

NCWSA VOTING PROCEDURES 1

I. HOW FLOOR MOTIONS ARE DEVELOPED

From time to time, items of interest, after discussion, require a formal decision. Motions are presented on form A2 ASSEMBLY MOTION FORM, with an originator and a second and projected costs, if any, identified. The Secretary, Chair, or another person may assist in creating wording appropriate to present to the Assembly. It is the responsibility of the Chairperson to determine whether the motion is appropriate to the subject under discussion.

The Chair or the Secretary will read the Motion as it appears on A2 ASSEMBLY MOTION FORM.

II. DISCUSSION OF THE MOTION

A. Who has Voice: Voice is restricted to those who are members of NCWSA. The Assembly Chairperson invites all AI-Anon and Alateen members of NCWSA present to participate. Members include the GRs, the Officers and the Executive Committee. In addition, all other members of the NCWSC Committee have voice. These other NCWSC members are not representing groups, but have expertise within their duties that may be important to be heard. Unless they are also GRs, these members do not represent any group's opinion. Only Group Representatives represent groups.

Since each group is expected to have only one voice at Assembly, to allow someone voice who is not a member gives a particular group more than one voice, giving the appearance of either adding to or subtracting from the Group Representative's voice from that group.

There may be some groups who have sent a "non-voting representative" who is a dual member. While a "non-voting representative" is welcome as an observer, that person does not have voice since a dual member cannot be a member of NCWSA.

The Chairperson may allow voice of specific non-members for specific issues, e.g., when an invited guest such as a WSO staff member is present.

B. 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.

C. Only one motion may be discussed at a time.

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

E. The Assembly Chairperson or any other person may present a motion to table and may ask to have the discussion held at another time. A motion to table stops all discussion while the vote to table is decided.

F. A majority vote is needed to table a motion.

III. VOTING

A. Who may vote: While all members of NCWSA may vote, it has been traditional in our area that only GRs vote at Assemblies.

B. The Chairperson asks the Recording Secretary to reread the motion.

C. The Chairperson calls for the vote.

D. Number of votes required to carry a motion: Unless otherwise required by the By-Laws, a majority vote

is required to carry a motion; however, we strive to abide by the Third Warranty principle: "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 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 really heavy majority can support every critical decision we are called upon to make in the Assembly. The Assembly voice would thus speak with authority and confidence beyond 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 practical and spiritual results of substantial unanimity will make itself evident.

E. Closed or Open Voting:

1. With the exception of the Election Assembly, voting at Assembly meetings is usually Open Voting. Only those eligible to vote may vote (See By-Laws.)

F. Counting the Vote - Open Ballot:

1. The Chairperson designates Vote counter(s) for each Assembly.
2. The Chairperson asks those in favor to stand.
3. Those opposed are then asked to stand.
4. Those abstaining are then asked to stand.
5. If, in the opinion of the Chairperson, there is no substantial unanimity, the Chairperson may request a count-off.
6. The vote is announced by the Chairperson and recorded by the Recording Secretary.

G. Counting the Vote - Closed Ballot: (Usually at Election Assembly)

1. Ballots are marked with name of candidate of choice.
2. Ballots are collected by those persons designated by the Chairperson.
3. Ballots are tallied by non-voting participants designated by the Chairperson.
4. The vote is announced by the Chairperson and recorded by the Recording Secretary.

IV. RESCINDING A VOTE

Occasionally, following a vote or a motion (not necessarily within the same hour) the Assembly may wish to negate or alter it's earlier decision. If so, the same voting procedure outlined above is followed.

V. ASKING FOR A CONSENSUS

At times, there is a need for a consensus from the Assembly to obtain a sense of direction before moving forward on a project. When a consensus is requested, the Assembly Chairperson asks for a show of hands indicating yes or not expression from the Assembly members. Since this is not a formal vote, closed ballots are not necessary, nor will abstentions be requested.

VI. MOTIONS ORIGINATING FROM OTHER THAN THE ASSEMBLY FLOOR

It is requested that motions originating from NCWSA Committee, or from individual Coordinators or their committees be prepared on an Assembly Motion Form and presented to the Assembly Chairperson in time to be included on the Assembly Agenda. Once these motions are read to the Assembly, they are to be handled according to the procedures outlined above.

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A-13 has been excerpted and modified from "conference voting procedure for world service conference, New York", for motions originating from the floor by assembly members and NCWSA committee members.