



O R E G O N

**SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT
ADVISORY COUNCIL**

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Contents

Introduction	1
General Information	3
Marion County Ethics Policy	7
Public Meetings Law	8
Public Records Law	9
Bylaws	Appendix A
Parliamentary Procedure	Appendix B
Roberta's Rules of Order	Appendix C
Plan More- Meet Less - Do More	Appendix D
Meeting DOs and DON'Ts	Appendix E

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Marion County Solid Waste Management Advisory Council (SWMAC)

Volunteer members of Marion County Advisory Boards provide policy level guidance to decision makers and bring public participation into the government process. In particular, Solid Waste Management Advisory Council (SWMAC) provides recommendations to Marion County Department of Public Works - Environmental Services (PWES) staff and the Marion County Board of Commissioners on issues related to solid waste, including waste reduction, reuse, recycling, composting, and disposal. Members are appointed by the Board of Commissioners to serve their term. A SWMAC term is four years.

This Handbook contains information on the functions of SWMAC and expectations and responsibilities of SWMAC members. The information is intended to help new SWMAC members become acquainted with balancing the functions and decision making processes of SWMAC. The handbook is also intended to be used as a reference guide for current SWMAC members.

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General Information

SWMAC serves at the pleasure of the Marion County Board of Commissioners in an advisory capacity. It is supported by the Marion County Department of Public Works - Environmental Services (PWES). The role of the PWES staff is to advise SWMAC and carry recommendations made to the County Commissioners for approval. The PWES staff also reports issues of importance to SWMAC, assists the Chair with agenda development, and compiles background information for the SWMAC members to study.

In addition, the PWES staff responsibilities include: meeting arrangements, preparation of minutes, processing complaints, communication with members, and other administrative duties.

Being an Effective Council Member

- Applicants are interviewed by the SWMAC Nominating Subcommittee.
- The Nominating Subcommittee makes recommendations to SWMAC.
- SWMAC votes on the recommendations.
- PWES staff takes the recommendations to the Board of Commissioners.
- Board of Commissioners appoints new member(s) to serve a four-year term.

It is vital that all members attend meetings regularly and are prepared. All reports, proposals, and other documents that are prepared or distributed by PWES staff or SWMAC members should be read prior to meetings.

It is important to be a team player. Sharing different points of view can produce good policies and procedures to equitably solve environmental challenges that pertain to solid waste.

The guidelines to be used for all subcommittees' actions are stated in SWMAC Bylaws 11 - Special Committees.¹

¹ Appendix A - page vi

Membership of SWMAC

The SWMAC is limited to sixteen members. The categories are:

Members at Large:

- Eight citizens-at-large

Business/Industry:

- One Chamber of Commerce
- One building/construction industry
- One medical community/public health

Solid Waste System Representatives:

- One recycling industry
- One collection industry
- One disposal industry
- One transfer station/compost facility

Community organization:

- One

Meetings

The SWMAC meetings are scheduled for the fourth Tuesday of the month, excluding the month of December when there is no meeting. The meetings are held in the Commissioners' Board Room of Courthouse Square, 555 Court Street NE, in downtown Salem, unless specified in a public notice announcement or on the agenda.

Application Process: Applicant must review the SWMAC Handbook, Bylaws, and Solid Waste Management Plan prior to submitting an application, which can be found on PWES's website (mcswwmac.net).

Applicant(s) Attendance: Applicants shall attend a meeting prior to the Nominating Subcommittee's consideration and/or the interview process.

Attendance: Attendance at the regular meetings is very important. If a member is not able to attend, the member must contact a PWES staff person or the SWMAC Chair and/or Vice-Chair. Absenteeism is covered in 8b of the SWMAC Bylaws².

Robert's Rules of Order: Robert's Rules of Order³ are used to conduct business. This is covered more in depth in this handbook under the title Laws and Rules for public meetings.

Consensus: Consensus is defined in SWMAC Bylaws 9d - Decision Making Method⁴.

