

Eagan High School *FIRST* Robotics (Team 2220) Booster Club Organization and Management

Founded in 2006, Eagan High School *FIRST* Robotics (Team 2220) worked without an official booster club for our first 5 years. In 2011, we determined that we had grown to the point that we needed an official booster club. In May 2011, we established an official booster club, including 501(c)(3) status. This white paper shares how we established and manage our booster club.

Booster Club Organization

While setting up the booster club can take time, it requires much less time than one might expect. Items A and B can be completed in 15-20 minutes. The Articles of Incorporation can be accomplished fairly quick as well; determining initial officers first is the key. The time consuming details come in the bylaws, but since bylaws are not required, you can take your time in getting those done. We do not use individual fundraising accounts or charge booster club dues. These activities can affect an organization's 501(c)(3) status. See <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-tege/eotopica93.pdf>

Note: Many states will have similar forms and processes, but we will be documenting the forms and processes specific to our team in Minnesota. Our legal documents are available for viewing on the Booster Club page of our team intranet. <http://2220twilightzone.pbworks.com> User name: 2220visitor@gmail.com; Password: eaganrobotics

A. Obtain a Federal EIN

The IRS requires that organizations have their own tax identification number. Booster clubs should not use the school's EIN.

One of the officers will need to provide his/her social security number and the name you have chosen for your booster club.

Go to: <https://sa2.www4.irs.gov/modiein/individual/index.jsp>

When asked for an organization type, check "View Other Types," then select "PTA/PTO or school organization." When you finally have to enter a type, put in "booster club." It's free, should take about 15 minutes, and you'll have an EIN at the end. An alternate method is to call the IRS at 800-829-4933, answer questions that correspond to Form SS-4 and get an EIN at the end of the call.

B. Establish 501(c)(3)

Organizations may apply directly to the IRS for tax-exempt status, but it is much simpler to obtain tax exemption by joining PBUSA. Under a group exemption ruling, a booster club has immediate IRS exempt status upon joining Parent Booster USA. For an additional fee, they will also obtain your EIN, draft your articles of incorporation, and file your taxes using the 990N or 990EZ.

To join, go to www.parentbooster.org and click on Join Now. The cost is \$195 to join; the annual cost for renewal is \$95.

C. Determine your board of directors

Before incorporating, initial officers need to be determined. Our elected officers include a president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer. Our Board of Directors also includes the faculty advisor and two appointed positions: technical representative and publicity coordinator.

D. Incorporate

If you intend to apply for IRS federal tax exemption as a charitable organization, your articles of incorporation must contain a required purpose clause and dissolution of assets provision.

In Minnesota, nonprofit corporation forms can be found on the Secretary of State website at <http://www.sos.state.mn.us/index.aspx?page=1086>. At the time of our incorporation, the original filing fee was \$70. An annual renewal is required once each calendar year. There is no charge for filing the renewal. Filings are also required for amendments, change of registered agent, change of registered office, dissolution, and mergers.

Mail form and Articles of Incorporation to:
Minnesota Secretary of State - Business Services
Retirement Systems of Minnesota Building
60 Empire Drive, Suite 100
St Paul, MN 55103

E. Draft Bylaws

Bylaws are the rules the organization adopts to govern itself. Bylaws determine how often meetings are held, voting requirements, etc. To provide flexibility from year to year, we did not establish particular committees within our bylaws. Bylaws are helpful, but not required. Minnesota organizations that do not have bylaws must legally default to Minnesota Statute 317A, the Nonprofit Corporation Act.

F. Apply for Sales Tax Exemption

Non-profit organizations may apply to the Minnesota Department of Revenue for sales tax exemption. There is no fee to apply. Once you receive your letter of exemption, you must establish your tax exempt status with each vendor or store individually by providing a completed ST3- Certificate of Exemption along with a copy of the letter.

http://www.revenue.state.mn.us/Forms_and_Instructions/st3.pdf

To apply, fill out form ST16

http://www.revenue.state.mn.us/Forms_and_Instructions/st16.pdf

Send the completed application along with all required documentation to:

Minnesota Revenue
Mail Station 6330
St. Paul, MN 55146-6330

G. Apply for permission to solicit funds

Charitable organizations that solicit funds in Minnesota and that are not otherwise exempt must register as a soliciting charity. See Minn Stat. §§ 309.52 and 309.53.

Forms and Instructions may be found at <http://www.ag.state.mn.us/Charities/CharityForms.asp>. The cost to register with the Attorney General is \$25.

Mail Completed application and required documentation to:
Office of the Attorney General
1200 Bremer Tower, 445 Minnesota Street
St. Paul, MN 55101-2130

A charitable organization registered to solicit contributions in Minnesota must file an annual report with the Minnesota Attorney General's Office. The due date is the 15th day of the seventh month following the close of an organization's fiscal year.

