

Information from P&C Queensland on running meetings

Motions

The following scenarios have been prepared to assist with specific issues that can be encountered during P&C meetings and include:-

- general discussion
- proposing a motion
- seconding a motion
- discussing a motion
- mover's right of reply
- voting
- amending motions

<p>General Discussion...</p> <p>*Discussion without a motion</p>	<p>It is quite normal and indeed often desirable for a meeting to discuss a matter without a motion being proposed.</p> <p>After a period of free discussion the Chair should suggest that one of the members moves that...</p>
<p>Proposing a motion...</p> <p>*Mover to explain their motion</p>	<p>A motion is any proposal made for the purpose of eliciting a decision.</p> <p>Ideally the proposer should stand and say "Mister/Madam Chair. I move that..." followed by the reasons for moving this way. However the motion can be presented after an introductory statement. It is a great help to the Secretary if the mover gives them a copy of the motion at this stage or preferably before the meeting. At very important meetings, copies of the motions to be discussed should be given to the members before the start of proceedings.</p>

<p>*Success depends on preparation</p>	<p>Success in getting a motion passed depends on preparation, arranging for a seconder and briefing supporters.</p>
<p>Seconding a motion...</p> <p>*Chair calls for a seconder</p> <p>*Motions need to be seconded</p> <p>*No seconder - no discussion</p> <p>*Mover resumes speaking</p> <p>*Secunder may speak</p>	<p>When the mover has stated their motion and given their basic reasons for it - the Chair should ask:-</p> <p>“Do I have a seconder for the motion?”</p> <p>If there is no seconder, then the motion lapses and discussion stops.</p> <p>Once seconded, the mover can then give more information. (* Note that in some instances a seconder is not required – see <i>Sticky situations</i> in this section to clarify)</p> <p>The seconder may then speak in support of the motion now or may reserve their right to speak later. If they do neither, they cannot speak. Sometimes, people second motions purely to allow discussion, even though, they may decide to vote against the motion. This is quite valid.</p>
<p>Discussing the motion...</p> <p>*First, call for speakers opposed to the motion.</p> <p>*If opposition, alternate those for and those against.</p> <p>*Speak once only</p> <p>*Chair may speak</p> <p>*Withdrawals</p>	<p>The Chair can save time by asking if anyone wishes to speak against the motion. If no one does so, the Chair puts the motion to the vote immediately.</p> <p>If there is a speaker against, let him/her speak, then ask for a speaker for the motion who can present new material. Alternate the speakers and insist that each speaker raises new points or challenges the opposition.</p> <p>Speakers can speak only once to the motion.</p> <p>In some cases the members would expect the Chair, usually the President, to speak to a motion. However, it is better that the Chair stays out of the debate. If they wish to speak, they should hand the Chair to the Vice President temporarily.</p> <p>If the mover, seconder and everybody else agree that the motion be withdrawn, it can be. If one person disagrees, the motion must be put.</p>
<p>Discussion closed...</p>	<p>The Chair should say at an appropriate time, “I believe there has been sufficient discussion and I will put forth the</p>

<p>*Chair to act</p>	<p>motion". If the meeting is not ready to vote, someone should move a dissent motion — <i>see Sticky Situations</i>.</p>
<p>Right of Reply...</p> <p>*Mover's right</p> <p>*Chair to offer</p>	<p>The mover of the motion has the right to reply to arguments against the motion. New material must not be introduced.</p>
<p>Voting</p> <p>*Secretary to read the motion</p> <p>*Voices, hands or ballots</p> <p>*Chair's vote</p> <p>*By the voices (Use if little or no opposition to the motion)</p> <p>*By show of hands (Use if there was much discussion for and against the motion).</p> <p>*Appoint scrutineers</p> <p>*By secret ballot</p> <p>— Use to protect confidentiality of the voter.</p>	<p>The Chair asks the Secretary to read the motion. This ensures that members know what they are voting for. Any dispute on the exact wording of the motion must be settled now.</p> <p>The Chair must choose the method of voting appropriate to the subject matter, or the discussion.</p> <p>The organisation's rules should state if the Chair has an ordinary vote and/or a casting vote. They must know the rules.</p> <p>The Chair says-</p> <p>"All those in favour say aye" — pause — "those against no" — pause — "I think the ayes (nos) have it". - Pause - "I declare the motion carried (lost)." In the last pause a member can request a show of hands.</p> <p>The Chair says:</p> <p>"All those in favour raise one hand" — pause for counting — "those against raise one hand" — pause for count. Declare the result. In big meetings the Chair should get the assistance of the Secretary or appoint scrutineers to count, one person counting the "ayes" and one person counting the "nos".</p> <p>The Chair must describe how members are to record their vote on the ballot paper. The scrutineers distribute the papers to those members eligible to vote. The Chair declares the ballot open and asks eligible members to record their vote. He declares the ballot closed and instructs scrutineers to collect papers. He asks if all ballot papers</p>

<p>— Secretary to have means of ballot ready.</p> <p>Scrutineers needed to distribute, collect and count.</p> <p>*Chair declares result</p>	<p>have been collected. He instructs scrutineers to count the papers and present the results to him in writing.</p> <p>The Chair must declare the result of the ballot.</p>
<p><i>Amended Motions</i></p> <p>*What is an amendment?</p>	<p>An amendment is a change to the detail of the original motion. It must not alter the basic purpose of the motion. If an amendment would have the same effect as voting NO to the original motion, then the Chair should not accept it.</p>
<p><i>Moving an amendment...</i></p> <p>*Who can amend?</p> <p>*Amendment in writing</p>	<p>Any member can move an amendment (except the mover and seconder of the original motion). If the subject matter of the motion and amendment is detailed or complex, it is best to present the amendment in writing to the Secretary. Write it out before moving, if possible.</p>
<p><i>Seconding...</i></p>	<p>An amendment should be seconded. No seconder, no discussion!</p>
<p><i>Debate...</i></p> <p>*Against first</p> <p>*Anyone can speak</p> <p>*Alternate for and against</p> <p>*Mover of original motion may speak</p> <p>*No right of reply for mover of amendment</p>	<p>The Chair should first call for speakers against the amendment. This should save time. Note - members who spoke on the original motion may also speak on the amendment.</p> <p>The speakers for and against should be heard alternatively. The Chair should remind the meeting that they are discussing the amendment, NOT the motion, and keep the discussion to the amendment.</p> <p>The mover of the original motion may speak for or against the amendment. If they do speak now they still have the right of reply at the close of debate on the original motion with or without amendments.</p> <p>The mover of the amendment has no right to reply.</p>
<p><i>Putting amendment to the vote...</i></p>	<p>The Chair must ensure that the meeting realises that they are voting on the amendment. They must explain the effect of the amendment on the motion. They must choose the</p>

	method of voting appropriate to the topic. Voting procedures are the same as described for ordinary motions.
<i>Declaration...</i>	The Chair must say, "I declare the amendment carried (or lost). We will now resume discussion on the amended (or original) motion".