Rules

Each member should respect the rules that are set forth in the Bylaws and policy. These rules can prevent misunderstandings and disagreements. Some important rules include the following:

Attendance: Members must contact PWES staff or the Chair or Vice-Chair of SWMAC if unable to attend. This is very important because a quorum of members is necessary to conduct business. Without a quorum SWMAC can only conduct a work session. This also applies to subcommittee meetings. Members who miss more than three regular scheduled meetings in a consecutive twelve month period will be evaluated by PWES staff.

Promptness: Meetings should start on time and adhere to the allotted times on the agenda in order to end the meeting in a timely manner.

Meeting place and time: The meeting place and time is included in the agenda. It is also listed on the PWES web page (mcswwmac.net).

Participation: Each member's viewpoint is valuable and can make an important contribution. SWMAC gathers information on an unbiased basis, respecting each other's right to an opinion.

² Appendix A, page iii

³ Appendix C

⁴ Appendix A, page iv

Basic courtesies:

- Listen attentively and respectfully to others.
- Do not interrupt another member that has the floor; one conversation at a time.
- Public comment time is set at the beginning of each meeting.
- Any additional public comment is at the discretion of the Chair.
- Always refer to the back of nameplate for the SWMAC mission statement, and keep comments and/or conversation limited within those standards.

Training: The SWMAC Nominating Subcommittee guidelines for recommending applicant(s) membership on SWMAC include the following:

- Individuals who are committed to environmental responsibility that is tempered with environmental practicality.
- Individuals who truly sense the importance of how social, environmental, and economic reality relate to one another.
- Individuals with social, environmental, and economic balancing skills.
- Individuals who can, in an unbiased fashion, help develop strategies for dealing with municipal solid waste issues.
- Individuals who see a problem not as a problem, but as an opportunity to find those solutions that best fit the needs of all stakeholders.

Marion County makes every effort to provide substantive background and educational information for new members to become informed as quickly as possible. In doing so, SWMAC has developed this handbook. New members are encouraged to seek background or educational information and materials from existing members and/or staff.

Oregon Government Ethics – Marion County Ethics Policy

Public Official: Any person serving the State of Oregon or any local government or public body as an elected official, appointed official, employee, agent, volunteer or otherwise, whether or not the person is paid for the services.

EIGHT GENERAL RULES FOR GOVERNMENT CODE OF ETHICS:

- 1. No Favoritism**
 - Treat all customers and clients equally, no special favors for friends or family.
- 2. No Special Privileges Because of Your Official Position**
 - Follow the same rules that apply to everyone, no preferential treatment.
 - Cannot use position to obtain an extra financial gain or avoid a loss.
- 3. Follow Confidentiality Rules and Laws**
 - Know which information you handle is confidential by law.
 - Do not disclose confidential information without authorization.
 - Do not “tip off” anyone with confidential information.
- 4. No Profiting from County Business Either Directly or on the Side**
 - Applies to you, your relatives, members of household or your businesses.
 - No directing county business to where you have a financial interest.
 - No soliciting private clients or work through your county position.
- 5. No Outside Work that Conflicts or Interferes with Your Job**
 - Avoid conflicts of interest with county position and duties.
 - Includes interference with attendance and ability to do county job.
- 6. State Law Limits on Accepting Gifts**
 - Applies to you, your relatives and members of your household.
 - Gift limit is \$50 per person per year from source with a county interest if the public official has authority to make a decision or recommendation.
 - Entertainment, like tickets or events, treated like other gifts.
 - Some exceptions for food, beverages, small awards; check before accepting.
- 7. No Personal Use of County Property**
 - Do not borrow or take property or supplies for personal or non-county use.
 - Exception: Marion County’s Computer Policy allows limited personal use.
 - Do not use county property for personal gain or outside business.
- 8. Report Violations to Supervisor, Department Head or County Management**
 - Violations include improper use or theft of county property.
 - Duty to report false claims, Medicaid fraud and abuse per federal law.

