OREGON AREA PROCEDURES

AGENDA

The agenda is derived from input through members of the Area World Service Committee (AWSC). Suggestions of all members and the membership-at-large are carefully considered.

The Chairperson can alter the agenda if circumstances warrant. However, any significant deviation from the agenda initiated by the Chairperson or any other member with voice requires a two-thirds vote.

TIPS, HINTS, AND WORDS OF CAUTION

In a Knowledge-Based culture, full discussion of an idea takes place before a motion is presented. At the end of a discussion, further discussion may be necessary. A motion need not be made after every discussion. Premature action (e.g., making or amending motions early in the discussion or hastily calling the question) can divert attention from the subject at hand, thus confusing and/or delaying business.

Proposed motions may come from the AWSC, committees, work groups, thought forces, or task forces.

The legitimate rights of the minority are protected by Concept Five ("The rights of appeal and petition protect minorities and insure that they be heard") and are observed throughout our proceedings.

It is important to remember that the purpose of rules of order is to make it easier for to conduct business; rules exist to allow us to do what needs to be done in order to carry out the will of the fellowship by reaching an informed group conscience.

Voting by show of hands or closed ballot is decided at by the Area Chairman. Out of deference to those holding a minority viewpoint, applause is discouraged when a member expresses an opinion with which others may agree.

ASKING FOR A CONSENSUS

At times, there is a need for a consensus to obtain a sense of direction before moving forward. When a consensus is requested, the Chairman asks for a show of hands indicating "yes" or "no" expression from the members. Since this is not a formal vote, closed ballots are not necessary.

SUBSTANTIAL UNANIMITY

What constitutes substantial unanimity is decided at the beginning of each Assembly and AWSC.

WARRANTY THREE

That all important decisions be reached by discussion, vote and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity.

Here, on the one hand, we erect a safeguard against any hasty or overbearing authority of a simple majority; and on the other hand, take notice of the rights and the frequent wisdom of minorities, however small. This principle further guarantees that all matters of importance will be extensively debated, until a substantial majority can support every critical decision we are called upon to make.

Our voice would thus speak with authority and confidence beyond that which a simple majority could confer. If any persons remain in opposition, they are likely to be better satisfied because their views have had a full and fair hearing.

The principle of substantial unanimity does, however, have certain practical limitations. Occasionally a matter will be of such extreme urgency that a decision must be made at once. In such a case a minority, however well-intended, could not be allowed to block a vitally needed action or one which is evidently in the best interests of Al-Anon. Here we shall need to trust the majority, sometimes a mere majority, to decide whether debate is to be terminated and a final decision taken. In certain other cases, the majority will also have to exercise its prerogative. Suppose, for example, that a small minority obstinately tries to use the principle of substantial unanimity to block a clearly needed action. In such an event it would be the plain duty of the majority to override such a misuse of the principle of substantial unanimity and call for a vote.

However, majorities will probably seldom need to take such radical stands. If and when they do, we will have to decide, by a simple majority vote, what the requirements of substantial unanimity should be, whether two-thirds, three-quarters, or an even greater majority.

The practical and spiritual results of substantial unanimity will make itself evident.

2010 - 2013 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, pages 212-213

Proposing and Discussing
Ideas and/or Proposed Motions in a Knowledge–Based Environment

In a Knowledge-Based Decision-Making (KBDM) environment, ideas for motions are brought to the floor with supporting information including background, perhaps a completed KBDM Questionnaire, and ample time for a discussion on a topic **without a motion.** This is referred to as "discussion before vote" or "dialogue before deliberation". The KBDM Questions are located at the end of this section.

1. Proposed wording for a possible motion is submitted to the Chairperson on a motion form. (A second is not needed at this time.) This form is available from the Chairman and in the Oregon Area Handbook.

2. Each proposed motion should be submitted to the Chairperson on a separate form using the motion format.

3. The Chairperson brings the proposed wording to the floor at an appropriate time. The person bringing the proposal is prepared with a KBDM questionnaire and/or background framing completed so that everyone understands the purpose for the proposed motion. These are submitted to the Chairperson with the motion proposal.

4. The proposed motion is read aloud by the Chairperson.

5. The Chairperson invites all members with voice to participate in a discussion on the proposed motion.
   ♦ The person who made the proposed motion begins the discussion in order to provide background.

   ♦ Members who wish to speak line up at the microphones and are called on in order.

