

DISTRICT 72 GUIDELINES

District 72 unites AA Groups from the Gallatin, Jefferson, Madison, and Park County areas of Montana. We band together to fulfill our primary purpose – to carry the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to the still suffering alcoholic. As an association, it is our responsibility to provide common functions and service activities for AA members. All AA members are welcome and encouraged to attend and participate in monthly District 72 business meetings. We strive, as a district, to work within the spirit of the Twelve Traditions and operate from the Twelve Concepts of Alcoholics Anonymous. We intend for the following suggestions to help clarify and expand the information found in the AA Service Manual.

I. Functions and Services

These are some of the functions and service activities the district may consider:

- Provide a phone service to furnish AA information and help process twelve-step calls.
- Prepare and distribute meeting schedules, updating them as changes are reported (minimally every three to four months).
- Provide groups in the district with information on district, area and general service conference issues.
- Form Public Information and Cooperation with the Professional Community (PI and CPC) committees to inform the public and those whose work brings them in contact with the active alcoholic about the AA program.
- Form committees to carry the AA message into treatment and correctional facilities.
- Form a “Grapevine” committee to inform groups about “our meeting in print.”
- Establish and maintain a District archives.
- Form committees to arrange other district functions such as workshops, roundups and other events.
- Establish and maintain a literature inventory to supply the needs of the groups in the district.
- Hold a monthly business meeting the last Saturday of the month, or at such a time that the district may decide.
- Use the ‘District 72 Agenda Item Form: Discussion or Motion’ for all non-emergent agenda items to be submitted for the monthly business meeting.

II. Representatives of District 72

Each registered group in District 72 is a member and is represented at the district meetings and area assemblies by its General Service Representative (GSR). If the GSR is unable to attend these meetings, an alternate group member may attend and participate in the place of the GSR.

District 72 shall elect the following trusted servants:

● **District Committee Member (DCM):** the DCM is the link between the group's GSRs and the Area's delegate to the General Service Conference and ought to represent the informed group conscience of the district. Among the DCM's responsibilities are: attend district meetings; keep GSRs informed about district, area and conference activities by ensuring oral and written reports are provided at the monthly District 72 Business Meeting; visit all groups in the district one time per year to keep them informed of General Service activities (the cost of fuel to drive to and from these groups to be reimbursed by District 72 upon receipt;) perform the responsibilities requested by the Area 40 Assembly; attend Area Assembly twice a year; attend Regional Service Conference and Regional Forum as District budget allows; serve as chairperson in absence of Alt. DCM. Is a member of the Finance Committee & participates in responsibilities related to the Finance Committee.

● **Alternate District Committee Member (Alt. DCM):** fills in if the DCM cannot attend district meetings or the Area Assemblies; serves as chairperson of the district meeting; plans agenda along with the DCM; shares the responsibilities (with the DCM) of visiting all groups in the district one time per year (the cost of fuel to drive to and from these groups to be reimbursed by District 72 upon receipt). May be asked to fill DCM term if DCM steps down. Communicates any important information by ensuring oral and written reports are provided at the monthly District 72 Business Meeting. Is a member of the Finance Committee & participates in responsibilities related to the Finance Committee. Maintains the District Guidelines (and any updates) by giving them to the Area 40 Webmaster to post.

● **Secretary:**

- maintains records of minutes of the district meetings and sends a copy to each group in the district and the Area 40 Archivist
- Keeps an updated record of group information such as current GSR, Alt GSR and contact information.
- Informs the Area secretary of group changes
- Supplies needed information to new GSRs, committee chairs and officers (such as a copy of District Guidelines)
- Provides the Area 40 Webmaster with District minutes, Treasurers Reports and event flyers, for posting to the District 72 page of the Area 40 website.
- All District 72 news is sent out by the Secretary using the current email list which includes D72 Officers, Committee Chairs, GSR's, Alt GSR's, and friends.
- District minutes are to be mailed or emailed within seven days after the District Meeting, and District Meeting agendas are to be mailed or emailed five days prior to the next District Meeting. Additional mailings as required.
- Updates and maintains accurate information with the bank to reflect officer rotations ie.: officers' names/positions on account are current and up to date, provide documentation which reflects the officers were voted in, help facilitate communication between bank and officers to acquire necessary paperwork.
- Is a member of the Finance Committee & participates in responsibilities related to the Finance Committee.

