



**THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF
VIOLIN AND BOW MAKERS**

- [THE BYLAWS](#)
- [THE CODE OF ETHICS](#)
- [THE PRINCIPLES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT](#)

MAY 2016

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INTRODUCTION

The occupations of violin making and bow making require extensive training, special aptitudes and extended practical experience. For those engaged in our profession, the development of technical skill and expert ability becomes a lifetime commitment. A maker's goal to create a fine new instrument or bow is to work in an established art form. In addition, objects of great value and historical significance are constantly entrusted to the care and judgment of the professional restorer.

The American Federation of Violin & Bow Makers, Inc., was founded as a non-profit organization in 1980 by twenty leaders of the profession to elevate national standards of craftsmanship and professional conduct. Through seminars, lectures and exhibitions at meetings, the Federation provides publications and objects for the study and growth of the membership.

The Federation also recognizes an obligation of its members to serve the needs of musicians and the general public. This document outlines the government, conduct and ethical standards that guide Federation members and their organization. *THE BY-LAWS* is an embodiment of the rules governing the internal affairs of the organization. They were first proposed by the founding Board of Governors under the leadership of its first president, Hans Weisshaar. In its present form, *THE BY-LAWS* reflects the collaborative input of subsequent administrations and the general membership.

In 1982 the then Committee for Professional Ethics, William L. Monical, Chairman, with Luiz Bellini, Jacques Francais and Helmuth A. Keller prepared the ethical framework of the Federation in 1982. *THE CODE OF ETHICS* and *THE PRINCIPLES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT* specify minimum levels of acceptable conduct and are formally binding on the membership. True ethical responsibility requires an absolute commitment to honorable behavior and practices, even at the sacrifice of personal advantage. Members of the Federation are expected to exercise sound judgment in avoiding situations, which constitute or give the appearance of improper conduct or conflict of interest.

The Board of Governors welcomes your interest and inquiries regarding the Federation and its programs. Membership procedures and applications are available from the Secretary of the Board as is information concerning the on-going work and public activities of the organization. We look forward to hearing from you and encourage your participation.

The Board of Governors' mission for the AFVBM is dedication to the ethical practice of craftsmanship, conservation, education, expertise and outreach. ¹²

The Board of Governors

June, 2016

THE BY-LAWS

Article 1: Name & Object

Section 1 This is a 501 (c) 6 non-profit organization that shall be known as "The American Federation of Violin & Bow Makers, Inc." ¹² The object of this organization is:

Section 2 To promote fellowship among its members.

Section 3 To provide standards of ethical conduct.

Section 4 To engender prestige and respect to its members and their profession.

Section 5 To cooperate with organizations, government agencies, and others with kindred interests and problems.

Section 6 To develop and conduct educational and public relations activities.

Section 7 To develop sources of raw materials.

Section 8 To help develop the members' knowledge in repairing, making and expertise by having the most knowledgeable members share their expertise with the others, by means of conferences and demonstrations at meetings. ⁷

Section 9 To organize Violin and Bow Making Exhibitions under the sponsorship of the Federation. ¹²

Article 2: Government

Section 1 The President shall preside at all meetings of the Federation and of the Board of Governors; he/she shall appoint all committees; he/she shall, with the Secretary, sign all contracts and obligations; and he/she shall perform such other duties as are incident to his office. ²

Section 2 The Vice-President shall in the absence of the President preside at all meetings of the Federation and of the Board of Governors and shall assume all the functions of the President during such absence.

Section 3 The Secretary shall keep the minutes of all meetings of the Federation and of the Board of Governors; he/she shall issue all necessary notices; he/she shall have the custody of the records of the Federation and of the Board of Governors; he/she shall sign with the President all contracts and obligations of the Federation and perform such other duties as the Board of Governors may require.

