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Rules of Debate

November 2017

Rules of Debate

Application

These rules of debate apply to all meetings of the Board, its committees, groups and Chapter Boards.

Procedure at Meetings

- At all meetings, if the relevant Chair be absent, the Vice-Chair shall take the Chair.
- If both the Chair and Vice-Chair be absent, the Chair shall be taken by another member elected by a simple majority from those present.
- The Chair shall preserve order, may call to order any person who he deems to be out of order, and shall decide which member shall be heard first.
- Board, committee and group meetings shall be conducted under the spirit of "qualified privilege" as defined in the Bylaws.
- At all meetings, the mode of voting shall be by a show of hands unless a poll is demanded.
- The Chair shall have the right to vote on any motion but does not have to exercise that right.
- Where the voting is equal, the Chair shall have, in addition to the ordinary vote, a casting vote, which must be exercised.
- The Board shall have the right to invite any certified or non-certified member to attend a Board meeting for all or any of a properly convened meeting.
 - Any such member shall be allowed to speak with the leave of the Chair
 - Any such member shall leave the meeting when requested to do so by the Chair
 - Any such member shall not be permitted to propose or second a motion, or to vote on any matter.
- The Chair may exclude from the meeting any person who is, in the Chair's opinion, being unruly, offensive, disruptive or who is filibustering. There shall be no right of appeal to this clause save the provisions below:
 - The member excluded may be invited back into the meeting at any time at the Chair's discretion
 - The member excluded may be required to give undertakings as to future conduct before being allowed back into the meeting.
- Those present at the meeting may instruct the Chair to stand down for the remainder of the meeting by a simple majority vote. In this case, the Vice-Chair shall take the Chair.
- Voting will only be allowed on a motion which has a proposer, a seconder, and which has been recorded by the minute-taker.
 - After a motion has been moved and seconded, the Chair shall ask whether there is any discussion on the motion
 - If any member of the Board, committees, groups or Chapter Board signifies that they wish to discuss the motion, the Chair shall invite discussion from each member in turn. No member shall speak a second time until all members have had the opportunity to speak once

- For the sake of efficiency, but subject to norms of fairness, the Chair may impose a guillotine on each member's contribution
- At any time during debate, a member may propose that "the motion now be put".
 - If seconded, this proposal will be voted on immediately by a show of hands
 - If a simple majority of those present approves the proposal, debate will cease and the motion will be put to a vote.
- At any time during a member's contribution to the debate, a member may propose that "the speaker not be heard"
 - If seconded, this proposal will be voted on immediately by a show of hands
 - If a simple majority of those present approves the proposal, the member subject to the call shall cede the floor and the Chair shall invite another member to contribute or, if all members have spoken, will put the motion under debate to a vote

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