

Meeting Procedures

These meeting procedures should be adopted for a formal meeting when decisions are to be made on a number of issues in a defined period of time. It has a set structure as shown below.

Refer to NZNO Conduct of Debate (discussion) Process Flow Chart. Attached to this document as a guide too.

Agenda

- > Welcome/Open the meeting
- > Apologies
- > Quorum
- > Minutes of the last meeting – confirmation
- > Matters arising
- > Correspondence
- > Financial report
- > Reports
- > General business
- > Other General Business – (late agenda items with consent of the meeting)
- > Announcement of next meeting
- > Closing meeting

Conduct of Debate

Motions Procedure

- > Secunder needed – or “lapsed for want of seconder”
- > Open for debate and amendments
- > Proposer speaks to motion, then seconder, then open to floor
- > Proposer has right of final reply, and summary of arguments and attempt to sway group

Amendments

- > May not be put by proposer or seconder may not replace motion (alter only)
- > Can be withdrawn

Amendment procedures

- > Mover of amendment – announces amendment
- > Chair – asks for seconder
- > Second of amendment – seconds amendment
- > Mover of amendment – speaks to amendment
- > Speakers from the floor – speaks for or against the amendment
- > Mover of motion – has right to reply
- > Secretary – records and reads the motion and amendment

- > Chair – puts the amendment to the vote
- > If carried, takes vote on amended motion
- > Secretary – records the motion, amendment and the result
- > If amendment is lost Chair takes vote on original motion
- > Secretary – records the motion, amendments and results

Voting

- > State the motion, ensuring that the wording includes any amendments
- > Put the substantive motion to the meeting
- > Ask for any abstentions (can be recorded if members so desires)
- > Ask for those in favour to vote for the motion
- > Ask those against the motion to vote against it
- > Declare the result

Mechanisms of voting

- > Verbal
- > Show of hands
- > Ballot

Only committee members/financial members can vote.

Passed motion becomes resolution – (a resolution cannot be rescinded or altered at the same meeting at which it was passed. Nor can a failed motion be brought up again at the same meeting).

In committee

- > Move “in to committee” (for confidential discussion)
- > No documentation of “In Committee” discussions shall occur
- > Immediately prior to exiting discussion, the “In Committee” meeting should decide what matters will be reported to the open meeting and the motions it will recommend
- > The meeting moves out of committee, the chairperson reports to the meeting and moves the adoption of the report
- > If the report includes motions, each motion is then put to the meeting

Points of order

- > Any member can raise a point of order
- > The chairperson rules out on the point of order
- > The meeting proceeds based on the chairperson’s ruling

Meeting Procedure Guidelines

Representation – Roles of Meeting Members

Chairperson

- > Know your constitution
- > Prepare agenda with secretary and liaise with other committee members
- > Facilitate meeting – start and finish on time

- > Check quorum present
- > Run meeting – keep to agenda – assign time limits to items
- > Use motion to enable discussion to be focussed
- > Limit/control the discussions
- > If no new discussion put motion to vote
- > Remain calm and neutral
- > Control but do not dominate
- > Clarify action to be taken
- > Summarise results

Secretary

- > Attend to all correspondence – bring to the attention of the Chairperson prior to meeting pertinent items
- > Notice of meeting circulated – book venue, catering, circulate minutes of previous meeting, agenda
- > Take minutes of all meetings – Chair to verify draft minutes are correct
- > Preparation of agenda with Chair – distributed with other papers
- > Prepare environment
- > Known constitution
- > Assist Chairperson to welcome guests
- > Delegates tasks if possible i.e. newsletter
- > Minute taking and meeting functions:
 - Note alterations to previous minutes and make sure signed by Chair
 - Summarise and present correspondence include
 - Conclusions reached – items to be actioned and by whom, matters unresolved
 - Repeat/read out motions
 - Record motions proposer/seconded and result of vote
 - Let Chair know of actions which are against the constitution
 - Act on resolutions

Treasurer

- > Have knowledge of and an understanding of the NZNO financial requirements
- > Have charge and full knowledge of all funds and securities of the group
- > Deposit all funds in the name and to the credit of the group through the centralised NZNO accounting system
- > Render to the committee, at each meeting and whenever they request it, an account of all transactions as Treasurer
- > Present accounts at each committee meeting and move them for payment
- > Render a statement of the financial condition of the group at all regular meetings of the general membership
- > Liaise with the NZNO accountant re finances and financial reports
- > Prepare the annual budget assessment/request a status report for NZNO and forward it to the PNA by December
- > Present for adoption the financial report, statement of account and annual budget to the Annual General Meeting