● **Treasurer:**

- Maintains proficiency in QuickBooks Online, updating financial records monthly and

preparing accurate reports (e.g., P&L, Balance Sheet, Contribution Reports) for District Business Meetings

- Ensures timely submission of the annual IRS Form 990 by May 15 to maintain the District's non-profit status
- Files the annual report with the Montana Secretary of State to keep the District in good standing by April 15
- Manages the QuickBooks Online subscription, ensuring it remains active and up-to-date
- Maintains records and keeps custody of whatever funds are received by the District
- Provides an accurate accounting of such funds and up-to-date contributions by each group at each District business meeting
- Writes checks to cover expenses incurred by the District for services, rent, etc. from such funds
- Follows the conscience of the District as to distribution of funds
- Maintains up-to-date check register
- Maintains the P.O Box, paying annual rental fees, maintaining a record of all key holders; picking up District mail on a timely basis
- Reconciles check register, bank statement and monthly treasurer's report
- Communicates with Corrections and Literature chairs regarding Pink Can and literature account balances
- Chairs the finance committee (DCM, alt DCM, Literature Chair, Treasurer and Secretary)
- Conducts annual audits of the books with the finance committee
- Works with the finance committee and District committee chairs to draft the annual spending plan to be submitted to the groups for their review at the October meeting to have the budget in place January 1st
- Communicates all financial information by ensuring oral and written reports are provided at the monthly District 72 Business Meeting.
- May attend Area Assembly when spending plan (and operating balance) allows, to sit in on discussions of the finance committee at the Area level and report, in writing, to the District any information or activities from those committee discussions
- Monitors the District's "Operating Balance" to ensure the District is honoring the spirit of the 7th Tradition "...A.A. treasuries which continue, beyond prudent reserves to accumulate funds for no stated A.A. purpose"

Finance Committee:

- Meets quarterly
- Members of the Finance Committee are: Treasurer, Alt. DCM, DCM, Secretary, and Literature Chair
- Initiates District discussion when the Operating Balance exceeds the agreed threshold of 25% of the spending plan or is inadequate to pay upcoming expenses without going into prudent reserve. The discussions should identify events, projects or services to consider.
- Assures diligent observation of fraud controls to avoid any suspicion of fraud or inappropriate spending: DCM, alt DCM, and Secretary are authorized signers of checks (the Treasurer is not a check signer)
- Conducts periodic bank reconciliation to check register and treasurer report

○ *Conducts periodic audits of deposit records, receipts and checks written, the Treasurer report, Treasurer Guidelines*

Financial Definitions:

- **Spending Plan.** *The Spending Plan is an estimate of the annual expenses of the District Committee. The estimate can be made based on previous years' experience plus any new projects; individual estimates will vary from year to year based on regional events, planned Area Assembly attendance, etc*
- **Prudent Reserve.** *A Prudent Reserve is a fund, or amount, set aside to protect the District in the event of a drop in income; to allow the District to continue to serve and pay its obligations until the drop in income can be understood and appropriate changes made. Example: the GSO and many A.A. entities used their Prudent Reserve during the Pandemic to pay rent and other financial obligations until requests for contributions were voiced to the fellowship. District 72 has established a Prudent Reserve of 3 months (of the spending plan) by group conscience 2/28/04.*
- **Operating Balance.** *The operating balance is the amount of money available to spend on District expenses. Group contributions and expenses vary greatly over the course of a year and the District has set 25% of the Annual Spending Plan as the threshold to initiate discussion of how the District can use the funds for which there is "no stated A.A. purpose".*

- **Answering Service Committee Chairperson:** acts as a liaison between the district and the Area 40 contact person for service provider; maintains lists of members willing to participate in 12-Step service calls; reports activity and action of the committee to the district at business meetings by ensuring oral and written reports are provided at the monthly District 72 Business Meeting.
- **Archives Committee Chairperson:** collects, houses, and catalogs archival material for the district; is available to research archival material for past experiences that can be beneficial to the district; reports activities and information to the district at regular meetings by ensuring oral and written reports are provided at the monthly District 72 Business Meeting; may attend the Area Assembly when budget allows, to sit in on discussions of the Archives committee at the area level and reports to the district, in writing, any new activities or information from those committees' discussions.
- **Corrections Committee Chairperson:** coordinates and encourages volunteers to attend meetings in correctional facilities; reports the status of current established correctional facility meetings and activities at regular district meetings by ensuring oral and written reports are provided at the monthly District 72 Business Meeting; maintains contact with the Area 40 Corrections Chair as to what the district can do to help at the area level; makes suggestions as to the distribution of District "Pink Can" funds; may attend the Area Assembly when budget allows, to sit in on the discussions of the Corrections Committee at the area level and reports, in writing, any new activities or information from those committee discussions; encourages participation in programs relating to correctional facilities, such as the "Corrections Correspondence" program; provides the PI Committee a list of current corrections opportunities, facility requirements, orientation schedules, calendars and facility applications for posting to the District 72 page of the Area 40 website.
- **Grapevine/La Vina Committee Chairperson:** encourages subscriptions to the "Grapevine – Our meeting in Print" and "La Vina – Our Spanish meeting in Print", informs groups of the benefits of the magazine; collects past issues from contributing members and has available for distribution to travelers, beginners, and correctional facilities; may attend the Area Assembly when budget allows, to sit in on

