

DSS Meeting Setup Information

July, 2017

Building Access

Attendees come to our meetings from many miles away, even from out-of-state. We don't want to take a chance on being locked out, so it is best to pick up a building key before the meeting.

When To Get Keys

The key must be picked up during regular business hours before each meeting, and left in a drop-box before leaving the building after the meeting. The Livonia Civic Park Senior Center is normally open from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Keys can be picked up anytime during those hours, though I would advise against cutting it too close to the 5:00 deadline. Please note that when the building is to be used on a Saturday or Sunday, there are no staff personnel at the building on those days, so the key must be picked up on the Friday before.

Keys Needed

Normally, when we meet in the Card Room, only the key to the main entrance door is required. However, when a different room such as the Game Room, the Conference Room, or Room "F" is used, an additional key may be needed to get into those rooms (see diagram on attached sheet).

Source For Keys

Our main contact person at the Senior Center is Karl Peters, the Senior Center Director. He handles reserving the rooms, and providing the keys. If he is not available, keys can be obtained from either Carri Saroka (Recreation Supervisor), or Kim O'Loughlin (clerk). Their phone numbers are listed below.

Procedure

When checking out a key, you will need to sign your name and phone number on a Key Signout sheet, along with the name of our group. When the meeting is over, the key should be deposited into a gray drop box mounted on the wall between the fireplace and the door to the offices (near the clock) in the main lobby area.

Using Key for Main Entrance

It is important that the entrance doors *not* be propped open, but simply unlocked. To do this, insert the key and turn clockwise, and open the door partway. With the key still in the lock, push in the latches all the way, and turn the key fully in the opposite direction (counterclockwise). You should then be able to let go of the latches and have them remain inside the door. Turn the key back to the center position and remove the key. The door will now open freely when pulled (or pushed, depending on which side you are on), and close all the way. Reverse the process at the end of the meeting so the doors will lock again.

Usually we only unlock the south entrance door, but the north door can be unlocked as well, if you want. Just be sure to lock them again before leaving at the end of the meeting.

Automatic Door Opening

There is a switch at the top of each doorway (on the inside) which enables the power door-opening feature. You may switch it on or off, as you choose. Normally during the day it is on; the staff usually turns it off before they close, and we usually leave it that way. However, if you do reactivate this switch, be sure to return it to the "off" position after the meeting

Contact Information:

Karl Peters	(734) 466-2556	(director)
Carri Saroka	(734) 466-2557	(rec. supervisor)
Kim O'Loughlin	(734) 466-2553	(clerk)

DSS Meeting Room Setup

Our regular monthly meetings are held in the “Card Room”. It can easily take an hour or more for one person to bring in the club’s equipment and set up the room for a regular monthly meeting, so make sure you arrive in time to complete everything before the meeting begins (but do not begin before 5pm). If more people can be there to help, the setup time will be reduced proportionately.

Light Switches

The light switches for the two left-hand (south) rows of overhead lights are on a bank of four switches on the right side of the wall as you enter the room from the main lobby area. The switches for the two right-hand (north) rows of lights are on a 3-switch plate on the wall between the bookcases and the doors that go to the hallway on the right-hand (north) side of the room. Both switch locations have a switch for the light at the back of the room where we typically have the “Information Table”.

Low Light Setting

The set of four switches has one switch for just two individual light fixtures, which is very useful for low lighting (between a completely dark room and a completely illuminated room). This switch is the one closest to the main part of the room, farthest from the main entry door.

Ambient Light Control

The windows in the two main entry doors to the Card Room need to be covered to block the light from the hallway. Two pieces of black plastic and a roll of ½” wide cloth tape are in the blue container that has the items for the Information Table (at the back of the room) to use for this purpose. After the meeting, the two pieces of black plastic should be removed from the windows. The tape should be taken off the sheets and discarded, and the black plastic put back in the blue Information Table container for future use.

Light From Exterior Doors

The exterior door at the northwest corner of the room (by the flagpole and fire alarm switch) needs to have one of the folding panel units placed in front of it to block light from coming in. However, try to insure there still is easy access to the door so that in case of an emergency, it can be used to exit the building.

Light From Windows

The blinds in the windows need to be in the fully covered (down) position for our meetings, to block the light from outside. They need to be adjusted back to the open position before leaving the room at the end of the meeting.

