
STANDING ORDERS

BASIC MEETING PROCEDURE

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Standing Orders

Subject to the DQ Constitution and the Board Position Job Descriptions, the DQ Board shall conduct its meetings in accordance with the following procedures. These procedures shall be extended to all other types of meeting of the association unless such rules conflict with a directive held within the current DQ Constitution in which case the DQ Constitution must prevail. The following meeting procedures are drawn from the parliamentary Rules of Debate that have been proved by experience to be an efficient way of conducting business.

Chair

The DQ Board Meeting is presided over by the President. In the absence of the President the Vice-President will assume the role of Chair. In the absence of both the President and Vice President, the role of the Chair will be by assumed from a member of the Board.

A good Chair will always strive towards the following qualities:

- **Impartiality** - Disadvantages as well as advantages exist in any proposal. The chairperson must carefully consider propositions put to the meeting as he/she may vote personally as a member of the group. To remain impartial and to rule objectively requires a fair-minded and rational person.
- **Firmness** - A chair must have the power to act as they see fit and within the rules of the organisation. Such action ultimately must be deemed to be interpreted as being reasonable, fair and generally promote the discipline of "good governance". Considerable psychological pressure is sometimes placed on them and, in such circumstances; they must possess sufficient confidence in themselves to be decisive in their rulings.
- **Tact** - A successful chair never forgets that they have been elected by the members. He/she is usually more conversant with procedure than the other members but, as emotions rise on debatable issues, deliberately embarrass other member(s) shall not be allowed or encouraged and as such is deemed to occur in order to gain political advantage. Notwithstanding this, such limitations must never be allowed to prevent the truth to be exposed. Whilst failure to expose the truth may prevent Board members being embarrassed it - at the same time - may deny or restrict (an)other member(s)' right under the DQ Constitution
- **Common sense** - When all else fails, the chair should have this very necessary quality to save the day. Rules and regulations cannot cover all situations and the meeting will be quick to recognize and respect the person who possesses a high degree of common sense.
- **Confidence** - The chair must have confidence in the aims of the organisation and in its general members. All actions emanating from the chair must be motivated by this concept.
- **Respect** - Conversely, the chair should strive towards winning the respect of the members. It makes life as a chair much less difficult.

In summary the DQ Chair should

- open the meeting on time
- ensure that it is constitutional and properly convened
- introduce items clearly so that everyone understands
- be familiar with the rules and standing orders
- administer the rules tactfully and impartially
- assure orderly debate and discussion by competent use of procedures
- sum up the discussion and points at issue
- close the meeting punctually

Agenda

The agenda is forwarded to Board Members in advance of the Board meeting. In accordance with the Board Position / Job Descriptions the President and the Secretary set the agenda for Board Meeting.

The standard agenda for DQ is as follows:

- Attendance
- Apologies
- Minutes of Previous Meeting
- Business Arising from Previous Minutes
- Financial Reports
- General Business

Minutes

The Minutes are to be distributed to all attendees and available for all members to peruse.

Achieving consensus

Meeting procedure is important to ensure orderly behaviour. In this context, the Chair's main objective should be to gain the widest possible participation in discussion by those present to facilitate consensus decisions.

Consensus implies:

- All agree to express views and express feelings - silence blocks good communication;
- All agree to listen to one another before pressing own point of view;
- Each person has an equal opportunity to participate and to influence the outcome;
- Time is available to consider options, opinions and consequences and does not become a coercive element;
- All are committed to discovering the "sense of group". Whilst this does not mean total agreement or unanimity, acting as a team must be a consequence. Covering one-another's mistakes and/or weaknesses must be a consequence of this.
- Willingness of members to "live with" a particular decision at a particular time. This means that all Board members are prepared to act as though it is their preferred solution and faithfully support such decisions without discussing ones personal 'point of view' and its virtues in public forums

Consensus occurs when alternatives have been discussed thoroughly by the group and everyone is prepared to accept that, in the circumstances, one particular solution is the best way forward for the good of the whole, even though it might not be every person's preferred solution.

Gaining consensus means acknowledging the principles of "shared wisdom" which are:

- No one has all the wisdom;
- Everyone has a different piece of the wisdom;
- Everyone has some of the wisdom - with a responsibility to share same;

Discussions which risk defamation (libel and slander)

Strong legal penalties exist for defamation in Queensland whether it is verbal, written or otherwise. DQ does not operate under any form of privilege and discussions should always be considered to be public communications in which the issue of defamation can arise.

For this reason making communications via words, images, acts or gestures that are likely to lower the esteem in which a person is held should be treated seriously by the Chair and prevented whenever possible.

In particular the Chair will bring a halt to any discussion which in the Chair's sole estimation makes an imputation that is likely to:

- lower a person's reputation; or
- lead others to think the less of them; or
- make others shun or avoid them; or
- cause others ridicule, hate or despise them.