Public Meetings Law

- 1. Notice**
 - a. Required for any meeting
 - b. Identifying time and location of the meeting
 - c. Subjects to be considered
 - d. Send to interested persons
 - e. Provide contact person

 - 2. Open to the Public and Accessible**
 - a. In the geographic area of governing body
 - b. ADA accessible
 - c. May need to provide interpreter, assistive listening devices for disabled
 - d. Non-discriminatory location
 - e. Right to observe not necessarily to participate

 - 3. Quorum Equals a Meeting if Talking Business**
 - a. Majority of appointed members equals a quorum
 - i. Half plus one
 - ii. Five members of nine-member board is a quorum
 - b. Subcommittee meetings also subject to public meetings law
 - i. If subcommittee making decision or recommendation
 - ii. Three of five deliberating equals a meeting

 - 4. Voting**
 - a. Must be public – no secret balloting
 - b. No vote by proxy
 - c. Vote of each member must be public
 - d. Majority of appointed members must vote to approve an item
 - i. If five of nine-member board present – vote must be unanimous

 - 5. Telephone and Electronic Meetings**
 - a. Can be allowed but must comply with all requirements
 - b. Member can appear by speakerphone; this is allowed if citizens at meeting can hear member participation/voting on the speaker
 - c. Technically, electronic meetings are allowed but public must be able to observe the electronic meeting transpire – will need to provide access to computer in one location. There may be ADA issues.

 - 6. Minutes**
 - a. Indicate members present
 - b. Motions, proposals, orders
 - c. Results of all votes
 - d. Subject of discussion but not necessarily transcript
-

Public Records Law

1. The public has a right to inspect nonexempt records of a public body

- a. First adopted by Oregon Legislature in 1973
- b. Response to Watergate scandal; desire for open government
- c. The statutes are “disclosure statutes;” not confidentiality statutes
- d. Courts liberally construe the statutes in favor of disclosure

2. Public Body

- a. A volunteer advisory committee is a public body
- b. Advisory committee’s records are subject to disclosure unless an exemption applies
- c. Note: it is unlawful to disclose certain records (i.e. health information)

3. What is a public record?

- a. Broadly defined in Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 192.410 as:
 - i. Any writing containing information relating to the conduct of the public’s business prepared, owned, used or retained by a public body
- b. A public record includes EVERY:
 - i. paper document, photograph, electronic file, map, tape recording, email used in conducting the committee’s business

4. Public records must be disclosed unless an exemption applies *Note: courts narrowly apply the exemptions.*

- a. Some exemptions protect individual privacy
 - i. Medical records
 - ii. Employee and volunteer address, phone numbers, dates of birth and social security numbers
 - iii. Mental health, alcohol and drug treatment, and HIV records receive extra protection under the law
- b. Some exemptions prevent interference with government operations
 - i. Advisory opinions – want a frank and uninhibited debate
 - ii. On-going criminal investigations
 - iii. Information submitted in confidence
 - iv. Litigation records
 - v. Government Safety and security plans

5. Public records requests

- a. The public has the right to inspect the original records or to receive a certified copy of the original
- b. Public body can require that request be made in writing
- c. The public body must provide access or copies within a reasonable amount of time
- d. If exempt and non-exempt information is in the same document, may provide a document that has been redacted (portions blacked out) so long as you inform requester of editing
- e. A public body may establish fees that are reasonably calculated to reimburse for actual cost in making records available
 - i. Marion County Board of Commissioners has adopted a policy stating that regular copying shall be charged at 10 cents a page. Also allows charging for reasonable expense of staff time.
- f. A public body is not required to create documents to comply with a public records request
- g. Must respond to request without unreasonable delay. Must notify if the fee is likely to exceed \$25.00. May require pre-payment.