Safety Lighting

To help people walk when the room is darkened, we have several small “night lights” that should be placed in the wall outlets around the room. This will help illuminate the floor and show where cables and other objects are, without affecting viewing the images on the projection screen. One or more of the desk lamps on the scorer’s table may also be used for this purpose. In addition, a battery-powered light is also attached to the light fixture above the information table, to help illuminate it when the room lights are off. Remember to remove these lamps and pack them away with the other equipment at the end of the meeting.

Light Control in Conference Room

In the Conference Room, which we use occasionally for the DISE judging, there is one window next to the door that needs to be blacked out when a projector is used. A separate roll of black plastic is included in the TDC slide projector case for that purpose.

Temperature Control

It can be helpful to use fans on each side of the room to help circulate air. Sometimes the fans are moved and used in other rooms during the day, but unless someone is using them in the evening, it is okay to relocate them to the Card Room for our meetings. They may be left in place after the meeting.

Adjusting Room Temperature

The temperature sensor for the Card Room is located in the adjacent "Activity Room". The room dividers between these two rooms are generally kept closed, but if the Activity Room is not being used, the dividers may be opened before meetings to help circulate the air between the rooms. (The Activity Room tends to be cooler, with more air-conditioning.) The exterior door at the northwest corner of the Card Room can be opened temporarily to allow fresh air in, if necessary.

Clearing Space for Seating

There may be some long tables in various places in the Card room. One can be used as the information table, and another as the scorer's table. The one by the sink and refrigerator should be kept as is, for use in serving refreshments at the break, as well as the two tables between that one and the door in the northwest corner of the room. The others should be folded and positioned to be out of the way, unless needed for a particular purpose.

Moving Round Table

The round "puzzle table" near the coat rack should be moved against the east wall, between the scale and the vending machine. Be sure not to drag this or any other table. A special roller is available in the yellow tool bag to allow a single person to easily move the table.

Placement of Card Tables

The card tables in our seating area will need to be moved to the sides of the room. Again, be careful not to drag them across the floor. At the end of the meeting, the tables should be replaced under the light fixtures. The main complaint we've received was when the tables were placed too close together, and the staff had to move them all farther apart the next morning for the seniors to use. If we place them under the lights, the spacing (and the lighting) is good.

Using Wheeled Chairs

The chairs around that round puzzle table may be used at the scoring table. If more of these chairs with wheels are needed for some reason, they may be borrowed from the desk near the cafeteria, or the main desk area. In that case, be sure they are returned back where they came from at the end of the meeting.

Locating the Seats

The closest seats should be about 10' away from the front of the screen. Each successive row of seats should be 3' behind the one ahead of it (seatback to seatback). The floor tiles are 1' square, so that makes it easy to space the rows out. Usually there is room for about six rows.

Setting the Center Aisle

A center aisle is needed to prevent viewers from obstructing the projected images. The first row should have a spacing of about 5'; 2-1/2' on each side of center. Each successive row should be moved in toward the center about 3", or a quarter of a floor tile. This helps to provide better sight lines to the screens by not having someone's head directly in front of you.

Chair Placement

The first row should have 3 or 4 seats on each side of center. The subsequent rows may add another chair, up to a maximum of about 6. Be sure to leave enough space on each side for an aisle wide enough to walk through easily. On the last row, leave enough space in front of the scoring tables so that the equipment cables can be connected easily and run where they are needed.

Electrical Service

It is best to have all the electrical devices used at the meetings powered from the same receptacle, to minimize the number of electrical cords running across the floor, and also to reduce the possibility of hum and noise in the sound system. Typically the outlet behind the bookcase is used, where the yellow GFCI (“Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter”) box is connected. This box serves as an instant circuit breaker to protect people and equipment from any electrical problem that could occur. From there, the main power cord runs first to the scorer’s table, and then an extension cord out to the projection table. (Equipment in the kitchen area will be plugged into a different outlet in that area.)

Taping Down Cables

Try to have a minimum number of wires in areas that people walk through, and be sure to tape them down sufficiently. Remember that people may need to move about when the lights are off and the cables may not be visible. We always need to be careful not to create hazards. “Gaffers” tape is used for this (not duct tape), which is kept in the yellow tool bag.

Using Available Outlets

There are three outlets available on the splitter at the end of the main power cord. Usually two of them will be used for the two outlet strips on the scorer’s table, and the third outlet for the extension cord to the digital projector. Be careful not to switch off or disconnect any electrical power until all the equipment (computers, projectors, etc.) has been properly shut down first.