Key behaviours that indicate that an imputation is being made are:

- Makes negative claims about a person's motivation with no evidence "I think the person was lying..." or "They did it for the money...";
- Use of the first person or naming of individuals, e.g. "Jim said..., You did... etc.
- Claims made in the form of hearsay, second hand evidence, rumour, gossip or half-truths;
- Attempting to make accusations behind statements of honest opinion, eg "That is just my opinion..."
- Endeavouring discrediting of a person's opinion by continuous reflection on alleged past performance that are interpreted to be unpalatable
- Such actions are required to be resolved/dissolved

Any member of any discussion who is found to have breached these guidelines will be considered out of order and warned by the Chair and may be subject to censure.

It is the job of the Chair, as in any debate, to ensure that the discussion remains factual and not personal at all times.

Motions and resolutions of the Board

A motion is any proposed resolution introduced for the purpose of arriving at a decision in the meeting. If practicable, such motion(s) should be published in advance of the meeting in order to provide Board members with the opportunity to privately reflect on the issues involved and seek input from the general members of their club on the issue(s). However, such publication must not under any circumstances instigate "lobbying" by any of the Board members as such action may pervert the opportunity of free choice and expression of other Board members.

The Chair may allow some general informative discussion before a motion is asked for, but such discussion will be limited to a preliminary discussion of the purpose of the motion.

The motion must be expressed in the affirmative. The motion must be announced / read by the Chair or Secretary, even if the Chair or Secretary is not a voting member of the Board. This allows for Chair or Secretary to assist in clarification of the motion.

The motion requires a seconder before it can be discussed otherwise it lapses. In seconding a motion a member may do so only to permit discussion and may still speak or even vote against the motion.

After the motion has been moved and seconded, the Chair will open the matter for discussion. Where possible the Chair will ask each Board Member to speak on the motion.

Once a motion is seconded, then in due course, it may be

- carried
- replaced by an amendment
- defeated or
- deferred

Except with the agreement of the Chair, no member has the right to speak twice on the same motion except the mover who has the right of reply thus ending the discussion. Questions of the mover and explanations are permitted.

Where discussion is prolonged unnecessarily, any member may rise and move "that the question be now put". If that motion is seconded, it is put to the meeting without further discussion.

If it is carried, there is no further discussion allowed and the original motion is also put to the vote. In this situation, the mover of the motion loses the right of reply, unless standing orders of the association state otherwise.

The mover of a motion may only withdraw a motion with the permission of the seconder and the consent of the meeting.

When and if the motion is carried it becomes a resolution, ie the meeting has resolved a particular matter.

Amendments to motions

An amendment to a motion may be moved by any member wanting to test a possible alteration in the detail.

Like a motion, an amendment needs a seconder. The mover of the original motion may state a willingness to accept the amendment. If the seconder agrees and the meeting does not object, the amendment may replace the motion.

Should anyone object and be not overruled by the meeting the original motion must remain before the meeting until, as may happen, it disappears because the amendment is carried.

An amendment which is a direct negative of the motion cannot be accepted by the Chairperson. The same result is achieved by speaking to earn votes against the motion.

Only one amendment should be before the meeting at any one time in the sense of discussion. A person may foreshadow a further amendment eg "Mr/Madam Chairperson, when this amendment has been dealt with I will propose the following further amendment". When discussion of an amendment and the motion is over, the Chairperson 'puts' the amendment to the meeting.

The mover of the amendment does not have the right of reply at this stage, but will do should this vote favour the amendment. The mover of the motion has the right of reply before further vote is taken. If the amendment is carried it replaces the motion.

If an amendment is not carried the original motion is still before the meeting. Another amendment may be moved if anyone so desires. If no such further amendment arises the original motion is put to the vote.

An amendment, if it becomes the motion, may be subject to further amendment. In any case the chance must be given for further discussion and amendment. Such further amendment need not have been foreshadowed or notified.

If further amendment occurs, the mover of what is the motion before the meeting solely owns the right to reply.

Quorums

It is important that the types of meetings conducted and their purpose be clear in order to apply the constitution as intended. Outlined below are the types of meetings and a summary of their Quorum rules:

| Meeting Type | Quorum | Notes / Explanation |
|--|---|---|
| Annual General Meeting (General Meeting) | 50% of eligible voting members plus one. Eligible voting members are two (2) Club Delegates per Club | Executive comprises President, Vice-President, and Treasurer and Secretary (State Executive Director). A total of four (4). For the purposes of the voting numbers, if the Secretary is the State Executive Director, then that person is not entitled to a vote, but does enable a quorum to be met |
| Special General Meeting (General Meetings) | As for AGM above | |
| Board Meeting | 50% of the Board of Directors plus one (1) | Board of Directors is the Executive plus the remaining Board. |

It must be noted that all General Meetings that are not the Annual General Meeting are Special General Meetings.

Points of order

Points of order deal with the conduct of procedure of the debate and should be put in the form of questions. The member raising the point of order should rise and say: *"Mr/Madam Chairperson, is it in order that....."*

Without making a speech, the member must prove

- that the offending speaker is going beyond the scope of the question
- that he is using inappropriate language
- that he is breaking some rule of society
- that he is infringing standing orders or the accepted procedure of debate.