discussions of the Grapevine Committee at the area level and reports, in writing, to the district any new activities or information for those committee discussions; attends and reports committee activities at district meetings by ensuring oral and written reports are provided at the monthly District 72 Business Meeting; provides the PI Committee a current version of the District Guidelines for posting to the District 72 page of the Area 40 website.

● **Literature Committee Chairperson:** maintains a literature supply for purchase by Groups or individual members in the district; provides a report and accurate accounting of inventory activity at the district meetings; is available to attend district functions and have a literature display, when requested; may attend the Area Assembly when budget allows, to sit in on the Literature Committee discussions at the area level and reports, in writing, to the district any new information from those committee discussions by ensuring oral and written reports are provided at the monthly District 72 Business Meeting. Is a member of the Finance Committee & participates in responsibilities related to the Finance Committee.

● **Public Information Chairperson (PI):**

- Forms and chairs regular meetings of a PI committee
- Reports to the district at regular meetings any committee activity by ensuring oral and written reports are provided at the monthly District 72 Business Meeting
- Maintains, updates and provides for distribution of meeting lists for all groups in the district
- Researches possible changes for the meeting schedules for increased efficiency (different formats, layouts, etc.)
- Oversees distribution of schedules and AA brochures throughout the District
- Responds to requests for information about AA from the public
- Cooperates with other District Committees on projects such as workshops, luncheons, community outreach
- Places public service announcements with radio and television stations
- Places information about AA in local newspapers
- May attend the Area Assembly when budget allows, to sit in on the discussions of the PI committee at the Area level and reports, in writing, to the district any information or new activities for those committee discussions.

● **Cooperation with the Professional Community Chairperson (CPC):** The purpose of this committee is to provide information about A.A. to those individuals who have contact with alcoholics through their profession. The Chair shall:

- Establish a committee of A.A. volunteers, ideally from a variety of communities/counties in the District, to provide experience and support in developing projects that will further the carrying of the A.A. message through cooperation with members of the professional community.
- Read and become familiar with the CPC workbook and all related materials from Area 40 and the General Service Office. Work with the Literature Chair to select A.A. publications appropriate to professional audiences.
- Find productive and efficient ways of cooperating without affiliating with the professional community; plan events and collaborate with Al-Anon when appropriate.
- Communicate with PI, Treatment and Corrections committees to coordinate outreach to organizations that may be relevant to more than one committee.
- Participate in monthly District 72 meetings, providing oral and written reports of the CPC committee's activities and any other relevant information.

- Attend Area Assembly meetings (in person when budget allows or online) for discussions of the CPC committee at the Area level.
- When rotating out of office, help the incoming CPC Chair by sharing experiences, records, and helpful suggestions for serving District 72. If appropriate, provide all relevant committee notes, suggestions, and documents to the District 72 Archives Chair to ensure they are stored for safe keeping and historical preservation.

● **Treatment Facilities Chairperson:** encourages and coordinates members who want to participate in this type of service activity; coordinates volunteers to participate in a monthly meeting at MCDC in Butte as part of District 72's responsibility for sponsoring this meeting; serves as a contact between the district and treatment facilities; may attend the Area Assembly when budget allows, to sit in on the discussions of the Treatment facilities committee at the Area level and reports, to the district any information or new activities from those committee discussions by ensuring oral and written reports are provided at the monthly District 72 Business Meeting.