Problems With Electrical Power

If there are power problems, check the circuit breakers inside the gray electrical panel on the wall where we set up the information tables, and also check the red ‘reset’ button on the GFCI plug. An outlet tester is included in the yellow tool bag, if needed.

Between Meetings

In the days after a meeting, the equipment is typically checked, sorted, and cleaned as needed, before storing away for the next meeting. Some items for the Information Table will become out of date, and should be removed from the container.

Cleaning the Polarized Glasses

The main job is usually to check and clean the polarized glasses. Those that show any oils or smudges (typically 1/4 to 1/2 of the glasses) should be cleaned with a 50% solution of isopropyl alcohol. Try to do this as soon as you can after the meeting, so that the polarizers do not become damaged by having contaminants on them for a long period. If you use a bottle that contains a 70% solution (readily available at most convenience stores for \$1 or less), simply mix two parts of this with one part water, which results in a 47% solution (close enough!). One tablespoon of the isopropyl alcohol and 1/2 tablespoon of water will usually be sufficient. Clean the glasses using a soft cloth dipped in the solution and wipe them dry with another soft cloth (a soft towel or a cloth diaper works well for this), so they are not scratched during cleaning.

Annual Maintenance

At least once a year, usually after the June meeting, *all* the glasses should be fully cleaned. It’s a good idea to examine all the equipment, tools and supplies at this time and make sure they are ready to use when the meetings start up again in the fall. You will probably need to buy a new roll of gaffers tape, and new 9-volt batteries for the wireless microphones. Name tags may also need to be purchased. We should have enough award ribbons to last until about 2021 or so, but those should be checked, too.

Projection Equipment Setup

Projection Screen

The silver screen should be placed near the center of the room, to allow about the same amount of seating on each side of a center aisle. It will be located about 4' west of the center of the room, as determined by the support beams, slightly towards the kitchen side of the room.

Screen Set-Up Procedure

When setting up the screen, be very careful not to have the surface of the screen touch anything, notably the front edge of the slot in the screen housing. Push down on the tab at the bottom of the screen to unlock and extend the three tripod legs. Rotate the screen housing so that it is horizontal. There is a lot of spring tension inside the screen roller, so to minimize this, position the screen housing up high when setting it up, and lower the chrome-plated upper support bar. Raise the short notched extension bar located on top of the upper support bar, and tilt it toward the projector. This will provide a slight downward angle to the screen surface for optimal viewing. Hook the screen onto this extension bar. Raise the upper support bar as high as it can go towards the ceiling, pulling out the red locking button as necessary. Then lower the screen housing downward until there is a moderate tension on the screen (which helps to flatten the surface). Rotate the lever near the handle to lock the screen in that position.

Taking Down the Screen

When taking down the screen, just reverse this process. Unlock the lever, slowly raise the screen housing at the bottom of the screen. Then lower the upper section (also slowly, so that the screen will roll up straight). Unhook the screen from the extension bar and allow it to slowly retract fully back into the housing. Move the short, notched extension bar back into the upper support bar. Rotate the screen housing to a vertical position, and lock the end of the upper support bar into the dimple at the top end of the screen housing. Retract the legs, and put the screen into the canvas case for transport.

Projection Tables

For projecting film-based slides, position the tan-colored portable projection stand next to (but not touching) the scorers table. Remove the legs from the rubber holder on the bottom side of the table, extend the legs fully, and tighten them securely, so that they don't collapse and cause the projector to fall. Screw them into the four sockets on the bottom of the table. If the table "rocks", adjust the longest leg until all four touch the floor at the same time, and lock it again to be secure. After the meeting, retract the legs, but only tighten the locks *lightly* for transport, and position the legs back into the black rubber holder.

For the digital projector, the projection rack should be about 14 feet from the screen. A small table, usually borrowed from the sink area, or from the hallway (to the north), can be used as a desk to hold the projector and laptop computer. A wheeled chair is a good choice to use here at the table, to make it easier for the projectionist to operate the equipment. Be sure to run an extension cord out to this table.

Judging Equipment

The scorer's table needs to have two 6-outlet power strips plugged into the splitter at the end of the main power cord (see "Electrical Service") and placed on the table. Three desk lamps should be placed on the table, plugged into the power strips. The electronic scoring unit should be set up in the middle of the table.

Connecting the Scoring Unit

The scoring unit consists of a main display, three wired score-entry units, and a hand-held reset button. It is best if all the parts are connected together before the unit is plugged into the power strip (the scoring unit has no power switch). Be careful to plug the cable connectors into the correct jacks, observing the correct orientation on the connectors. Usually there will be a white mark on the top surface of the connector when plugged in properly.

