

## **Quorum, Simplified Robert's Rules, and a Typical District 36 Business Meeting Format**

### **Quorum:**

A Quorum is the minimum number of members of a fellowship, assembly or society that must be present at any formal meeting to make the proceedings of that meeting valid. Example: in June of 2017 in Kingston and the Islands – District 36, there were 4 Officers + 6 Sub-committee Chairs + 25 Groups = a Total of 35 eligible Voting Members in District 36. If a Sub-Committee chair or District Table Officer position is vacant, this position will not be counted when determining total eligible votes to achieve quorum. If a GSR also holds a position as a Table Officer or Sub-Committee chair this person will not be counted when determining the total eligible votes to achieve a Quorum. For roll call, they would be counted as GSR.

To achieve a Quorum for a valid District Meeting, two conditions must be met:

- First, more than 50% of Voting Members be present and,
- Second, of those present, at least 2/3 must be Group representatives.

Hence, the minimum number of Voting Members required to be present =  $35 \times 50/100 = 18$

And, to achieve a Quorum, of those present, at least  $18 \times 2/3 = 12$  of the Voting Members must be individual Group Representatives from District 36.

### **Simplified Robert's Rules of Order for use at the District 36 Business Meeting**

Robert's Rules of Order are used around the world to allow organizations to make decisions in a timely and mutually accepted manner. They are designed to allow groups with widely opposed views to come to agreement. They are not the only kind of informal parliamentary procedure, but they are relatively simple and familiar to many people.

This document presents a simplified version for use in the business meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous. This is not General Service Conference-approved A.A. literature, but it does reflect common practice.

### **Main ideas:**

- We gather in a spirit of cooperation to discover our group conscience. We need never fear the conscience of the group.
- For each discussion, everyone should have the chance to speak once before anyone may speak a second time.
- Everyone has the right to know what is going on at all times.
- Only urgent matters may interrupt a speaker.
- The members discuss only one thing at a time.
- Respectful, attentive listening is of singular importance.

### **The Chairperson**

The Chair performs an invaluable service by running the business meeting according to the agreed rules of order, and making sure that participants understand those agreed Rules of Order. The Chair does not introduce motions, participate in the discussion, or vote unless there is a tie. In general, no one should speak without first being recognized by the Chair, and if people start speaking out of turn, the Chair will call for order.

### **The Secretary**

The Secretary takes notes so that they can prepare the official written record of the meeting, called the “Minutes.” Clear, accurate Minutes are very important – they will be used to keep track of the group’s conscience, as well as unfinished business from previous business meetings.

The Secretary need not record everything that is said; the Minutes are *not* a transcript. But they should include:

- Officer’s reports, if any were made during the meeting.
- The exact wording of any Motions introduced, and their fate (passed, amended, defeated, referred to committee, or tabled).
- If Motions were referred to committee, make sure the group specifies the duties of the committee and when their report should be delivered back to the full business meeting.

If at any time the Secretary is unclear about something, they should ask for clarification immediately. The Secretary can vote, introduce motions, and participate in discussions.

### **A Typical District Business Meeting format**

District business meetings are run according to the following Agenda:

1. Chair calls the meeting to order.
2. Roll call and Quorum.
3. Familiarize participants with the agreed Rules of Order.
4. Minutes of the previous business meeting should be reviewed by all members of The Table for Errors and Omissions. After the Secretary has made any necessary corrections, and if there are no further objections to the content, a Motion to Accept the Minutes should be made, Seconded, and voted on. A Simple Majority is required to pass.
5. Officers’ Reports. If necessary, trusted servants (at minimum the Treasurer) report to the group.
6. Group Service Representatives report.
7. Old Business:
  - a. If there are any reports due from committees, they can be delivered during this part of the meeting.
  - b. If there are any Motions pending from a previous business meeting, they can be reintroduced for consideration at this time.

- c. If there are any Motions that have been Tabled for two consecutive meetings without being reintroduced, they will now be declared dead.
8. New Business. If any member wishes to bring up a new topic for consideration by the group, it can be done during this part of the meeting.
9. Meeting Closes.