● **Special Events Committee Chairperson:** plans and coordinates four special events a year for the district (these should be service functions, e.g. workshops, panel discussions, District Day); finds locations for these events, asks speakers or guests, arranges for expenses, organizes and plans activities; is available to serve on committees for area or regional events held in the district; reports to the district at regular meetings up-coming events and activities being planned by the committee by ensuring oral and written reports are provided at the monthly District 72 Business Meeting; provides the PI Committee with fliers for upcoming events in District 72 for posting to the District 72 page of the Area 40 website.

● **Bridging the Gap Chairperson:** participates in the monthly District 72 meeting at MCDC in Butte (the cost of fuel to drive to and from Butte to be reimbursed by District 72 upon receipt), giving a short Bridging-the-Gap presentation and collecting card requests for contact from patients; finds appropriate AA contacts from Area 40 BTG contact list (database) when requests for a BTG contact are received from people in treatment or corrections facilities; keeps an updated contact list of volunteers from groups in our District; provides BTG cards and presentations/information as needed directly to facilities in our District and through Corrections and Treatment committees' work. Communicates all important information, by ensuring oral and written reports are provided at the monthly District 72 Business Meeting.

● **District Technology Chairperson:** recommended qualifications for this position are a background in I.T. or Web technologies or experience with Hybrid meeting hosting, Virtual meeting software and account administration, Web-based Email, Calendar, and Document Sharing, Troubleshooting various devices: phones, computers, Wi-Fi and A/V equipment, good communications with non-technical users.

Hybrid Business Meetings

- Facilitate technology during District 72 hybrid monthly business meetings by setting up necessary equipment, and monitoring Zoom activities.
- Troubleshoot internet connectivity and other technological issues as they arise.
- Act as the in-person "voice" of Zoom attendees, ensuring they are recognized to speak when they raise their virtual hands and voting members' votes are accurately recorded when needed.
- Set up and break down technology equipment at each District 72 business meeting.
- Train additional committee members for rotation of hybrid admin duties.

District Responsibilities

- Ensure secure storage of District hardware.
- Make recommendations for additional equipment, software and/or hosting/website services to improve our ability to carry the message.
- Monitor use of District 72 Zoom account to ensure all committee chairs can access and hold committee meetings when desired.
- May attend the Area Assembly when spending plan allows, to sit in on discussions of the Technology committee at the area level and report to the district, in writing, any new activities or information from those committees' discussions.

Committee Responsibilities

- Coordinate and chair Technology Committee meetings.
- Recruit members to serve on the technology committee and ensure they are provided with the tools they need to be successful.
- Provides all needed information to the District by ensuring oral and written reports are provided at the monthly District 72 Business Meeting.

Technology Committee

Goals:

- *Design, manage and monitor the technical hardware and software.*
- *Provide technical support to District 72 Officers and Committee Chairs who need to use the District's applications, equipment, or software.*

Duties:

- *Ensure all applications and software are up-to-date with the latest versions.*
- *Ensure all hardware and software is compliant with industry standards.*
- *Preserve the anonymity of our data to the greatest extent possible.*
- *Ensure data security through proper administrative, technological, and physical safeguards.*
- *Maintain reasonable safeguards to ensure a healthy physical and digital environment.*
- *Train and participate in Hybrid Meeting admin rotation.*

Responsibilities:

- *Hold regular committee meetings (recommended on a monthly basis) and as needed.*
- *Act as a resource to District 72 Officers on technological solutions.*
- *Develop and document technology policies and procedures available for use by District 72.*
- **District Inventory Chairperson:** chairs all meetings of District Inventory committee; develops list of inventory questions with input from group members, GSRs, and District chairs and officers; coordinates with District secretary to maintain and update database of contact information for all groups in District; distributes inventory questions to groups and collects written responses; plans and oversees a District Inventory event; develops with assistance from Committee members a written report on the Inventory process; communicates inventory findings to GSRs, District chairs, and officers to assist them in their efforts to more effectively reach the still suffering alcoholic and serve our District by ensuring oral and written reports are provided at the monthly District 72 Business Meeting. It is recommended that the District Inventory Chairperson form an ad hoc committee during the first year of the rotation, conduct the inventory approximately six months later, and present findings to the District approximately three months after the inventory.
- **Roundup Chairperson (selected by District 72 approximately every four years):** Approximately two years before District 72 is scheduled to host a Roundup (may be Spring or Fall), the District will vote

to elect a Roundup Chair. The Chair may choose to find a Co-chair with whom to split duties as agreed. Suggested sobriety/experience: Min. of 2 years' sobriety, with service experience that demonstrates commitment, follow-through, and completion of duties. Enthusiasm is helpful. Duties are:

- Recruit, establish and maintain a Roundup Committee (Team)
- Reach out to Al-Anon so that they may establish an Al-Anon Chair
- Chair Team meetings
- Communicate Team progress, needs, issues to District on regular basis by ensuring oral and written reports are provided at the monthly District 72 Business Meeting.
- Communicate Team progress and publicize the event at each Area Assembly. May engage Area Webmaster and Triangle Editor to post "save the date" information, registration flyers and links
- Oversee and support Team activities & responsibilities including, but not limited to: Selecting a theme, speakers, event dates, brand image and venue; setting up a Roundup checking account; establishing budgetary assumptions; creating a budget with registration fees/structure to support it; creating and managing a registration process; program logistics (i.e., scheduling the AA/Al-Anon meetings, workshops, speakers, hospitality room etc. throughout the event); entertainment; determining how best to disburse funds remaining post-event after bills paid, refunds made and split with Al-Anon completed
- Attend the event from set-up through tear-down
- Conduct a post-event debrief with Team to share learnings
- Discuss Team recommendation and secure agreement with District 72 on how to disburse funds remaining post-event; disburse funds and close checking account
- Deliver a final report to District 72 no later than six months post-event

****Please Note: When rotating out or upon resigning, it is the responsibility of all the outgoing chairs/officers to provide all pertinent information and materials to the incoming chairs/officers.**

III. Accessibility

In line with AA's Responsibility Declaration, all members of the District 72 service structure are collectively responsible for working to address accessibility challenges that must be overcome to ensure full participation in AA. Accessibility challenges – whether mental, physical, geographic, cultural, technological, or arising from other factors – can create barriers that prevent alcoholics from accessing the AA. message. Such barriers can make it difficult or impossible to attend meetings, read the literature, do Twelfth Step work, and work within the service structure. Members of AA within our District are encouraged to bring to the District's attention the existence of any challenge that may be affecting them or other members. District 72 will work together to try to remove such barriers, drawing on District 72's accessibility fund when necessary, in order to support this work.

IV. Voting

Motions: In all district issues requiring a vote, the group conscience ought to reflect a substantial majority by those voting, and an allowance ought to be made that the minority opinion be heard. Any AA member may attend and participate in district meetings, but only the following may vote, make or second a motion on district issues: each duly elected GSR (or alternate group member if the GSR is absent) has one vote; each elected district officer has one vote (as per the fourth Concept-“Right of Participation”) each district committee chairperson has one vote. (It is suggested that if a District Officer/Chairperson is also a GSR, then that officer should vote the conscience of his group.)

A quorum of voting members is established at each District meeting. A quorum shall be $\frac{3}{4}$ of the eligible voters at that meeting. As long as the total votes on any ballot, including elections is at least a quorum, $\frac{2}{3}$ of the actual votes constitutes a substantial unanimity and more than $\frac{1}{2}$ constitutes a simple majority.

ALL MEMBERS of District 72 are to become familiar with and apply Robert’s Rules of Order in our District Meetings so that things flow more smoothly, and everyone gets an equal voice as a voting member. Robert’s Rules are also used at Area 40 assemblies, and a helpful summary is attached explaining how the rules are used in that context to facilitate AA decision making. Additional information is available at <https://robertsrules.com/>.

Election of District Officers: DCM, Alt. DCM, Secretary, Treasurer are elected according to the Third Legacy Procedure found in the AA Service Manual.

V. Elections

The election of district officers and committee chairs shall take place no later than the August district meeting in the even numbered years, with each district officer and committee chair serving a two-year term from January 1 of the odd numbered year to December 31 of the following even numbered year, except for the Roundup Chair, who serves from the time of their election until the time at which all committee business is complete.

- **DCM and Alt. DCM:** has usually served as a GSR. If the person chosen is a current GSR, a new GSR should be elected to fill his/her position. **Should have enough sobriety (generally 4 – 5 years) to be eligible for election as delegate.** Also needs to have the time and energy to serve the district well. (See duties in the AA Service Manual.) **Term: 2 years.** The election follows the third legacy procedure as described in the service manual ($\frac{2}{3}$ majority).
- **District Officers (Treasurer, Secretary):** are elected in the same manner but need not have served as a GSR to stand. **Suggested sobriety: 2 years. Term: 2 years.**
- **District Committee Chairpersons:** are nominated from the floor and elected by a simple majority (over $\frac{1}{2}$). **Suggested sobriety: 1 year. Term: 2 years.**

In all district service positions, rotation is encouraged so that everyone has the opportunity to serve in all areas of service work. It is also discouraged for a district officer or committee chairperson to serve in more than one capacity. District officers are encouraged not to stand for re-election to the position they

are currently serving. Anyone who fulfills a service position that has been vacated is eligible to stand for election to that same position and serve a full two-year term if elected.