6. Appeal rights

- a. If a person is denied access by county, that person may petition the District Attorney to order disclosure
- b. If District Attorney does not order disclosure, a person may seek review in circuit court

7. Retention of records

- a. Secretary of State requires that certain public records be retained
- b. Some board records must be kept permanently; some ten years
- c. Volunteer notes are public records but if not directly connected to board action need not be retained. Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) 166-150-0005(8)
- d. Volunteer records relating to board “business” may be subject to a public records request. This includes emails.
- e. Unlawful destruction of a public record is a misdemeanor

**MARION COUNTY
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL
BYLAWS**

- 1. NAME**

This Marion County body will be known as the Solid Waste Management Advisory Council (“SWMAC”).
- 2. MISSION**

To provide input to the Marion County Board of Commissioners (“Commissioners”) regarding an integrated waste management system that is financially feasible and protects the public health and environment of Marion County and to provide recommendations, reports, position papers, and other information as requested by the Commissioners.
- 3. PURPOSE OF ADVISORY COUNCIL**
 - 3a. The Commissioners formed SWMAC by Board Order on February 1, 1989.
 - 3b. SWMAC members represent the public interest and are expected to preserve the public trust by acting in an ethical and responsible manner.
- 4. GOALS**
 - 4a. To provide a forum for input to the Commissioners and a clearinghouse for information regarding solid waste management and recycling.
 - 4b. To further develop the solid waste system in accordance with the Marion County Solid Waste Management Plan.
- 5. MEMBERSHIP**

Representation: The SWMAC shall be limited to sixteen members.

 - 5a. Members at Large:
 - (1) Eight citizens-at-large
 - 5b. Business/Industry:
 - (1) One Chamber of Commerce
 - (2) One housing industry
 - (3) One medical community/public health
 - 5c. Solid Waste System Representatives:
 - (1) One recycling industry
 - (2) One collection industry
 - (3) One disposal industry
 - (4) One transfer station/compost facility
 - 5d. One community organization
- 6. APPOINTMENT**
 - 6a. Members of the SWMAC shall be appointed by the Commissioners to serve a four year term from date of appointment. All members shall serve at the pleasure of the Commissioners.
 - 6b. Terms shall commence on the date of appointment by the Commissioners.

- 6c. Members wishing to be reappointed shall submit a written request within 120 days prior to their term's expiration to the SWMAC chairperson who shall notify the Director of Public Works ("Director") or his/her designee of the requested reappointment.
- 6d. Members may be reappointed by the Commissioners.
- 6e. The Director or his/her designee shall be an ex-officio member of SWMAC and vested with responsibility for assisting the chairperson in coordinating SWMAC activities.

7. MEMBER'S DUTIES & EXPECTATIONS

The Director or his/her designee shall provide new SWMAC members with an orientation within 60 days of the appointment. The orientation shall include, but not be limited to:

- (a) Bylaws
- (b) Public Works-Environmental Services
- (c) Master Recycler Program, if available, is encouraged
- (d) Waste-to-Energy Facility
- (e) North Marion County Disposal Facility
- (f) Marion Resource Recovery Facility
- (g) Salem-Keizer Recycling and Transfer Station
- (h) Solid Waste Management Plan
- (i) Latest Waste Matters
- (j) Environmental Services Annual Report
- (k) Volunteer Handbook/Packet
- (l) Oregon Public Meetings Law and Public Records Law
- (m) Media interaction policy

Members are expected to attend meetings regularly, participate in discussion on topics brought before the SWMAC, work collaboratively with other SWMAC members and the public, inform themselves and the SWMAC on related topics through reading of handout materials and other sources of information, and participate in the decision making process.

Additionally, SWMAC members are expected to abide by Oregon public meetings, public records, and conflict of interest laws.

8. TERMINATION

The SWMAC shall recommend to the Commissioners removal of any member who it believes warrants termination from the SWMAC.

