

What is involved with being an officer in the NMRVTA?

Each year, the NMRVTA holds elections of officers at our Annual Membership meeting. More often than not, finding willing volunteers is difficult. We have put together this article to describe what each officer does along with talents/experiences that are desirable for each position.

All positions require NMRVTA membership. While the time involvement varies based on the projects the Board is working on and the experience of the individual officer, in 2021 the Executive Board met monthly (approximately 1.5 hours per month) and spent approximately another 10 hours per month outside of the meetings working on various tasks and researching. We have used Zoom for meetings the past few years, enabling geographically-distant officers to participate.

Past-President, President, and President-Elect

The President-Elect is an elective office. The offices of President and Past-President are filled by succession – that is, the President-Elect becomes the President in the following year and the President becomes the Past-President. This succession allows the President-Elect to learn more about the workings of the organization (President in training, if you will) and the Past-President to bring recent knowledge and experiences to the Executive Board (a mentor).

The President-Elect and the President must be a New Mexico-licensed RVT. Because of the succession of office, the President-Elect will be on the Executive Board for three consecutive years. During the year as President-Elect, the person participates fully and learns about the recurring responsibilities of the Executive Board.

The candidate for President-Elect should have passion for the direction of veterinary technology along with an understanding of the construct in which we work. The person should be comfortable with leading and the democratic process, putting the needs of the organization first with an open mind. The ideal candidate should be dedicated to the three-year commitment to the NMRVTA. The second year, the year as President, is the most critical as will be described later in this document. The duties of the President-Elect per the NMRVTA Constitution are:

ARTICLE NINE – PRESIDENT-ELECT

1. The President-Elect shall assume the duties of the President in the event the President is absent or unable to perform his or her duties.
2. The President-Elect shall perform tasks and duties as delegated by the President.

The President is the leader of the Executive Board. With the Board, the President must ensure that the Executive Board organizes and offers eight hours of continuing education to current NMRVTA members. The responsibility of the position can be significant, especially if any member of the Board does not complete assigned tasks or when the President is unable to delegate tasks. The NMRVTA Constitution lists the following duties of the President:

ARTICLE EIGHT – PRESIDENT

1. The President presides at all meetings and enforces all the By-laws and the Constitution.
2. The President shall appoint committees as needed.
3. The President shall have the power to call special meetings of the Board.
4. The President should attend or send a representative to all regular New Mexico Board of Veterinary Medicine meetings and all New Mexico Veterinary Medical Association (NMVMA) Board meetings, as permitted.
5. The President is responsible for informing the New Mexico Board of Veterinary Medicine (NMBVM) and the New Mexico Veterinary Medical Association (NMVMA) of the NMRVTA officers within 30 days of the annual transitional officers' meeting.

The President often brings specific goals to the position in line with the mission of the NMRVTA. For example, past goals of our Presidents have included: outreach to the students through Career Night both in Albuquerque and at the Navajo Technical University, specific outreach to veterinary staff outside of Central New Mexico (CE offered in Las Cruces), bringing the feel of a big conference to the NMRVTA with presentations from veterinary technicians and veterinary technician specialists who speak on the national circuit, improving content of the CE, and working toward title protection for veterinary technicians.

The Past-President supports the President and the rest of the Executive Board by having the Association's memory for the previous two years. This position provides experience and continuity needed for the smooth transition of officers and a more high-functioning Executive Board on day one. The NMRVTA Constitution lists the following duties for the Past-President:

ARTICLE SEVEN – PAST-PRESIDENT

1. The Past-President will serve as support in an advisory position to all elected officers
2. The Past-President shall not be eligible to hold the President-Elect position until one year has elapsed since his or her retirement from this office.

Other Positions on the Executive Board

Any current, regular member of the NMRVTA may hold the remaining positions on the Executive Board. These positions are filled annually at the Membership Meeting. It is recognized that a current officer is often re-elected to an office. Officers have expressed the desire to serve a second term after learning the position in the first term and to follow-through on the goals set. There are pros to having this continuity. That said, new ideas and energy can lift the performance of the Executive Board. Therefore, turnover on the Executive Board is important as well. Know that each position described below is open every year.

