

10 STEPS TO START A NON-PROFIT DANCE CLUB

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INTRODUCTION - So you want to start a non-profit dance club. First thing to be aware of is that a dance club can be a lot of work and take up a lot of your time. It is also a lot of fun and you will meet people all over the country that you would never have met otherwise. Starting a dance club will definitely change your life. The America Bop Association which consists of 30 dance clubs can help. These clubs have probably experienced every problem that a club could run into and have found a solution for it. This booklet is designed to walk you through the step by step process of starting you club on a successful footing.

INTEREST - Make sure that there is enough interest in your area in starting a dance club. In most cases there is a core of dancers usually 4 to 8 people that would like to start a club. These people usually know many more people in their city that like to dance. These people will be the start of you club.

TYPE OF CLUB - You should decide on what type of club you want. (Bop, Shag, Jitterbug, Swing, West Coast Swing etc.) This should be included in you Articles Of Incorporation. Example: Dedicated to the promotion and preservation of jitterbug bop swing and shag styles of dancing and rhythm and blues, beach and bop music.

LEGAL DOCUMENTS - It is very important that your club be incorporated and legal. This protects you and your officers from personal law suits. The process of incorporation is not that difficult and should be in place before you have any functions or acquire any members. Contact your Secretary of State Office for the forms. Required forms may vary from state to state. The following example of forms needed is from the State of Ohio. You will need to fill out the following forms. Statutory Agent Form, Articles of Incorporation Form, Name Reservation or Name Availability Form and Trademark Forms. You should also get a Federal Tax ID Number.

Statutory Agent Form - This form is used by the state for all legal correspondence with the corporation and is usually the home address of the President.

Articles of Incorporation Form - This form has the club info such as names and addresses of the officers (President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer) and the purpose of the club.

Name Reservation or Name Availability Form - This form reserves your club name and insures that there is not a duplicate club name already being used.

Trademark Forms - These forms should be used to protect your club name and logos from unauthorized duplication.

Federal Tax ID Number - This is used for filing you federal and state tax

returns.

CREATE YOUR CLUB BY-LAWS - This might be easier than you think. Every club in the American Bop Association has by-laws and will gladly send you a copy that you can use as a guide. Your best bet is to get several sets of by-laws and adapt them to your club.

RENT A PO BOX - Rent a Post Office Box for your club mail and designate two people that can pick up the mail. (Usually the President and Treasurer) All correspondence such as applications and dues etc should go through the PO Box. The PO Box number should be printed on all applications for membership, flyers for dances etc.

CREATE A CLUB LOGO - This will be printed on all club materials.

OPEN A CLUB CHECKING ACCOUNT - There should be three people that can sign checks (usually the President, Secretary & Treasurer) Your by-laws will dictate the procedures for writing checks and spending club funds.

THE MUSIC - This is one of the most important aspects of your club. It will define you as something different. Most clubs have their own DJ and play only the music that their members like to dance to.

THE PLACE - Some clubs dance in public venues such as a bar or night club and others dance in a hall that they rent such as a VFW or Moose Hall. Keep in mind that if you dance in a public venue that they are in business to make money so your club members need to spend enough money to make them want you back. Your best bet is find a place with a decent size dance floor and a DJ booth and to ask what is their worst night and tell them that you will bring the music and the crowd to dance on that night. If you rent a hall you need to have enough dancers paying an admission fee to pay for the hall. You will also need a sound system and dee jay to play your music.

GETTING STARTED PROMOTING - After you have a place to dance it is time to get started promoting. Make up some flyers or cards promoting the start of the club. Make phone calls to your friends who like to dance. Have them call other dancers. Get as many people to show up on your first night as possible. Make you night as enjoyable as possible. Have special dances - mixers etc. Remember that this is something different that they are use to. Most places do not play the kind of music that they dance to all night long. They usually have to wait for that one special song to dance to. The club plays it all night long. Have applications on hand to fill out and join the club.
REMEMBER NEVER STOP PROMOTING.

DO NOT FORGET TO JOIN THE AMERICAN BOP ASSOCIATION - This organization can be a wealth of information for your club about such things as newsletters, web sites, music, having special dances, hotel negotiations, by-laws, day to day operation of a dance club and much more. Good luck on starting your club and remember we can help.