- 8a. Attendance: More than three absences by any member from scheduled meetings during a consecutive twelve-month period may cause the SWMAC to recommend to the Commissioners that this member be removed. Following the second absence during a consecutive 12-month period from a SWMAC meeting, the member shall be reminded by the chairperson of the absence removal policy.

- 8b. Member absences:
- (1) If a member will not be able to attend a scheduled SWMAC meeting, the member is to contact the Marion County Department of Public Works prior to the meeting and inform the Director or his/her designee or the chair and/or vice-chair of the absence.
 - (2) The SWMAC vice-chairperson will notify the meeting recorder of the absences at the end of the meeting for inclusion in the minutes.
 - (3) The absences will be recorded by the SWMAC vice-chairperson for review and action if needed.
 - (4) The record of absences will be kept on a twelve-month basis that will coincide with each member's date of appointment.
- 8c. Resignations: Resignations by members shall be submitted in writing to the SWMAC Chairperson and announced at the next meeting. A copy of the resignation shall be forwarded to the Department of Public Works and the Commissioners for the appropriate action.
- 8d. Reasons for Dismissal: The SWMAC may recommend removal of a member for misrepresentation of the SWMAC, excessive absences from meetings, violation of SWMAC Bylaws, or other inappropriate conduct as determined by SWMAC. In the event a recommendation for removal is made, it shall be submitted by the SWMAC for the Commissioners' due consideration.
- 8e. Removal: The members of SWMAC serve at the pleasure of the Commissioners and may be removed at any time by the Commissioners.

9. MEETINGS

- 9a. All meetings of the SWMAC shall be in accordance with the requirements of the Oregon Public Meetings Law (ORS 192.610 to 192.710).
- 9b. Regular & Special Meetings: Tentative agenda, time, and location for the next SWMAC meeting[s] shall be set at the end of each meeting, as mutually agreed by the chairperson and the members. The Marion County Department of Public Works may submit items for the agenda.
- (1) Notice of the meeting time, place, and agenda shall be provided to all SWMAC members, interested persons who have requested notice and the local news media at least three (3) days in advance of a scheduled meeting.
 - (2) Additional meetings may be scheduled as needed by the SWMAC, the chairperson, or the Director, with appropriate notice.
 - (3) Meetings for subcommittees shall be scheduled by the subcommittee chairpersons, after consultation with the subcommittee members, with appropriate public notice.

9c. Minutes:

- (1) Minutes shall be a summary of the actual discussions and proceedings that transpired at the SWMAC meeting or subcommittee meeting.
- (2) Minutes shall be distributed to all members, interested persons who have requested to be on the mailing list and the local news media prior to the next scheduled meeting, as well as be placed on the county website.
- (3) SWMAC members may submit clarification of their own comments, positions, votes, or other member activity at the next regularly scheduled meeting for inclusion in the minutes of the meeting being clarified.

9d. Decision Making Method:

- (1) A motion must be pending before a decision may be made. Every effort will be made to reach consensus when the SWMAC is deliberating toward a decision. If consensus cannot be reached, the chairperson or any member may call for a voice vote. If during the voice vote, there are greater than two (2) no votes, the motion will fail. In all cases, the minimum number of affirmative votes for any motion to pass must be a majority of the appointed positions.
- (2) A quorum shall be present in order to conduct business of the SWMAC.

9e. Quorum: A quorum shall be a majority of the appointed positions.

9f. A member must declare any conflicts of interest at a public meeting (ORS 244). A conflict exists if a recommendation by SWMAC may potentially or actually affect the finances of the SWMAC member or a direct family member, defined as spouse, child or stepchild, parents, or siblings. If an actual conflict exists, the member must declare this fact at the beginning of the meeting where the issue is discussed and the member must refrain from discussing or voting on the matter. For a potential conflict of interest, the member must declare this fact at the beginning of the meeting where the issue is discussed, however the member may still discuss and vote on the issue.

For represented positions on the SWMAC, there is no conflict of interest if the decision or action would affect the business or industry for which the individual is seated on the SWMAC to represent.