Section 4 The Treasurer shall keep the accounts of the Federation; he/she shall collect and receive all dues and other indebtedness of the Federation and deposit same in the name of the Federation in such bank or trust company as may be directed by the Board of Governors; he/she shall pay bills after prudently determining their validity and perform such other duties as the Federation or the Board of Governors may require.²

Section 4A The Treasurer shall post the Profit and Loss statement and Balance sheet at least 2 times per year in the members-only and board-only area of the website. As a non-profit entity, the AFVBM Inc. and AFVBM Foundation books are open for inspection to every member at any time, however this financial information is for members-only and is not to be shared with non-members. Members will be required to use an on-line confidentiality agreement each time to view financial records. Requests for financial information from non-members will be disseminated through the Board.¹²

Section 5 In the case of a vacancy in the office of President, Vice-President, Secretary or Treasurer, the Board of Governors shall elect from its own number a member to fill the office until the next General Election. Should a vacancy occur in any of the other five Governors' seats, the Board will choose a person from the membership to fill this position until the next General Meeting.²

Section 6 The Board of Governors shall have the following powers, and it shall be its duty;

- a. To manage and control the affairs of the Federation, subject to the general approval of the membership and in accordance with the By-Laws, ²
- b. To examine the books of the Federation and to provide for their audit,
- c. To arrange for the entertainments given by the Federation,
- d. To pass upon the application of all candidates for admission,
- e. To provide for examination to determine the ability of violin or bow restorer applicant to demonstrate his/her ability as part of their membership application by forming a three-person oversight committee. ¹²
- f. To provide for the AFVBM Journeyman's examination for violin or bow maker applicants who must prove their making and repairing skills to the Board, before proceeding further with their application, by taking part or all of the examination. ¹²

Section 7 The presence of five members of the Board of Governors at any meeting shall constitute a quorum.

Section 8 Any member of the Board of Governors who shall be absent from the meetings of the Board for three consecutive meetings shall, at the option of the Board, be considered as having resigned.

Section 9 The Board of Governors shall consist of one President, one Vice-President, one Secretary, one Treasurer, and five additional Board Members. ²

Section 10 The principal officers and five other Board Members shall be elected for a period of two years. The principal officers shall be elected by a two-thirds majority of the membership present at the meeting in which an election is held, excepting the incoming and outgoing President. The four other Board Members shall be elected by a simple majority of members present. ^{2,9}

Section 11 To insure structural continuity within the Federation, the Vice-President will automatically become President in the term of office following his/her Vice-Presidency; similarly, the outgoing President will remain a member of the Board of Governors in the term of office following that of his/her Presidency. ²

Article 2-A: Election of Officers & Board Members

Section 1 A nominating committee, consisting of three members (if possible, one from the east coast, one from the Midwest and one from the West Coast) shall be formed.

Section 2 The Vice-President shall be extended the courtesy of submitting his/her slate of candidates for those years that he/she shall become President. He/She shall submit his/her slate of candidates to the committee chairperson three months in advance of the General Meeting ⁸ at which an election is to be held.

Section 3 The committee shall make known to the General Membership the slate of candidates. The membership shall have the opportunity to submit in writing their choice of candidates to the committee chairperson two months prior to the General Meeting ⁸. Any member wishing to nominate himself/herself shall do so in the same fashion.

Section 4 The nomination committee shall contact all nominees. (Nominees shall be made aware of their obligations as Governors regarding time and financial commitments.) Nominees must either accept or decline nominations before six weeks prior to the General Meeting.

Section 5 The final list of willing nominees shall be made known to the voting membership at least 20 days in advance of a General Meeting at which an election will take place.

Section 6 The nomination committee shall prepare ballots for the election and supervise the election.

Section 7 All ballots shall be prepared in triplicate, each of the three copies being of a different color for easier identification.

Section 8 The Treasurer shall determine if all members present are in good standing. The number of eligible voters will be announced at the election.

Section 9 Voting shall take place according to the By-Laws, Article 2, Section 10 through 11.

Section 10 If a candidate nominated by the Vice President for any office on a new Board of Governors runs unopposed, said candidate, upon a resolution by the Board of Governors and ratification by the membership present at the general meeting, would be declared elected unopposed.

Article 2-B: Committees 3

Section 1 Committees are the research, development and working arms of the Federation. All committees shall be appointed by the President to implement the programs of his/her administration.

Section 2 Committees shall be dismissed at the conclusion of each administration, and thereafter be newly appointed to fill requirements of the incoming President.

Section 3 All committees are responsible to the President and the Board of Governors. Committees are required to report to the Board for permission to publish information, spend monies on the Federation's behalf, and to implement programs.