Committee Members

- > Preparation
 - Notice of meeting, agenda, background papers, meetings of previous meeting own comments/discussion points
 - Within decisions of timeframes, send in notice of motion
 - Lobby as necessary
 - Notify Chair of matters for discussion under general business
 - Address the meeting through the Chair – speeches/debate/comments/questions – addressed through the Chair often time limited
 - Reference to others in third person (i.e. the previous speaker/will the treasurer)

Meeting Process

Agenda

- > Welcome/Open the meeting
- > Apologies
- > Quorum (50% plus 1 person) NZNO Rule 28
- > Minutes of the last meeting – confirmation
- > Matters arising
- > Correspondence
- > Financial report
- > Reports
- > General business (of which notice has been given)

Proceeding with business

Once the agenda has been settled, the Chairperson may proceed with the business. The business will be taken in the order set out in the agenda.

Care should be taken to ensure that the business in hand is relevant to the agenda items, and that members do not diverge the meeting onto other topics. It is the Chairperson's responsibility to see that one item is dealt with at a time, and that each item is as set out on the agenda (*Pitchforth*).

Meeting Procedure

If this policy is adhered to, people will learn to submit notices of motion and items for the agenda. They will also come to expect that the meeting will proceed as set out in the agenda, and not follow the inclinations of the crowd.

General Business

After other matters have been considered, there is an opportunity for members to raise matters of general business.

General business should deal with incidental matters, not major items. Major items should have been notified for inclusion in the agenda. A Chairperson faced with a major topic in general business should indicate that it would be acceptable to give notice of motion for the next meeting, and should allow no discussion of the matter at the present meeting (*Pitchforth*).

Other General Business (late agenda items with consent of the meeting)

- > Announcement of next meeting
- > Closing of meeting

Conduct of Debate

Motions

A motion is a statement that has been moved (and seconded if the rules of the organisation require this). A motion should be in the form of a positive statement and usually begins with the word “that”. (*Pitchforth*)

When it is moved and seconded and put to a vote at a meeting and approved by a majority it becomes a resolution. (*Stretton*)

Motions fall into two categories: substantive motions, which are concerned with the actual business of the meeting, and procedural motions, which are concerned with the way in which the business of the meeting is conducted. (*Pitchforth*)

The person moving the motion should be asked to tender a copy of the motion in writing to the secretary.

The Chairperson shall inform the meeting if, in their opinion, any motion is in conflict with any policy already adopted by the organisation. The Chairperson shall refuse any motion which appears to be unconstitutional.

This is one of the powers that allow the Chairperson to maintain order. If the meeting disagrees with the Chairperson’s decision, a motion that the Chairperson’ ruling be disagreed with may be moved. (*Pitchforth*).

Motions without notice (late agenda items)

The Chairperson should only allow discussion on topics of which notice has been given. If a member raises an important or substantial matter during general business, the Chairperson should not allow the matter to proceed unless all members are present and notice can be assumed to have been waived. If such an issue is raised, it should be noted that it will appear on the next agenda to be sent out with the next notice. Adherence to this rule will ensure that members inform the secretary of any important matters that they wish to be raised before the meeting. (*Pitchforth*)

Procedures

- > Should be written and handed to the Chair
- > Secunder needed or “lapsed for want of seconder”
- > Open for debate and amendments:
 - The proposer speaks to motion, then seconder, then open to the floor
 - The proposer has the right of final reply, and summary of arguments and attempt to sway group
- > Amendments:
 - May not be put by proposer or seconder
 - May not replace motion (alter only)
 - Can be withdrawn only with the consent of proposer, (seconder) and majority (*Millar*)

Amendments of motion

When a motion has been seconded and has been accepted by the Chair for discussion, an amendment may be received from any member other than the mover and seconder for the original motion. (*Pitchforth, page 55*).

An amendment should not be the same in substance as a previous amendment which has been rejected, as the meeting cannot go back and repeat business. (*Pitchforth, page 55*)

Procedure

- > Mover of amendment – announces amendment
- > Chair – asks for seconder
- > Secunder of amendment – seconds amendment
- > Mover of amendment – speaks to amendment
- > Speakers from the floor – speaks for or against the amendment
- > Mover of motion – has right to reply
- > Secretary – records and reads the motion and amendment
- > Chair – puts the amendment to the vote
- > If carried, takes vote on amended motion
- > Secretary – records the motions, amendments and the result
- > If amendment is lost Chair takes vote on original motion
- > Secretary – records the motion, amendments and results

Voting

The way a decision is actually made by an organisation is by the passing of a motion or a resolution. This is done by the meeting voting on the question. When all those entitled to speak, and who wish to speak, have spoken, the Chairperson must put the motion. A method of doing this is:

- > State the motion, ensuring that the wording includes any amendments
- > Put the substantive motion to the meeting
- > Ask for any abstentions (can be recorded if members so desire)
- > Ask for those in favour to vote for the motion (verbal, show of hands or ballot)
- > Ask those against the motion to vote against it
- > Declare the result

The Chairperson must make sure that a vote is taken on each item of business as there is a duty to ensure that the sense of the meeting is properly ascertained with regards to any question which is properly before the meeting. (*Stretton, pages 58-59*).