   ♦ All comments are to be made at a microphone, and are limited to two minutes and only one appearance at the microphone per person per motion.

   ♦ Everyone is entitled to, and should, express his or her opinion. However, if your perspective has already been stated by someone else, it is not necessary to go to the microphone and say it again. If your opinion has already been expressed, you may wish to relinquish the microphone in order to hear other diverse opinions.

   ♦ Out of deference to those holding a minority viewpoint, applause is discouraged when a member expresses an opinion with which others may agree.

   ♦ When asking a question for clarity on the current discussion, hold up your *Service Manual.*

   ♦ Questions begin with who, what, where, when, why, and how and do not contain personal opinion.

   ♦ Questions and answers to the questions are not subject to the two-minute time limit.

   ♦ If a question arises, it is the Chairperson's responsibility to call on the appropriate person to answer the question.

   ♦ Only one proposed motion may be discussed at a time.

   ♦ If the proposed motion as stated is unclear, the Chairperson may ask the originators to reword it.

◆ The Chairperson or any other member with voice may ask to have the discussion held at another time.

◆ The Chairperson does not enter into the discussion

◆ Focus on the proposed motion—remember we are to "presume goodwill" and practice "principles above personalities"

6. The Chairperson will ask for a consensus on each change that is proposed before moving ahead. For each proposed change the Chairperson may ask: "Is it correct?" or "Can you live with it?"

7. The Chairperson will ask for a consensus that the motion proposal be acted upon at this time. (We may also choose to wait or to obtain further information on the topic.)

8. After all wording changes are discussed and agreed upon, the Chairperson will ask for the official motion to be made. A second is required at this time.

9. The Chairperson will ask for any further discussion.

10. When discussion ends, a vote on the motion will be called for.

Developing and Presenting Motions
By Members Who Have a Vote

How Motions Are Presented

Matters that are recommended by AWSC are submitted to the members in advance, whenever possible, in the form of a proposed motion for approval. At the appropriate time, the proposed motion will be read to the membership.

If the members wish to act on the proposed motion, a second must be from a voting member.

How Floor Motions Are Developed

When the conscience indicates a specific motion is in order, any member with voice may prepare a proposed motion.

If the membership wishes to act on the proposed motion, a second must be from a voting member.

Voting on the Motion

♦ The Chairperson rereads the motion.

♦ The Chairperson calls for the vote.

♦ All members are asked to remain in the room during a discussion and during the vote.

♦ The following number of votes are required to carry a motion:

◊ The members determine the percentage required to carry motions. We strive to abide by the Third Warranty principle: "That all important decisions be reached by discussion, vote and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity."

◊ Closed or Open Voting

At the beginning of each AWSC or Assembly, it will be determined by a show of hands whether we will have closed or open voting on matters of substance. If closed balloting is approved, the Chairperson requests discretion in asking for a show of hands in procedural and consensus matters.

♦ Counting the Vote—Closed Ballot

◊ Ballots are marked YES, NO, or ABSTAIN.*

◊ Ballots are collected by those persons designated by the Chairperson.

◊ The vote is announced by the Chairperson and recorded by the Secretary.

*Abstentions are not considered as votes. Therefore, the number of voting members will vary from motion to motion.

♦ Void Ballots—A ballot is considered void if any of the following occur:

◊ No motion number or an incorrect number is written in;

◊ No mark is indicated showing YES, NO, or ABSTAIN;

◊ More than one category is marked.

Additional Motion Procedures

In a Knowledge-Based culture, thorough discussion generally takes place before a motion comes to the floor, often making the need for amendments unnecessary. However, should there be a need, follow these procedures:

Amendments
Should there be a need for an amendment, it must be related.

1. **To insert or add**
   "I move to amend the motion by inserting the word, 'red,' before the word, 'roses.'"

2. **To strike out**
   "I move to amend the motion by striking out the words, 'long stemmed,' before the word, 'roses.'"

3. **To strike out and insert**
   "I move to amend the motion by striking the word, 'roses,' and inserting the word, 'flowers.'"

Postponing Discussion on a Motion
The Chairperson has the authority to delay or continue a discussion at his/her discretion. If the members object, it takes a motion, second, and vote of substantial unanimity to overrule the Chairperson's decision.

TABLING A MOTION
- ◊ Requires a motion and a second.
- ◊ Is not debatable.
- ◊ Needs substantial unanimity to pass.
- ◊ If passed, the motion is rescheduled at the discretion of the Chairperson, unless the motion directs a specific date.