District Committees and Committee Chairpersons: any committee formed or active within the district has the traditional right of decision (as per the “Third Concept”), however, any committee request for district funds for expenditures in excess of the committee’s annual budget allocation should be brought forward for debate and approval at the district meeting. When re-activating or forming a committee, the chairperson must be nominated and elected at a district meeting. District committee chairs are expected to fulfill responsibilities of their service position.

Attendance and reports at district meetings are necessary for good communication. If a district officer or committee chairperson “fades away” (does not attend or send a report for two district meetings), a voting member of the district may request that officer or committee chairperson be replaced, and the position may be voted on at the following district meeting.

Vacancies in District Service Positions (Officers and Committee Chairpersons) should be filled as soon as possible and always by election by the GSRs and District 72’s elected officers and chairs. In the case of a DCM elect’s resignation prior to taking office, the Alternate DCM remains the Alternate DCM for the new rotation and a new DCM is elected.

VI. Expenses

Non-budgeted expenses or expenses in excess of budget ought to be discussed and approved by the district.

VII. Prudent Reserve

The prudent reserve of the district is established to ensure that the district has funds to operate for a period of time (currently 3 months of the operating budget) without receiving any contributions from the groups in the district. This is in accordance with the “Seventh Concept” to guarantee that the groups of District 72 are the final authority and they do have “the power of the purse” over the actions of the trusted servants of District 72.

VIII. Guidelines

It is suggested that these guidelines be reviewed by a committee chaired by the outgoing DCM and revised from time to time as the need arises or, minimally, every 4 years with any changes submitted to the groups of the District for approval.

IX. District 72 Meeting Format Guidelines

The suggested guidelines for District 72 Meeting Format are as follows:

- Opening with the Serenity Prayer
- All voting members raise hands (to establish how many are in attendance)

- Read month concept (short form)
- Review of and additions and/or corrections of last months meeting minutes. Followed with a vote to approve minutes
- Reports:
 - a. Treasurer's Report
 - b. Group Reports from GSR's
 - c. Committee and Officer Reports
 - 1. Answering Service
 - 2. Archives
 - 3. Bridging the Gap
 - 4. CPC
 - 5. Corrections
 - 6. Grapevine/La Vina
 - 7. Literature
 - 8. PI
 - 9. Special Events
 - 10. Treatment
 - 11. Round Up (when needed)
 - 12. Technology
 - 13. Alt. DCM
 - 14. DCM
- Immediate Business (for current month if applicable):
- Old Business:
- New Business:
- Closing – 2 hours after beginning of meeting (unless a motion is made to extend the meeting or adjourn and it passes)
 - a. A.A. announcements
 - b. Responsibility Statement

How the Conference Operates

Generally speaking, the General Service Conference follows *Robert's Rules of Order*, and proceeds on as informal a basis as possible consistent with the rights of all concerned. It is important to remember that the purpose of rules of order is to make it easier for the Conference to conduct its business; rules exist to allow the Conference to do what it needs to do to carry out the will of the Fellowship by reaching an informed group conscience. Over the years the Conference has adopted some exceptions to *Robert's Rules*, which help it to proceed more closely in accord with the spirit of A.A. Tradition.

Conference Quorum

A Conference quorum — two-thirds of all registered members — is required to conduct Conference business.

Committee System

To the extent possible, important matters to come before the Conference will be handled via the "Committee system." This assures that a large number of questions can be dealt with during Conference week. Members are encouraged to trust the process. Each Committee has considered carefully the items before it and presents its recommendations to the Conference as a whole for acceptance or rejection. Recommendations of Conference committees are automatically motions that have been made and seconded. Members are asked to refrain from spontaneously amending the work of the Committee; there are no "friendly" amendments under Robert's Rules.