Initializing the Scoring Unit

When everything is ready and powered up, push the hand-held reset button. The LEDs on all three scoring units should light up. Set all three score-entry units to “8”, and enter those scores, using the pushbutton switch on each of the score-entry units. If the display reads “8” “8” “8” “24”, then it’s ready to go. This assures that all of the segments on the display are working properly (a burned out segment could give an incorrect score). Push the hand-held reset button to clear the scores and make the unit ready for use. Judges should be made aware that their scores are entered as soon as they press down *even slightly* on the button, not just when the buttons are fully depressed. Printed instructions for judging are in a tan-colored envelope the Scorers Table Equipment container.

Using Manual Scorecards

Four sets of manual scorecards are included with the scoring unit, in case of a problem with the scoring unit. Usually the Alternate judge will use one of them. This judge needs to sit close to the scoring table so that the score keeper can see their score. If for some reason the electronic scoring unit should not work, *all* the judges will need to sit there and also use the manual scorecards.

Power Cords on Table Lamps

At the end of the meeting, be especially careful not to stress the electrical cords on the table lamps at the place where they exit the base of the lamp. The metal there can be sharp and cut into the cord, so take care not to pull or bend the cable at that point.

PA System Setup

The Card Room has a built-in Public Address system, but the controls are in a closet (which may be locked) off the large dining/dancing room, and thus it is impractical to use. The club has our own stereo PA system, which is mainly used for the wireless microphone and occasionally for some background music, though other inputs are also available. This equipment is stored in a large blue container.

Connecting AC Power To The PA System

The stereo PA system needs to be centered in the room for proper operation, so it is now located on the scorers table in the back of the room. The power cord for the amplifier plugs into one of the power strips, as well as the A/C adapter for the wireless microphone receiver, and (when used) the A/C adapter for the portable CD player.

Connecting the Speaker

Two 50-foot long black 1/4"-1/4" cables connect between the two Left and Right outputs on the back of the amplifier and the speakers, which are placed on tripods on each side of the screen. Be sure to tape the cables down to minimize the chance that people will trip over them.

Connecting the Wireless Microphone Unit

The wireless mic unit is connected to the amplifier with two short XLR (3-pin) cables between the wireless unit and the amplifier. Be sure to switch power on to both the wireless receiver and the amplifier, using the switches on each unit, and also the switch on the power strip. In use, avoid having the microphone directly in front of the speaker, or feedback can occur.

Connecting the CD Player

The portable CD player is mostly used for accompaniment music. It can work for a limited time from 2 AA batteries, but in practice, they don't last too long, and using the AC adaptor works better. In this case, it is better not to have batteries installed. A small adapter plugs into the CD Player's stereo headphone jack, and the cable goes from there to the input connectors on channel 5 of the amplifier, to control the sound signals from the left and right tracks. One or two music CDs are usually included in the CD Player case.

Batteries

There is a 9-volt battery inside both the hand-held microphone and the transmitter pack for the clip-on microphone. If the battery voltage gets to 8.5 volts, it should be replaced. There is a small red digital voltmeter included in the yellow tool bag for testing this. Just unscrew the bottom section of the microphone to access the battery compartment. The clip-on mic transmitter requires the case to be slid forward for access to the battery. It is a good idea to switch the microphones off when not in use during the meeting, and certainly when it is packed away, in order to help the battery last longer. There may also be 2 AA batteries inside the CD player. They should measure at 1.45 volts or better; if not, replace them. Use alkaline or lithium batteries – try not to use “heavy duty” batteries. Spare batteries are included in the blue PA Equipment container.

PA Equipment Operation

The level settings typically are within the '5' to '7' range, and should be adjusted as needed for balance and clarity. There are also knobs to adjust the Treble and Bass levels on each input. The Reverb controls should be set to 'off' (turned fully counter-clockwise). During operation, it can be too dark to see the controls and switches, so a battery-powered dual clip-on lamp is provided in the blue storage container. A binder in that container has operating manuals for all the PA equipment.

Pianos

One further item - there are two pianos nearby (one in the adjacent Activity Room, and one in the hallway to the north of the Card Room) that can be very distracting if played while we are having a meeting. Generally it's a good idea to close the keyboard covers beforehand as part of the setup routine before the meeting, to help minimize the temptation for someone to “express themselves” at an inopportune time.