

RULES OF ORDER

FOR

MEMBERS' MEETINGS

PREAMBLE

These Rules of Order are designed to allow each member to participate in decision-making at the Co-op's general meetings.

The aim of the decision-making process at general meetings is to reach the best possible decision based on the combined input of the members. It is important, as well, to ensure that all members understand the substance and implications of any proposal under review before they are asked to vote on it.

The main steps in the formal decision-making process are as follows:

1. a proposal or 'motion' is introduced by its sponsor or 'mover', or by the Chairperson
2. a specific motion is made
3. the motion is seconded by another member who supports it
4. the motion is discussed, with discussion controlled by the Chairperson
5. the motion may be amended before a decision is taken on the motion as a whole
6. the meeting makes a decision by voting on the motion (as presented or amended)
7. if the motion is defeated a related motion can be considered, or the meeting can move on to consider other business.

The following Rules of Order have been adopted by the Co-op to govern the formal decision-making process and form part of this By-law. The comments which follow each Rule in the paragraphs below are not part of the Rule itself, but are intended to assist the Chairperson in the application of the Rule and to help members to understand its purpose.

1. MOTIONS

Each item of business will be introduced by the Chairperson or presented by its sponsor (the member who asked that the item be included on the agenda). The sponsor will normally request the meeting to accept a proposal by "moving" it as a motion. In order to be considered by the meeting, the motion must be supported by at least one other member who agrees to "second" the motion. Only one main motion may be before the meeting at any one time.

On occasion, the Board or a member may introduce a matter for discussion without presenting a specific recommendation on how to deal with the matter. The Chairperson will be responsible in such cases for determining whether a specific motion is in order to help the meeting to deal effectively with the matter.

Comment: A main motion expresses the principal proposal before the meeting. Main motions should be written up and distributed to members in advance of the meeting whenever possible. This will enable members to consider the matter before the meeting. Main motions formulated at the meeting should also be presented to the Chairperson in written form whenever possible to assist the Chairperson in guiding discussion and the Secretary in recording the minutes. However, procedural motions (6), interruptions (7) or amendments are usually not presented in written form. Prior to being voted on, the Secretary should have all motions in written form and should read the motion to the meeting.

2. SPEAKING

Once a motion has been moved and seconded, it is discussed by the members with discussion regulated by the Chairperson. Speakers must deal with the proposal on the floor and directly related matters. Speakers may ask questions about the motion which will be answered by the Chairperson or, at the discretion of the Chairperson, by the sponsor.

All remarks should be addressed to the Chairperson and not to other members at the meeting. Each speaker will normally be allowed to speak for a maximum of three minutes. The Chairperson may, at its discretion, set a longer or lesser time limit. Normally, no member will be permitted to speak more than once on the same item until all members

Occasionally, a member wishes to amend a motion by replacing it with a whole new motion or by amending it in a way that is contrary to the original motion. This is not allowed as a valid amendment. The member may briefly outline the substitute motion and either ask the mover to withdraw the motion on the floor or urge the meeting to defeat it so that the substitute motion can be proposed.

4. WITHDRAWING A MOTION

The mover of a motion may, at any time during discussion of a motion, with the permission of the seconder, withdraw the motion from the floor.

Comment: A motion might be withdrawn if the mover decided, for example, that it was not appropriate to make a decision at this time or felt that it was preferable for a substitute motion to be considered.

5. VOTING

Once every member who wishes to do so has had a chance to speak the Chairperson calls for a vote. Motions are decided by simple majority unless otherwise required by the Co-op's By-laws (which may include these Rules of Order) or by the Co-ops Act. The Chairperson of the meeting will not vote unless the vote is by ballot or unless this vote would make or break a tie. The Chairperson will rule on whether or not the motion has passed. A recount may be held on the request of any member. A majority vote is defined as more than half of the positive and negative votes without counting abstentions and without rounding. A two-thirds majority vote is defined as a positive vote of two-thirds or more of the positive and negative votes without counting abstentions and without rounding.

Comment: Normally, votes are taken by a show of hands with the Chairperson asking first for an indication of all those in favour, and then all those against the motion. The meeting may decide, by majority vote, to vote on any motion by secret ballot. The Act(s.75(3)) provides that any member may require that a poll or count be taken.

6. PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

(a) Calling the Question

During the debate of a main motion or amendment, any member who has not yet spoken on the motion

the Board or to a specific committee for further study and recommendations.

The motion to "table the motion" sets the business aside for an indefinite period of time. It is usually used when members do not wish to express their opinion and prefer to shelve the matter indefinitely. In order to again consider the matter, a motion must be passed by a simple majority to take the motion from the table.

(c) Dilatory Motions

The Chairperson may rule a motion out of order on the grounds that it is absurd, frivolous, obstructive, delaying or otherwise dilatory and not worth the attention of the meeting.

7. INTERRUPTIONS

The only occasions on which members may speak out of turn are if they wish to raise a 'point of order' or a 'point of information', if they wish to 'appeal' a ruling of the Chairperson, or if they raise a 'question of privilege'.

Once a point of order has been stated, the Chairperson will rule on its validity and, if appropriate, act on it.

An appeal may be made when any member is dissatisfied with a ruling of the Chairperson. It requires a seconder, and is not debatable. Both the member making the appeal and the Chairperson may give their reasons for their positions. The question, "shall the decision of the Chairperson be upheld", is then put to the vote. The Chairperson does not vote. In the case of a tie vote, the Chairperson's ruling is considered to have been upheld.

A question of privilege will not require a seconder, nor shall there be discussion on such a question. The Chairperson will give a ruling on the question of privilege without calling for a vote.

Comment: A point of order should be raised when a member feels that an incorrect procedure is being followed, there is a better procedure, or there is a lack of quorum at the meeting.

A point of information should be raised when a member feels that he or she