10. OFFICERS

10a. Appointment of Officers:

- (1) SWMAC shall nominate and recommend to the Commissioners, members at large (5a), and/or members that represent Business/Industry (5b) or a Community Organization (5d) for the positions of chairperson and vice-chairperson. The Council shall appoint the chairperson and vice-chairperson of the SWMAC, who shall serve at the pleasure of the Commissioners.

- (2) a) The chairperson shall serve a one-year term, starting in May. At the end of the one-year term, the vice-chairperson may become the chairperson. Should the chair be unable to complete his/her term, the vice-chairperson may serve the remainder of the term as chair and then serve one full year as chair.
b) Nominations for the chairperson and vice-chairperson will be held at the April SWMAC meeting.
- (3) In the event that neither the chairperson nor vice-chairperson is present, the SWMAC shall designate a member-at-large to act as the chair for that meeting.

10b. Duties of Officers:

- (1) The chairperson shall:
 - (a) Preside at all meetings of the SWMAC.
 - (b) Be the official representative of the SWMAC.
 - (c) Be the spokesperson to the media for the SWMAC.
 - (d) Shall assign a mentor for each newly appointed SWMAC member.
 - (e) Coordinate members for various subcommittees.
- (2) The vice-chairperson shall:
 - (a) Have the authority to preside as chairperson in the absence of the chairperson.
 - (b) Be the Parliamentarian for each meeting.
 - (c) Record member absences.

10c. Orientation for the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson.

- (1) The Marion County Department of Public Works shall provide an orientation for the chairperson and vice-chairperson within 60 days from the assumption of duties by a new chairperson or vice-chairperson.
- (2) The orientation content shall provide the chairperson and vice-chairperson with information concerning the conduct of meetings and the responsibilities and duties of the chairperson and vice-chairperson. The information to be provided to the chairperson and vice-chairperson by staff includes, but is not limited to:
 - (a) Bylaws
 - (b) Public Meetings Law
 - (c) Roberts Rules of Order
 - (d) Code of Ethics

10d. Removal of Officers:

The Board of Commissioners may remove a chairperson or vice-chairperson on its own motion or upon the recommendation of the SWMAC when it determines that it is in the interest of the SWMAC or the county to do so. If the chair is removed, the vice-chair will assume the chair's position. If the vice-chair is removed, the SWMAC will recommend a member-at-large for appointment to the position.

11. SPECIAL COMMITTEES

- 11a. The SWMAC may authorize the chairperson to appoint special subcommittees as necessary to deal with specific problems or issues the SWMAC believes appropriate.
- 11b. All appointed subcommittees are required to report their information and/or recommendations to the SWMAC.

12. CHANGE IN BYLAWS

- 12a. Changes to the Bylaws may be proposed by the SWMAC Bylaws/Handbook subcommittee. Any recommendations agreed upon by the SWMAC shall be forwarded to the Commissioners for their approval.
- 12b. The Commissioners may initiate changes to the Bylaws. These changes will be submitted to the SWMAC for review and consultation prior to the Commissioners' adoption.
- 12c. Upon the Commissioners approving Bylaw amendments, the Marion County Department of Public Works will update the Bylaws and distribute them to all members of the SWMAC.

13. GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNITY RELATIONS

- 13a. Any member of the public is welcome to attend, participate, and provide input at SWMAC meetings, at the approved agenda time.
- 13b. Public comments are encouraged and may be limited to 3 minutes or accepted in writing
- 13c. Anyone who wishes to voice an opinion or present information or concerns to the SWMAC may:
 - (1) Come to the meetings.
 - (2) Contact the Marion County Environmental Services Division Manager.
- 13d. The chairperson shall make arrangements as appropriate to assure public participation.