Section 4 The President may dismiss or re-appoint committees at his/her discretion during his/her administration.

Article 2-C: Finance Committee

Section 1 All Federation monies, income, expenditure, indebtedness and not-for-profit corporation obligations shall be permanently monitored by the Finance Committee reporting to the Board of Governors.

Section 2 The Finance Committee is also charged with responsibility to explore and recommend sources of funding to develop and implement Federation programs.

Section 2A The Finance Committee will meet after the General Meeting and before the end of its current fiscal year. It shall submit a budget to the Board of Governors to be acted upon and adopted for the succeeding fiscal year. 7

Section 3 The Finance Committee shall consist of four Governors, including the President, Vice President, outgoing President, and Treasurer of each administration.

Section 4 The Finance Committee shall submit in writing an annual report to the membership. This report shall outline all financial activities of the Federation during the past Year. This report must be submitted to the General Membership at least twenty days in advance of the General meeting.

Article 3: Types of Membership ³

Section 1 There are 2 types of membership: Founder Members and Members. ¹²

Section 2 Founder Members are the 20 colleagues who formed the American Federation of Violin & Bow Makers, Inc.

Section 3 Members are those with recognized professional abilities and experience in either making or repairing. They are elected to the Federation and are entitled to all privileges and duties of membership. ^{7, 10}

Article 3-A: Geographic Requirements ^{3, 7}

Membership is available to individuals who have their place of business, employment, and residence in the United States or Canada. Firms, corporations, or other organizations and groups cannot become affiliated with the Federation.

Article 3-B: Prerequisites for Membership ^{3, 7}

Section 1 A Membership applicant shall be a full-time working professional violin maker or bow maker with recognized abilities and experience in either making or repairing. ⁷

Section 2 A Membership applicant shall have passed his/her 30th birthday and shall have at least 9 years of professional experience.

Article 3-C: Professional Affiliate ^{6, 11, 12}

Professional Affiliates are those who have achieved distinction and recognition for their contributions to the profession. They are exempt from annual dues and initiation fees. They are not entitled to all membership privileges, and they can be dismissed by the Board of Governors if they are found in violation of the AFVBM Code of Ethics. They may attend meetings only by invitation from the President or the Board of Governors. They are not allowed to attend the Business Meeting of the members. An individual may be elected Professional Affiliates upon recommendation of the Board of Governors and confirmation of 2/3 of the members present at the next General Meeting. ^{6, 11, 12}

Article 4: Application for Membership ⁶

Section 1 Applicants for Membership shall submit a formal application document provided by the Secretary of the Federation. The applicant shall furnish letters of recommendation from three sponsors who are members of the Federation, and who are familiar with his/her work. The applicant shall also submit an example of his/her work for review by the Board of Governors.

Section 2 Applications shall be deliberated by the Board of Governors to ensure that all requirements have been met. Those that have, will be nominated for consideration by the members, by a simple majority of those members present and voting. The Board after reviewing the sample of work, will communicate to the applicant their evaluation of said work, after which the applicant can decide whether to proceed with his/her nomination.

Section 3 Membership applicants have clearly established abilities and experience in either making or repairing. If only questions of experience or well-rounded abilities prevent Board nomination for membership, the Governors may request the applicant take part or all of the AFVBM Journeyman's Examination. This gives the applicant an opportunity to demonstrate that he/she has acquired sufficient knowledge to meet all skill requirements. ¹²

Article 4-A: Election Procedure for Membership ₃

Section 1 Board nominations for Membership shall be sent by the Secretary to the voting membership at least 20 days in advance of the meeting at which voting will take place. Included with the nominations shall be a short profile of each nominee's background in the profession.

Section 2 Each nominee shall provide an example of his/her work for examination by the membership at the meeting in which the voting will take place.

Section 3 At the General meeting, members will review the work and professional history of each nominee and vote by secret ballot: YES, or NO. A YES vote of 2/3 of the membership present at the meeting is required for successful election. A NO vote shall indicate either reservations on ethical grounds, or reservations about technical skills evidenced in the nominee's work.

Article 5: Dues and Fees ₅

Section 1 Annual Membership dues shall be \$300.

Section 2 Dues for new Members shall commence on January 1st of the year following the meeting at which they are elected.

