For Life.®





How Are Commissioners Selected?

- **Selection process and criteria vary depending on the position.**
 - Unit Commissioners are appointed by the district commissioner with the approval of the council executive board.
- **Unit commissioners should—**
 - Have excellent people skills
 - Have a Scouting background or be fast-track learners
 - Know and practice Scouting ideals
- **Assistant District Commissioners are appointed by the district commissioner with the approval of the council executive board.**
- **Assistant district commissioners should—**
 - Be able to recruit and work through a team of unit commissioners.
 - Have excellent people skills
 - Have a broad Scouting background or be fast-track learners
 - Know and practice Scouting ideals

Prepared. For Life.®





How Are Commissioners Selected?

(cont.)

- **Roundtable Commissioners** are appointed by the district commissioner with the approval of the council executive board.
- **Roundtable commissioners should—**
 - Be congenial and enthusiastic performers
 - Have the ability to recruit a roundtable staff
 - Have a good Scouting program background in the program for which they will run roundtables
 - Be a good planner

Prepared. For Life.®





How Are Commissioners Selected?

(cont.)

- **District Commissioners** are approved and appointed by the council executive board, with the concurrence of the Scout executive, on the recommendation of the district nominating committee.
 - District commissioners should—
 - Be widely respected in the community
 - Be an enthusiastic leader of adults
 - Have the ability to recruit a complete team of commissioners for their districts
 - Have the ability to guide and motivate commissioners to visit units regularly, identify unit needs, and help unit adults to meet needs
 - Be a role model of Scouting ideals

Prepared. For Life.®





How Are Commissioners Selected?

(cont.)

- **Assistant Council Commissioners** are appointed by the council commissioner with the approval of the council executive board.
- Assistant council commissioners should have some of the criteria for district commissioners and/or council commissioners.
- A **Council Commissioner** is elected at the annual meeting of the local council after selection by the council nominating committee.
- The council commissioner should—
 - Have the ability and proven experience to lead and meet objectives through a large structure of other people
 - Become a role model of exceptional Scouting service to units throughout the council
 - Be a person with a vision of how a good unit program helps youth stay in the program long enough to learn Scouting values
 - Have the ability to develop a good working relationship with the Scout executive and professional staff advisor, characterized by mutual trust, mutual respect, and mutual recognition of each other's role and competency

Prepared. For Life.®





Commissioners are NEEDED!

- **Recruiting Commissioners— Step by Step**
 - Determine what commissioner positions are needed.
 - Determine the best prospects for the position.
 - Research the prospects at the top of your list.
 - Make an appointment to speak with the prospects.
 - Sign them up.

Prepared. For Life.®





Unit Commissioner Responsibilities

- Be a catalyst in developing good relationships between troop and pack leaders.
- Promote communication by scheduling a meeting of key volunteers.
- Help plan a Webelos den visit to a troop meeting and other joint activities.
- Keep the pack and troop on schedule as plans develop for the crossover ceremony at the blue and gold banquet.
- Attend the crossover ceremony.
- Be sure new Scouts have completed a Boy Scout application, that they have a copy of the troop's activities, and that they know when and where the troop meets.

Prepared. For Life.®





Unit Commissioner Responsibilities (cont.)

- Work with the pack and troop in their charter renewal process to help ensure Webelos Scouts are moved from pack rosters to troop rosters.
- Work with the Webelos transition chair to follow up on boys who have not yet joined a troop. Make sure they are invited to join a troop.
- Be sure Webelos Scouts join a troop in time to prepare for Boy Scout summer camp.





Conclusion

- Perhaps no other members of the unit service team have a more important or demanding responsibility. As friends and counselors of unit leaders, unit commissioners operate quietly, generally in the background. They are effective communicators, providing the resources of the district and council to the units they serve. They aid the chartered organizations that operate the units through charters from the Boy Scouts of America.
- To help units succeed, today's commissioners must be people-oriented more than procedures-oriented. They are truly a council's front-line diplomats.

Prepared. For Life.®