First Revision 07/18/89

Second Revision 09/25/90

Third Revision 05/11/93

Fourth Revision 07/09/96

Fifth Revision July 99

Sixth Revision May 2003

Seventh Revision June 2004

Eighth Revision Aug 2005

Ninth Revision Aug 2015

Tenth Revision Nov 2016

**Eleventh Revision Feb 2019*

**Bylaws embedded in handbook*

Parliamentary Procedure at a Glance

To Do This	You Say This	May You Interrupt Speaker?	Must You Be Seconded?	Is The Motion Debatable?	Is the Motion Amendable?	What Vote Is Required?
Adjourn the meeting	" I move that we adjourn"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Recess the meeting	" I move that we recess until _____ "	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
Raise a question as to rights and privileges: noise, room temperature, etc	Question of privilege or "Point of Privilege"	Yes (if urgent)	No	No	No	No Vote; Chair decides
To suspend further consideration of something	" I move to lay on the table" or "I move we table it"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
To end debate	"I move the previous question"	No	Yes	No	No	2/3rds Vote
To limit or suppress debate	"I move we limit debate to _____ "	No	Yes	No	No	2/3rds Vote
To defer action or postpone consideration	"I move to postpone this matter until _____ "	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
To have something studied	"I move we refer this to a committee"	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
To introduce Business; Place a motion on the floor	"I move that _____"	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
To modify or amend a motion	"I move to amend this motion"	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Object to procedure or a personal	"Point of order"	Yes	No	No	No	No Vote; Chair decides
Request Information	"Point of Information"	Yes	No	No	No	No Vote; Chair decides
Ask certain questions about procedure	"Point of Parliamentary inquiry"	Yes	No	No	No	No Vote; Chair decides
Ask for a vote count to verify a voice vote	"I call for a division of the house"	Yes	No	No	No	No Vote; Chair decides
To fix the time to adjourn	I move we adjourn at _____ "	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
To object to considering some matter	"I object to consideration of this _____ "	Yes	No	No	No	2/3rds Vote
Take up a matter previously tabled	"I move to take from the table _____ "	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Reconsider something already disposed of	"I move we reconsider action on _____"	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
To consider something not in scheduled	"I move we suspend the rules and _____"	No	Yes	No	No	2/3rds Vote
Vote on a ruling by the Chair	"I appeal the Chair's decision"	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority

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Must Robert Always Rule?



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Roberta's Rules – What's different about them?

- They are less formal. (Roberta is a first name; Robert was Henry Robert.)
- They are less military in tone. (Robert was a military officer.)
- They are more flexible – and can be customized to fit your organization's culture.

What are their basic assumptions?

1. People tend to support what they have helped shape or create.
2. Starting with a problem or challenge is more fruitful than starting with a solution (a motion).
3. Good outcomes allow everyone to win.
4. Consensus is a great goal, but not always worth the struggle.
5. Something productive can arise out of mild chaos.
6. Everyone has something to say and should say it – once.
7. The wisdom of the group is discovered through reasonably structured conversations, not multiple side conversations.
8. Everyone's opinion must be sought, verbally and nonverbally.

What makes them work?

1. Making structured written proposals: what needs changing, why and how it might be changed?
2. Establishing measurements of success: time, money, effort?
3. Holding open discussion – but with ground rules.
4. Testing the waters for consensus – get to at least three for concordance.
5. Settling for concordance when consensus is an obstacle.
6. Standing aside while a small group develops an amended proposal.

How about that agenda?

- Begin with a “grace period” that involves a meal, refreshments, informal activity.
- Make sure everyone is introduced and identified.
- Use a consent agenda for routine items.
- Adopt rules of conduct (bylaws, charter, etc.).
- Consider items in order of importance and urgency.
- Summarize at the end and review responsibilities and tasks assigned.
- Evaluate the meeting according to the three important components: process, relationships and results.

This excerpt is based on ***Roberta’s Rules of Order*** by Alice Collier Cochran, Jossey Bass, 2004.