It is permissible to ask a question on procedure at any time, but other points of order must be made immediately the breach occurs. Similarly, a chairperson may rule a member out of order if they commit any of these breaches or even wander from the subject. However the speaker should first be warned that there is danger of censure.

Censure of members

Any person who is deemed out of order three (3) times in the one meeting will be censured through removal from that meeting without recourse for appeal.

Such censure will be recorded in the minutes and provide adequate reasons for such removal.

The removal of a member from a Board meeting will not prejudice the Chair or prevent DQ or its members from taking action under the DQ Member Protection policy.

If a censure occurs resulting in insufficient members to form a Quorum the Chair will immediately adjourn the meeting and defer all business.

Chair's ruling is final

The chairperson's ruling is final on points of order, procedure, and application of the Constitution to the conduct of Board Meetings. The Chair must allow his or her authority to be challenged during a meeting only through a formal process.

The accepted procedures to follow if necessary is to raise a motion against the Chair, eg *"That the Chairperson's ruling be disagreed with..."* is an acceptable motion to allow the meeting to decide the matter. The Chairperson may in fact encourage such a motion to be moved.

In the case of such as motion the mover should explain his reasons. The Chairperson should reply, no general discussion is allowed.

Failure to abide by a ruling of the Chair without the bringing of a motion will result in the member being out of order.

No confidence / Confidence Motions

A vote of no confidence in the Chair is a motion moved against the Chair when the organisation feels the Chairperson no longer has the confidence of the general and/or Board members. This motion requires a notice of motion of two thirds of the Board members. The Vice-Chairperson presides and if the motion is carried the Chairperson should resign.

If the Chair and the President are the same role, a no-confidence motion in the chair is considered to be a no-confidence motion in the President.

A vote of confidence is also permitted to re-affirm the Chair's position in times of crisis, organisational difficulty or as a means for recognition.

The general members also must have the opportunity to move a Motion of "No Confidence" in the President and/or any of the other Board members. Procedure should be outlined with a requirement of say one third of the General membership signing a petition.

Closed meetings

All Board meetings are considered as 'closed meetings' and only non-Board members may attend upon invitation.

Complaints

Complaints are a fact of organisational life. However, they are also an operational dimension to any organisation and should not be allowed to prevent the ongoing governance of the entire body.

Initially such an occurrence should be considered to be "An Opportunity for Improvement" rather than be interpreted as a personal attack.

Very few individuals spend the enormous amount of time it takes to prepare a complaint without having a genuine issue to be dealt with! Where ever possible complaints should be handled in accordance with either the Member Protection or Complaint Procedure outside of Board Meetings. When Complaint procedures are in progress, no Board member must engage in the practice of active lobbying in favour of outcomes as desired by them individuals personally.

Fierce lobbying may be extremely coercive to the person who is being lobbied and may cause them to not express their true opinion in fear of retribution. Such actions must be considered as diverting the course of justice in the case.

DQ Standing Orders Summary

1. DQ Board Meetings shall run for not more than 30 minutes beyond their scheduled end time unless an extension of time is agreed by all Board members present
2. Time limit for discussion by the mover of a motion shall be 5 minutes, and for the seconder 3 minutes
3. Each subsequent speaker may have 3 minutes and the mover 3 minutes for a final speech prior to the vote
4. Not more than three (3) consecutive speakers in the affirmative or negative shall be allowed
5. The Chair shall ask for speakers from within the Board first, then from the floor.
6. No speaker may speak twice to the same motion other than the mover, who shall have (see the second point) the right to reply. The use of this right shall close the immediate debate

7. All speakers shall address the Chair and confine their comments to the subject under debate
8. The mover of the amendment may not have a reply right unless/until the amendment is voted in to replace the motion of reference. The mover shall then own rights of reply until the new motion is replaced by another amendment
9. Statement of a point of order, a question or a formal motion across the motion of reference or an answer to a question asked, through the Chair, shall not be taken as speech rights
10. Speakers wishing to state a point of order or ask for a ruling shall confine themselves to a simple statement of the point
11. When the Chair is called upon to make a ruling, that ruling may be final or may be subject to a motion of dissent. This, if seconded, shall be put to the meeting without discussion
12. Motions shall be decided upon the voices unless a show of hands is granted or requested by the Chair or by another Board member present
13. A member acting contrary to the standing orders shall obey a call to order by the Chair or may be required to leave the meeting
14. Standing Orders can be suspended to allow free discussion on an issue. A formal motion needs to be put and carried to allow this action

Any person may at any time during the discussion raise a point of order which shall be decided immediately by the President. Any dissent from the ruling of the President shall be expressed in the form of a motion. A motion of dissent shall be put to the vote immediately, and the ruling of the President shall stand unless a three quarters majority of those organisations represented in person at the meeting and eligible to vote support the motion of dissent.

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