CHARTER

NORTHERN PLAINS AREA COUNCIL of OFFICE PROFESSIONALS

October 17, 2012

MISSION

The mission of the Northern Plains Area Council of Office Professionals (NPACOP) is to provide a resource for the Area Director and management for matters relating to office professionals. The Council is to work with the Area Director and management in an advisory capacity on new initiatives, which impact employees in the organization, provide input and serve as liaison to the NPA representative to the ARS National Advisory Council for Office Professionals (NACOP) on matters that impact employees Agency-wide, and to enhance the office profession through training, mentoring and recognition.

VISION

Our vision is to ensure that NPA has highly skilled professionals working in partnership with management to meet the office support needs of the organization.

GROUND RULES

- Approach tasks positively and optimistically.
- Treat each other professionally, regardless of functional responsibility, grade or position.
- Take responsibility for our decisions and actions. We are accountable and flexible.
- Be candid.
- Encourage giving and receiving constructive feedback.
- Actively participate with information and resource sharing.
- Approach and resolve conflict openly.
- Have fun and value humor.
- Stand together as a team.
- Decisions by consensus - can live with decision made.
- Keep records.
- Quorum should be present.
- Start and end meetings on time.

OBJECTIVES

- Recommend opportunities and promote recognition for office professionals.

- Support the NACOP.

- Support newly hired office professional staff through the New Office Professional Orientation, the Resource Assistants List, the Quick Reference Guide, NPA Files Management and Retention/Disposition Guide, the NPACOP Website, Brochure, Welcome Packet, and Mentoring Program.

- Identify and encourage outside training for office professionals, as needed, such as coordination and organizational skills, enhance computer skills, time and office management.

- Encourage networking among office professionals for effective communications and efficient working relationships, provide assistance and back-up between various offices.

- Identify and advise the Area Director and/or management on matters concerning office professionals.

- Recommend office professionals attend the NPA Leadership Conference and assist in development of the agenda for the office professional portion of the meeting.

SCOPE OF COVERAGE

- The Northern Plains Area Council of Office Professionals will represent office professionals who support the Area Office, Center/Laboratory Directors, Research Leaders, and Administrative Officers throughout the NPA. This may include employees in the Secretarial Series, GS-318; Office Automation Series, GS-326; and Miscellaneous Clerk or Program Support Assistant Series, GS-303; and positions that provide a broad scope of program management assistance.

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

- Membership will be made up of office professional representatives from the Area Director's office and the remainder from the locations throughout the Northern Plains Area. The Area & Associate Directors' Executive Assistants will serve as Ex-Officio members. Volunteers will be solicited. NPA Council members will be appointed by the Area Director based upon recommendations submitted by the Council.

- Appointments will be for three years.

- Terms will begin October 1 and end September 30. If a member cannot complete a term, the new appointee will finish the remainder of the term. If the resigning member has one year or less remaining, the new member will serve the remainder of the term plus an additional term.

- The representative from the Northern Plains Area to the NACOP will serve as Technical Advisor and shall be selected by the Area Director from persons who have served, or are presently serving, on the Northern Plains Area Council. If a current council member is appointed to the National Council, a new member shall then be selected to serve on the NPA Council of Office Professionals.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Chairperson will:

- Rotate every two years among members.
- Organize meetings and issue agendas.
- Preside at all meetings and conference calls.
- Advise and work with management on implementing policies and programs affecting the NPA.
- Develop correspondence from the Council and obtain appropriate approvals prior to dissemination.
- Arrange conference calls as needed.
- Inform Council members of future meeting arrangements.
- Assist the NACOP Representative in preparing the annual progress report and distributing it to NPA office professionals and NACOP.
- Follow-up with welcome phone call to new office professionals.

Recorder will:

- Rotate yearly among members.
- Record and distribute highlights and action items of meetings and teleconferences.
- Upload minutes and action items to SharePoint site.
- Upload summary of Annual meeting minutes to NPACOP website.

NACOP Technical Advisor will:

- Ensure all Council meetings are conducted in accordance with the established charter and appropriate issues are addressed.
- Ensure that all recommendations from the Council are consistent with rules and regulations.
- Represent the NPACOP on all NACOP activities.

Webmaster will:

- Keep NPACOP Web site updated and functioning with assistance from all Council members.
- Maintain current biographical information on Council members.

Media/PR will:

- Provide periodic "Tidbits from your NPACOP" to all NPA Office Professionals through the NPACOP email address.
- Distribute annual reminder of the Resource Assistant List.

Welcome Packet Coordinator will:

- Maintain current information.
- Distribute packet to new NPA office professionals, follow with a courtesy call, and notify Chairperson that call has been made.

All Members will:

- Support and actively participate in the activities of the Council.
- Collect and report information on significant activities, questions, and concerns.
- Provide current biographical information upon appointment to the Council.
- Assist in keeping the NPACOP website current.
- Actively serve as a resource and assist with updates to the Resource Assistant List.

OPERATING PROCEDURES

- The Council will meet yearly. Special meetings will be held as called by the chairperson. Meetings will be held at the Area Office in October.

- Hold quarterly conference calls.

- Recommendations from the Council with Area-wide impact will be submitted to the Area Director for approval prior to implementation.

- A replacement will be named by the Area Director prior to the expiration of a member's term.

- Official Council records will be retained by the Area Director's Office.

- All members of the Council will adhere to the following principles:

  - All members will be expected to attend meetings and participate.
  - Confidentiality of all discussions will be maintained.

- A calendar year progress report will be provided to the Area Director and the NACOP by May 31 of each year. Annual report will be posted on the NPACOP website.

- Feedback on Council issues and activities is encouraged.

- All NPACOP records and documents will be stored on NPACOP SharePoint site.

NORTHERN PLAINS AREA COUNCIL of OFFICE PROFESSIONALS

10-17-12 Linda Parnell
Date — Linda Parnell, NACOP Technical Advisor

10-17-12 Amber Whittaker
Date — Amber Whittaker, Chair

10-17-12 Carol Durflinger
Date — Carol Durflinger, Ex-Officio Member/Recorder

10-17-12 Olga R Lee
Date — Olga Lee, Ex-Officio Member

10-17-12 Jaime M Mitchell
Date — Jaime Mitchell, Webmaster

10-17-12 T. Ross Johnson
Date — Tawanna Ross Johnson, Welcome Packet Coordinator

10-17-12 Janel Nierman
Date — Janel Nierman, Media/PR

APPROVED:

10-18-12 Laurence Chandler
Date — Laurence Chandler, Area Director