Section 3 Families consisting of more than one member working together at the same location shall pay dues as follows: the principal member will pay regular yearly dues and each additional family member will pay 1/2 of the regular dues.

Section 4 Dues can be changed by the Board of Governors with a 2/3 vote of the Governors present at the Board Meeting in which the vote is taken.

Section 5 The collection of dues by the Treasurer shall be as follows:

- a. Annual dues shall be payable on January 1st.
- b. A member who has failed to pay his/her dues by March 1st shall be considered in arrears and fined \$50.⁷
- c. The Treasurer shall notify such delinquent members by mail, email or phone call¹² that unless payment of dues is received within 30 days of mailing such notice, membership shall be terminated.
- d. Discontinuance of membership by nonpayment of dues does not constitute a Leave of Absence.¹²

Section 6 The resignation of members shall be made in writing to the Federation President. Members who wish to leave for personal and/or political reasons may resign in writing or email to any Board Member who will refer the matter to the president. If a member who has resigned wants to rejoin the AFVBM in the future, he/she must reapply as a new applicant and go through the review process.¹²

Article 5A: AFVBM Leave of Absence (LOA) Policy: ¹²

Section 1 The LOA policy is for the overall fairness and cohesion of the AFVBM membership. Requests for LOA will be made in writing or email to any Board Member and referred to the President. LOA will be granted on a case by case basis by Board quorum in a simple majority vote. Requests must be submitted before the end of the calendar year to remain "in good standing" as a member, or before January 31st, when current dues are owed. Discontinuance of membership by nonpayment of dues does not constitute a LOA. No leaves will be granted for personal and/or political reasons.

Section 2 Applicant for LOA must be in good standing with the AFVBM and have been a member for at least one 2-year term. Applicant's membership dues must be current with the Treasurer's approval. Applicant's reason for requesting a LOA must involve 'unusual' circumstances. The applicant must set forth 'good cause,' being defined as personal hardship caused by temporary and/or extraordinary financial, job, business, medical or family issues.

Section 3 The leave period shall be for 2 years. No dues will be charged during the period of the leave. Members who wish to take a LOA for a longer period than 2 years must specify this in their initial written request by showing just cause. Upon approval of the leave, the Secretary will notify the Applicant of the expected date of return. In the event the Applicant decides not to return to the AFVBM at the end of the granted LOA, written notice is required to the Board, and Membership will be terminated. If the Applicant is unable to return after the 2-year leave period but wants to request an extension then another LOA request in writing must be submitted to the board for review and voting, with a maximum of 2 total leaves granted before membership termination.

Section 4 Applicants granted LOA may not use AFVBM member benefits including: website Member Content; Meetings; Ventures; AFVBM logo; “Players Meets Makers”; purchase new CD-ROMs produced during their leave; etc. The Applicant granted LOA will be removed from AFVBM website listing, bulk email server, printed member directory, and other communications/mailings from the AFVBM. Applicant granted LOA may not advertise membership in the AFVBM.

Section 5 Upon termination of his/her Leave, the Applicant again becomes a subscribing member and is responsible for paying \$600 for current and back dues.

Article 6: Suspension & Expulsion

Section 1 Conduct detrimental to the profession or to the Federation or any member thereof, as determined by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Governors after a formal complaint and hearing, shall be cause for expulsion, suspension or other disciplinary action.

Section 2 A complaint against a member shall be investigated by a special committee of not less than five members appointed by the President. The special committee shall submit its report and recommendation to the Board of Governors.

Article 7: Fiscal Year

Section 1 The fiscal year shall be from January 1 to December 31 of the same year.

Section 2 Terms of officers and committees, and all annual periods, except fiscal, shall terminate with the election of a new Board at the appropriate meeting.

Article 8: Use of Name, Trademarks, Service Marks and Copyrights

Section 1 The Federation's name may not be used for any purpose without specific written authorization from the Board of Governors.

Section 2 Members may, however, indicate their affiliation as individuals.

Section 3 One business affiliation and/or trade name of a member may be indicated in the Federation Membership Directory.

Section 4 A member may indicate his/her Federation affiliation in conjunction with his/her affiliation with a business operated under a trade name, partnership, or corporation.