Calling the Question
Calling the question brings discussion to a halt while members decide whether to proceed directly to a vote (the question) or go on with discussion. A motion to call the question:
- ◊ Is made in order at the microphone
- ◊ Requires a second
- ◊ Is not debatable
- ◊ Requires a two-thirds vote by a show of hands

If the question is passed, discussion ceases and members proceed immediately to vote on the issue before them. If the question is not passed, discussion on the main issue resumes.

Reconsideration
A request to reconsider after the vote must be made by a member who voted with the majority and wishes to reconsider the issue.

- ◊ Requires a motion and a second.
- ◊ The member who is proposing reconsideration is the only member to speak to the reason for requesting the reconsideration.
- ◊ Needs a two-thirds majority by consensus to pass.

◊ If there is a consensus to reconsider, full discussion on the original motion is resumed. (Members are urged to limit discussion to new considerations of the question under discussion.)

The same motion may be reconsidered only once.

WHAT MOTIONS TO USE

Purpose	Motion to Use	To Pass
To introduce a subject to the	Proposed Motion or Motion	Substantial Unanimity
To modify or change the motion	Amend	Majority
To defer action until a later time or the next meeting	Table the motion	2/3
To stop discussion/debate	Call the question	2/3
To correct action by a WSC member who voted with the majority	Reconsider the vote	2/3
To suppress the question (motion)	Withdraw the motion	No vote required
To call attention to a perceived violation	Point of order	No vote required
To obtain information or make a request of any kind	Request	No vote required

Who votes?
At Area Assemblies, Group Representatives (GRs) vote. In the absence of a Group Representative an alternate GR or designated member, with voice, of that Group may vote. Each Group has only one vote.

At Area World Service Committee (AWSC) meetings, Area officers (except the Chairman who has **no** vote) District Representatives, Area Coordinators, AIS Liaisons, members of the Audit-Budget committee and Past Delegates vote.

For the election of Delegate and the election of Alternate Delegate the first person to receive two-thirds of votes cast is elected (Page 143). For the election of other officers, a simple majority is sufficient (Page 144). The Chairman indicates, before each vote, which standard will be used.

Microphones
Use a microphone when addressing the AWSC or Assembly. Members wishing to speak should form lines at the floor microphone. Members should first state their name and current position. Trips to the microphone are limited to one time per discussion and no more than two minutes. If your view has been previously expressed, please do not come to the microphone. While in line, if you hear your opinion voiced, please return to your seat.

Election Assemblies

For election Assemblies the Oregon Area follows the detailed instructions in the *Al-Anon Alateen Service Manual (2010 – 2013 edition, pg 142-144).*

In addition, at election Assemblies, when voting begins for a specific position, The Oregon Area Chair will ask those members standing for a position to leave the room prior to voting. Members with voice can then come to the microphone to share information regarding the qualifications of those standing for the position. After the comment period, the member(s) previously asked to leave will be invited to return for the voting.

This procedure was first used at the 2009 election Assembly and will be used at the 2012 election Assembly. The third trial of the procedure is anticipated at the 2015 election Assembly. After the completion of the trial the fellowship will determine whether or not to continue using this process.

This process will also be used during interim election periods. *Even if there is only one person standing for a position, a vote must still take place.*

Trusted Servant Profile

The Oregon Area asks those standing for an Area service position to complete a short, resume-style summary of their experience and qualifications related to the position they seek. This is called a **Trusted Servant Profile** (TSP). Use of the TSP is optional.

The KBDM Questions

How to get the information we need to have for an informed group conscience?

Gather information for these questions for all of your discussion topics. Gather this information prior and during a discussion and get the information out to people before the actual discussion begins. Everyone can add to them. Use them as a basis for discussion. They provide common information so everyone can be on the same page.

Five Important Questions

Question 1
What do we know about our members' or prospective members' needs that is relevant to this discussion?

Question 2
What do we know about the resources and our vision for the organization that is relevant to this discussion (finances, membership participation)?

Question 3
What do we know about the current realities (membership, culture), evolving dynamics of the world and our fellowship's environment (technology, our Legacies and spiritual principles) that is relevant to this discussion? What are the Pros and Cons?

Question 4
What are the ethical implications of our choices (pros and cons)?
In other words, will our decision be consistent with our spiritual principles?

Question 5
What do we wish we knew, but don't?