Sample Consent Agenda

From the Association for Volunteer Administration

- A. Minutes of the last board meeting
- B. Results of any e-mail votes since last meeting
- C. Treasurer’s report
- D. Executive Director’s report
- E. President’s report
- F. Committee reports
- G. Correspondence
- H. Other reports for information without action items

Note: The consent agenda will be voted upon in its entirety. If you have questions about a specific item, please ask in writing for removal prior to the meeting and the item will be considered separately from the consent agenda.

All items in the consent agenda are posted on the password-protected board page of the website. To be included in the consent agenda, an item must be posted ten days prior to the start of the board meeting. The consent agenda is voted on as the first item of business in the board meeting.

Rules and Roles based on ***Roberta's Rules of Order***

Proposed meeting rules

1. We will give each speaker our full attention for up to three minutes.
2. We will avoid side conversations.
3. We will turn off pagers and cell phone or turn them to vibrate.
4. We will limit "volleys" between two people to two exchanges before opening the discussion to others.
5. everyone gets to speak once if desired before anyone gets to speak again.

Meeting roles

1. Leader (chair, president, facilitator or designee)
2. Time keeper (observes agenda time and speaker times)
3. Note taker (secretary or designee)
4. Egalitarian (notes when participation is unbalanced)

How to reach agreement

Except with routine items like approving minutes for example, please begin with a proposal rather than a motion. After discussion, the chair will test for consensus or general agreement. Then a formal motion can be made, seconded (after discussion) and passed. If there is still substantial disagreement at the end of the allotted agenda time, a small group will be appointed to work out differences and report back near the end of the meeting.

Plan More – Meet Less – Do More

Establish a need for a meeting:

- To clarify ideas
- To develop ideas
- To make decisions
- To delegate work
- To persuade or inspire

Invalid reasons for meeting include:

- We do it monthly, needed or not
- To share information (there are better ways for this)
- To avoid responsibility (if it's your job, just do it)

The agenda is the most powerful meeting tool:

- Communicates expectations
- Provides a mechanism for order – limits the tasks, limits the items to those agreed upon, limits the time
- Measures the success/failure of a meeting

An effective agenda:

- Identifies date, time, place, expected participants
- Tells the participants how to prepare
- Sets time limits and clarifies reason item is there
- Schedules items in order of importance
- Is distributed in advance

Identify and overcome potential barriers:

- Uninformed participants: Distribute reports in advance
- Uncooperative participants: Use Roberta's Rules
- Too-lengthy meetings: Limit agenda items to essentials
- Too much time on trivia: Use a consent agenda

Ensure a proper environment for the meeting:

- Prearrange the meeting place
- Ensure room is set up properly
- Ensure that equipment and materials are present
- Arrange for food and beverage if needed
- Arrange for childcare if needed

Set the tone for meeting behavior:

- Be cordial, but expect preparation, attention, and effort.
- Set high, but achievable expectations
- Speak in terms of "we," not "I" or "you"
- Make the team realize the task matters and is doable

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Meeting DOs and DON'Ts

DO:

- Have a “consent agenda” of things that can be approved all in one vote. Include all reports for information, the financial report, and the minutes of the previous meeting. Distribute these ahead of time. Anyone who wants to have an item removed from the consent agenda and considered separately must ask prior to the meeting.
- Immediately name the most important or urgent items.
- Be positive – affirm all appropriate contributions
- Listen actively. Paraphrase to confirm what you heard.
- Establish and observe time contracts.
- Build on other’s ideas and encourage building by others.
- For any idea- identify benefits before concerns.
- Set up win/win situations
- Discuss and, if possible, reach or near consensus before asking for a motion.
- Use the thinking hats to look at proposals from all angles.

DON'T:

- Allow side conversations.
- Let people ramble – or ramble yourself.
- Violate time contracts or ignore the timekeeper.
- Let people introduce non-agenda items (unless there is time left for new business within the set schedule).
- Let people re-visit issues decided earlier.
- Be overly formal. A gavel has no place in most board meetings, nor does excessive “parliamentese.”

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