Only committee members/financial members can vote.

Passed motion becomes resolution. A resolution cannot be rescinded or altered at the same meeting at which it was passed. Nor can a failed motion be brought up again at the same meeting).

Proxy Vote

Organisation and individual groups should refer to their rules related to proxy issues.

- > There is definitive difference between proxy representation and proxy voting
- > There is no common law right to have a vote at a meeting by proxy. It depends on the rules of the organisation whether proxy votes are allowed. Proxy votes may be

given to delegates who then receive credit for the number of votes and proxies that they hold in the balloting process (*Pitchforth*)

- > A member may transfer their voting rights to another only if the rules provide for it and the Chairperson accepts the validity of the proxy (*Strutton*).

Teleconference/Video Conference

- > Follow meeting procedure:
- > Notification of teleconference date, time and conference call dialing details and pin
- > Agenda sent out in advance with relevant discussion papers
- > Participants need to identify themselves each time they speak
- > Minutes need to be taken by secretary or other delegated person
- > The Chair needs to keep control of the meeting and aim to keep 1-1.30 hr and summarise action points

In Committee

There are also times when any board or committee needs to have a confidential discussion on an issue, or a private meeting. So an item may be taken in a confidential session or private meeting of the board or other committee for a variety of reasons. Reasons for inclusion of a subject for confidential discussion or action must be clearly articulated and justified either on the agenda or on the paper itself. As a matter of good practice, the Chair of any meeting should clarify the confidentiality status at the end of the item's discussion. This allows the participants of the meeting to understand their corporate responsibility in terms of confidentiality (RCN, 2009).

It is identified that when meetings go "into committee" there are 2 options to be considered regarding documentation:

1. The proceedings of any committee of the whole shall not be reported or recorded (*Pitchforth*) as identified by statutes of law.
2. Organisations may identify alternative processes i.e. recording "into committee" minutes which will require adherence to an Organisation Record Keeping Policy.

When a meeting agrees that it will go into committee what happens in committee is secret, and no member has the power or right to disclose what happened to anyone who was not there (*Pitchforth*). Please note no discussions should be disclosed outside of "into committee meetings".

- > At any time the meeting may resolve itself into a committee of the whole. The meeting in committee shall report to the open meeting which shall forthwith adopt or reject such report by a motion to that effect. If any motions are reported to the meeting, they shall be put individual to the meeting
- > There are a number of reasons why an organisation might want to go into committee. The members might wish to discuss something that they do not wish other clubs to know about, to deal with matters which might cause embarrassment or subsequent legal action, to maintain the confidentiality of some information, or to deal with matters which might be personal to someone
- > A decision taken in committee cannot become official until the meeting, in open session, receives and adopts the committee's report
- > While in committee the meeting should decide what matters will be reported to the open meeting, and the motions it will recommend
- > When the meeting has moved out of committee, the Chairperson reports to the meeting and moves the adoption of the report

- > If the report includes motions, each motion is then put to the meeting
- > The report and the putting of the motions are done on behalf of the meeting in committee
- > It is unusual for there to be debate on such motions as most of the discussion will have been heard while in committee (*Pitchforth*).

Points of order

The Chairperson may not observe all that is going on and a member of the meeting through the Chairperson should/may bring this to the Chairperson's attention by making a point of order. Any person at any time may address the Chairperson on a point of order. A point of order relates to a breach of the constitution or standing orders. A member so wishing to address the Chairperson must immediately state a point of order is being taken and must then confine any observations to the point of order raised. A point of order shall be taken immediately when the breach of order occurs. A speaker called to order should be given the opportunity to explain and the Chairperson may give others permission to speak briefly, but new matters must not be debated. The Chairperson's ruling on a matter is final and must not be discussed unless the dissent is moved (*Pitchforth*).

- > Any member can raise a point or order
- > The Chairperson rules on the point of order
- > The meeting proceeds based on the Chairperson's ruling

References

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Mission statement

NZNO is committed to the representation of members and the promotion of nursing and midwifery. NZNO embraces Te Tiriti o Waitangi and works to improve the health status of all peoples of Aotearoa/ New Zealand through participation in health and social policy development.

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NZNO Annual General Meeting Remit Process Flow Chart