There are a number of administrative tasks that the Executive Board must complete for the smooth running of the Association. These tasks may fall naturally into one of the seven Board positions. In practical terms, some tasks may fall to a different Board member depending on the experience, available time, or geographic location of the officers involved.

The **Secretary** is responsible for recording the minutes of all Association meetings and the receipt of correspondence. Experience in word processing and database management is important for this position. The NMRVTA Constitution lists the following duties of the Secretary:

ARTICLE TEN – SECRETARY

1. The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the general membership and Executive Board meetings.
2. He or she shall prepare a report of the minutes of these meetings. The minutes of the previous meeting shall be read and approved at the next meeting.
3. The Secretary shall be responsible for receiving correspondence and shall inform all members of any meetings.
4. The Secretary shall be responsible for keeping an updated copy of the NMRVTA constitution to be made available on request.
5. The Secretary shall maintain the membership records. The Executive Board will determine any use or release of the membership records.

The **Treasurer** is responsible for receiving funds, maintenance of the financial records and reconciliation of expenses to budget. Explicitly, the Secretary should receive bank statements and the Treasurer should reconcile the account. The Treasurer must promote transparency of financial records to the Executive Board and to the general membership. It is critical that a candidate for Treasurer be comfortable with budgets, ledgers, and financial reconciliation. The NMRVTA Constitution lists the following duties of the Treasurer:

ARTICLE ELEVEN – TREASURER

1. The Treasurer shall oversee the keeping of the books of the Association and shall report the state of the Association's finances at all Executive Board meetings and all general membership meetings.
2. All expenditures must be approved by the Executive Board. Written approvals will be kept on record for expenditures (email, fax, letter, or signatures in the check register or another log). Pre-event budget plans, to a maximum expenditure dollar amount, can serve as a directive with signatures or other written approvals by the Executive Board. In the event that not all officers have responded to a request, written documentation will be made to state the circumstances and serve as an explanation of the expenditure being made.
3. If the Association's bank/checking account allows for such, preferably both the President's and the Treasurer's signatures (or any two elected officers) will be required for the disbursement of funds of the Association.

The role of the **Publicity Coordinator** has expanded with the explosion of websites and social media. An ideal candidate should have experience or a strong interest in website design and maintenance and social media platforms. The Association is evolving in our management of communication and so strength in this position is important. The NMRVTA Constitution lists the following duties of the Publicity Coordinator:

ARTICLE TWELVE – PUBLICITY COORDINATOR

1. The Publicity Coordinator shall be responsible for promoting NMRVTA information / events through electronic media.
2. The Publicity Coordinator shall be responsible for keeping the NMRVTA website / social media updated with regards to job listings, and other pertinent news for the NMRVTA at least monthly.
3. The Publicity Coordinator shall be responsible for checking for Association emails weekly.
4. All electronic media content should be:
 - a. pertinent to the NMRVTA purpose,
 - b. posted by the Publicity Coordinator, and
 - c. from a reliable source.

The **NAVTA State Representative** serves as the liaison between the National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America and the NMRVTA. This position requires membership in NAVTA. Ideally, the candidate should have a keen interest in national veterinary technician issues and initiatives. This position currently requires participation in quarterly meetings of State Representative in AVMA District 9, updates

of NMRVTA news to The NAVTA Journal and encourages participation in the NAVTA Association Leadership Summits and Symposia. The NMRVTA Constitution lists the following duties of the NAVTA State Representative:

ARTICLE THIRTEEN – National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America (NAVTA) STATE REPRESENTATIVE

1. This individual must meet the current qualifications of NAVTA to be a State Representative and to perform the duties of this position as required by NAVTA.
2. The NAVTA State Representative will make reports at meetings and to the Publicity Coordinator regarding NAVTA activities.
3. He or she will coordinate national and state NAVTA activities.
4. He or she is to be a resource or contact person for their area, and represent New Mexico at pertinent NAVTA functions.

General skills that are helpful for all officers to have are: knowledge of assertive communication style and Robert's Rules of Order, critical thinking skills (to be able to make important board decisions after considering all information available), and the willingness to learn and take responsibility for their own development.

Should you have any questions about being an officer, please reach out to any of the current or past officers. We are here to encourage your participation and growth as a member of the Association. This can be an amazing opportunity to strengthen your leadership skills for your veterinary career, while helping to strengthen the profession in New Mexico.