Section 5 Any member causing the name of the Federation or his/her affiliation with it to be used in a manner not authorized by these By-Laws and amendments thereto shall be subject to disciplinary action which may include expulsion from the Federation and termination of his/her membership.

Section 6 All trademarks, service marks and copyrights are the sole property of the American Federation of Violin and Bow Makers, Inc. These collective membership marks and copyrights may be used only on and for official material issued with the approval of the Board of Governors. Members may not use or reproduce the marks and copyrights in any form.

Article 9: Amendments

Proposed amendments to these By-Laws shall be submitted to the Board of Governors. If the amendment is approved by the Board, it is mailed to the membership for consideration no less than fifteen days before the next AFVBM General Meeting. The amendment is adopted if approved by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at that meeting.²

Article 10: Suspension of By-Laws

These By-Laws may be suspended by unanimous vote of the members voting at a meeting of the Federation.

1. Amended 5 December 1983, by the Board of Governors
2. Amended 31 March 1984
3. New ARTICLE, introduced 25 April 1986
4. Addition 6 May 1989 by full membership
5. Amended 28 January 1996, by the Board of Governors
6. Amendments and additions 16 April 1999, by full membership
7. Amended 15 April 2005, by full membership
8. Footnoted-on 6 April 2006 the full membership voted and approved holding General Meetings every other year, instead of annually.
9. Footnoted- on 6 April 2006 the full membership voted and approved to hold a one-time off-year proxy vote in 2007 to bring the Board vote in sync with the General Meeting schedule.
10. Footnoted- on 6 April 2006 that the full membership voted and approved to allow restorer-applicants to apply for membership.
11. Amended April 8, 2009, by full membership.
12. Amended 26 May 2016 by full membership.

THE CODE OF ETHICS

The conduct toward which members of the American Federation of Violin & Bow Makers, Inc. shall strive is outlined in the following general ethical principles.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

A member of the Federation shall maintain universally high technical standards and strive constantly to improve his/her competence and the quality of his/her services.

OBJECTIVITY AND INTEGRITY

A member of the Federation shall maintain his/her objectivity and integrity and be independent of those he/she serves. Objectivity refers to the ability of maintaining an impartial attitude to all matters under review. Integrity is an element of character, which is fundamental to a client's reliance on a member of the Federation. While neither of these qualities is precisely measurable, the profession holds them up to members as essential through rules embodied in *THE PRINCIPLES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT*.

RESPONSIBILITY TO CLIENTS

A member of the Federation will be fair and candid with his/her clients and serve them to the best of his/her ability. He/She must show professional concern for their best interests in complement with his/her responsibilities to the public.

RESPONSIBILITY TO COLLEAGUES

A member of the Federation shall conduct himself/herself in a manner which will encourage cooperation and good relations among members of the profession.

OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

A member of the Federation shall conduct himself/herself in a manner which will enhance the stature and respect of the profession and its ability to serve the musical community and the general public.

THE PRINCIPLES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Membership in the American Federation of Violin & Bow Makers, Inc. implies that the member has accepted an obligation to fair and honest performance of professional services in relations with clients, colleagues and the public. Therefore, the Federation has adopted the following rules of professional conduct.

1. Responsibilities of Members to Each Other and to the Profession:

a. A member of the Federation is expected to uphold the dignity and honor of his/her vocation.

- b. A member of the Federation is expected to conduct himself/herself in a manner which will enhance the stature of the profession and its abilities to serve the public.
- c. A member of the Federation is expected to conduct himself/herself in a manner which will encourage cooperation and good relations among members of the profession.
- d. A member of the Federation has an obligation to share his/her experience and knowledge with his/her colleagues and with serious students.
- e. A member of the Federation has a responsibility to teach and train apprentices in the highest standards of his/her skill within the limits of his/her expert knowledge and ability and the technical facilities available.
- f. A member of the Federation will not volunteer criticism of the procedures and qualifications of another member. Such comments or insinuations tend to lower the confidence of the client in the Federation, and works against the interests of the clients, the profession and the critic.
- g. A member of the Federation shall not attempt to use, patent, copyright or otherwise seek financial gain from an idea, design or product of others engaged in the profession.
- h. A member of the Federation shall not undertake to solicit, encourage or hire an individual who is retained by or in the employ of another member. An individual can only be considered for employment after having given formal notice to quit to his/her current employer.