Substantial Unanimity

All matters of policy (Conference Advisory Actions) require substantial unanimity, that is, a *two-thirds majority*. Any actions, including amendments, that affect an Advisory Action, or motions that might result in such an action, also require a *two-thirds majority*. Because the number of members present in the hall during the week of Conference varies from time to time, the phrase "two-thirds majority" is taken to mean two-thirds vote of the Conference members voting, as long as the total vote constitutes a Conference quorum.

Minority Opinion

After each vote on a matter of policy, the side which did not prevail will always be given an opportunity to speak to their position. If the motion passes with two-thirds vote, the minority may speak. If the motion receives a majority vote, but fails to pass for lack of a two-thirds vote, the majority may speak.

Remember that saving "minority opinions" for after the vote, when there is no rebuttal, is a time-waster, for it can force the Conference body to reconsider a question that might well have been decided the first time around if it had been thoroughly examined from all sides.

General Rules of Debate and Voting

(Agreed to at the beginning of each Conference)

- People who wish to speak line up at the microphones and address their comments to the chair.
- Each person may speak for two (2) minutes.
- No one may speak for a second time on a topic until all who wish to have spoken for the first time.
- Full discussion of a recommendation should take place before each vote.
- Everyone is entitled to express his or her opinion. However, if your perspective has already been stated by someone else, it is not necessary to go to the mike and say it again.

- Our experience is that premature actions such as amending motions early in the discussion or hastily calling the question can divert attention from the subject at hand, confusing and/or delaying Conference business.
- Voting is by show of hands unless the Conference decides otherwise.

Motions Made During Conference

When making a motion, come to the microphone and address the chair. There are various types of motions we use to help reach an informed group conscience. The specific rules governing each are on the next page.

Tabling a Motion

Tabling a motion postpones discussion to a later time during the same Conference.

Motion to Recommit

The motion to recommit returns a motion or proposal to the respective trustees' committee for further consideration. A motion to recommit must be seconded, is debatable and can be amended.

Calling the Question

Calling the question brings debate to a halt while Conference members decide whether to proceed directly to a vote (the question) or go on with the debate.

Reconsideration

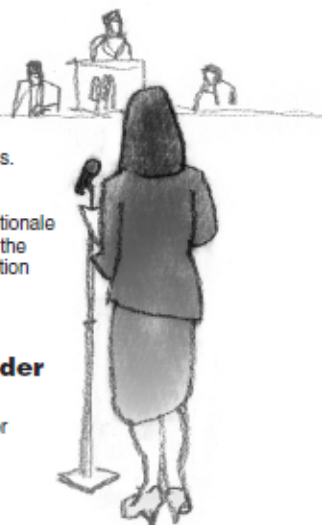
A motion to reconsider a vote may be made only by a member who voted with the prevailing side, but it can be seconded by anyone. If the majority votes to reconsider, full debate, pro and cons, is resumed.

Floor Actions

Floor actions may be introduced at any time during the Conference except at the Sharing Sessions. When a floor action is to be heard, its maker will be given two (2) minutes to state the rationale behind the action, after which the chair shall ask if there is a motion that the Conference decline to consider the floor action.

Declining to Consider a Floor Action

A motion to decline to consider a floor action is made without comment.



Summary of Conference Procedures

Remember:

- Motions must be made in order at the microphone.
- Address motions to the chair.

MOTION		Requires a "Second"?	Is Debatable?	Vote Required for Approval	Minority Voice Heard?
Committee Recommendation	Presented in the committee report.	Automatically seconded	YES	Two-thirds	YES
Amending a Motion	A motion on the floor is owned by the entire Conference body, no longer by the Committee which recommended it. The committee is not asked to vote on the motion to amend; any motion to amend a main motion depends on the approval of the Conference.	YES	YES	Two-thirds	YES
Tabling a Motion	Made without comment.	YES	NO	Simple Majority	NO
Moving to Recommit	Made without comment.	YES	YES	Two-thirds	NO
Calling the Question	Made without comment.	YES	NO	Two-thirds	NO
Reconsidering a Vote	May only be made by a member who voted with the prevailing side. No action may be reconsidered twice.	YES May be seconded by either side.	NO	Simple Majority	NO
Making a Floor Action	Made without comment. Introduced any time during the Conference except at the Sharing Sessions. Is submitted in writing by the maker to the Conference secretary.	YES	YES	Two-thirds	YES
Declining to Consider a Floor Action	Made without comment. May be made after the maker of a floor action is provided time to state the rationale for it.	YES	NO	Two-thirds	NO