H. File Taxes

All organizations with income of \$5,000 or more are required to file an IRS tax return. For non-profits, this is one of the 990 series forms.

From the IRS website:

[http://www.irs.gov/Charities-&-Non-Profits/Annual-Electronic-Filing-Requirement-for-Small-Exempt-Organizations-%E2%80%94-Form-990-N-\(e-Postcard\)](http://www.irs.gov/Charities-&-Non-Profits/Annual-Electronic-Filing-Requirement-for-Small-Exempt-Organizations-%E2%80%94-Form-990-N-(e-Postcard))

Most small tax-exempt organizations whose annual gross receipts are normally \$50,000 or less are required to electronically submit Form 990-N, also known as the e-Postcard, unless they choose to file a complete Form 990 or Form 990-EZ instead.

If you do not file your e-Postcard on time, the IRS will send you a reminder notice. There is no penalty assessment for late filing the e-Postcard, but an organization that fails to file required e-Postcards (or information returns – Forms 990 or 990-EZ) for three consecutive years will automatically lose its tax-exempt status. The revocation of the organization's tax-exempt status will not take place until the filing due date of the third year.

Due Date of the e-Postcard

*The e-Postcard is due every year by the 15th day of the 5th month after the close of your tax year. For example, if your tax year ended on December 31, the e-Postcard is due May 15 of the following year. If the due date falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, the due date is the next business day. **You cannot file the e-Postcard until after your tax year ends.***

Communications

A. Meetings - We have monthly booster club meetings. Our meetings coincide with the student meetings so as to not take another night from families for robotics. Meetings have been key to bringing in new volunteers.

B. Sign-ups - Most sign-ups are done through Google docs or Google spreadsheets and are set so that anyone with the link can edit them.

C. Team Application – We use google forms for our team application to gather contact information for the students and their parents, as well as to gain information on occupation and employers for possible sponsorship leads. (We do not currently have a live form available for viewing.)

D. Team Directory - We publish a team directory for internal use.

E. Team Intranet - We have a team intranet through pbworks.com developed with input by students and parents. It is nicknamed the Twilight Zone. We have a limited access login for visitors.

<http://222otwilightzone.pbworks.com>

User name: 222ovistor@gmail.com Password: eaganrobotics

There are a few pages with private data that cannot be shared; those links will give a Permission Denied error.

On this internal website, we post our sign-ups, keep track of our legal forms, maintain sponsor lists, etc. The students also use it to share information as well, providing information and instruction for their sub-teams. We are still in the process of populating some of the pages because we started a new intranet during the summer of 2012. To simplify management of the intranet, we have a generic view-only login for parents and most team members. The remaining students and mentors have individual accounts with editing access. For security, we have page level controls, varying content available to the faculty advisor, the students, and the public.

Areas of Service

We have several areas where parents help. Some of our parent positions overlap with mentor positions, especially in the area of business. In general, we do what we can to help with the financial and administrative tasks of the team so that the mentors and students can focus on building a robot, rather than getting bogged down in the logistics of running the program. (That being said, we utilize students in every area; we aren't doing it for them; we are doing it with them. They assist with fundraisers, write grants, etc.)

Most areas have a chairperson or coordinator. We have found that sometimes the title of Chair can scare off potential volunteers. In some cases, we have gone with a committee without a chair to remove the associated stress. In other cases, we have found that it is easier to find someone to take on a particular task than to take on an area. Below are some of the areas where we utilize parents.

- Carpool Coordinator and drivers
- Build Season Food - We provide food, snacks, and beverages on the long Saturdays during build season.
- Concessions - We run the concessions booth when we host a competition.

- Banquet - We organize an end of season banquet for the students, parents, and sponsors.
- Student Fundraisers - We coordinate the student fundraisers, such as Cub bagging, bake sale, etc.. (As a policy, we do not do door-to-door sales.)
- Sponsors - We help identify potential sponsors.
- Grants - We help with the grant application process.
- Not essential for every organization - but we handle all the legal documents required as a 501(c)3, including taxes
- Treasurer maintains the bank account (Deposits, writes checks, etc.) (Student with a mentor handles the bookkeeping separately from the treasurer; they do not have access to the bank account.)
- Help maintain a team intranet for internal communications. (lots of free wikis out there, we use pbworks)
- Sewing - We have a few parents who have helped sew the bumpers and a team mascot costume.
- Socials - We organize a few fun events for students and parents.
- Publicity Coordinator - arranges for media coverage
- Alumni Liaison – Communicates with the alumni; assists with tracking majors and careers.