2. Responsibilities of Members to Clients and the Public:

- a. A member of the Federation shall serve his/her clients with a professional concern for their best interests consistent with his/her obligation to the public at large.
- b. A member of the Federation is required to hold in strict confidence all information concerning a client's affairs that may have developed from a working relationship.
- c. A member of the Federation will be frank and straight-forward with clients. A client should never be in doubt about the professional opinion or stature advised by a member.
- d. Members of the Federation shall be constantly alert to guard the public against fraud or unethical conduct of any kind and to report such suspicions to the Board of Governors.
- e. Members of the Federation shall be alert to the status of stolen or lost objects and make every possible attempt to return the objects to their rightful owners. Acceptance of reward or gratuity for the return of lost or stolen property is considered unethical.
- f. A member of the Federation will assume responsibility for the ultimate quality of his/her services and advice and will not engage in activities beyond his/her professional competence and experience.

g. A member of the Federation shall be sensitive to questions of punctuality and will make every attempt to both estimate and deliver services or objects with reasonable promptness.

3. Responsibilities of Members to Objects:

a. A member of the Federation shall be always mindful of the great value and historical significance of objects entrusted to his/her care.

b. A member of the Federation shall take all precautions possible to protect objects in his/her care from the risks of fire and theft.

c. A member of the Federation shall be required to be conscious of the danger of environmental hazards such as unsuitable levels of relative humidity, temperature, light and atmospheric pollutants.

d. A member of the Federation shall maintain objects in areas of storage suitable for safe care and protection from accidental damage.

e. A member of the Federation shall always be mindful of the physical integrity of instruments and bows. He/She shall always be guided by the "principle of reversibility" in the conservation and restoration of objects.

4. Advertising:

a. A member of the Federation shall not make statements or present opinions in the name of the Federation as an individual member without expressed written permission from the Board of Governors.

b. A member of the Federation shall not engage in any advertising, public or private, that uses statements or claims likely to exaggerate favorable results or expectations of the skills or expertise of the member.

c. A member of the Federation shall not engage in any form of public or private advertising that implies his/her skills to be superior to those of other member professionals.

d. A member of the Federation shall not make statements or claims likely to cause confusion or misunderstanding to the average person.

5. Fees:

a. Fees shall be determined by a member exercising his/her independent judgment and being always mindful of his/her professional responsibilities.

b. A member of the Federation shall avoid charges for services which underestimate the value of a completed task. Indeed, a professional person who cannot maintain a respectable standard of living is not likely to inspire confidence or to enjoy sufficient peace of mind to do his/her best work. However, a client's ability to pay cannot justify a charge more than the value of the service.

Therefore, estimates for services should not be misleading by being substantially lower or higher than is consistent with reasonable cost for the performance of the task.

- c. A member of the Federation shall not collaborate with clients to artificially inflate costs in cases of insurance compensation. Any collusion to falsify insurance claims is unethical and forbidden.
- d. A member of the Federation shall not offer manufactured products or accessories at cost or near cost except under unusual circumstances to reduce inventory or promote advertising. The continual sale of products far below market price shall be considered unfair competition.

6. Enforcement of Rules of Professional Conduct:

- a. A member of the Federation shall expose without fear, incompetent or corrupt, dishonest or unethical conduct on the part of members of the profession. Conduct in violation of the American Federation of Violin & Bow Makers, Inc., *THE CODE OF ETHICS* or *THE PRINCIPLES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT* can lead to expulsion of a member from the Federation.
- b. A complaint against a member shall be investigated by a special committee of not less than five members appointed by the President. The special committee shall submit its report and recommendations to the Board of Governors. A two-thirds vote of the Board of Governors after a formal complaint and hearing shall be cause for expulsion, suspension or other disciplinary action.

7. Amendments:

- a. Proposed amendments to *THE CODE OF ETHICS* and *THE PRINCIPLES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT* shall be submitted to the Board of Governors.
- b. If the amendment is approved by the Board, it shall be mailed to the membership for consideration no less than fifteen days before the next AFVBM General Meeting. The amendment is adopted if approved by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at that meeting. 5