



Stakeholders Council Meeting Ground Rules

Use of Roberts Rules

Decisions need to be documented, both in the exact wording of the decision and the vote by which it was adopted. The documentation provides proof that the body followed its rules in making decisions. In terms of Robert's Rules, the minimum is to use motions for adoption and voting, which will be captured in the audio recording of the meeting. The motion must clearly state what is being voted on. Other motions can be used during deliberations to help the group or body make a decision.

Basic rules

- A quorum (majority of members of the group) must be present for business to be conducted (i.e. for voting to occur).
- Everyone has the right to participate in discussion if they wish, before anyone may speak a second time.
- Only urgent matters may interrupt a speaker.
- All members have equal rights, privileges and obligations.
- Members have a right to know what the pending question is and to have it restated before a vote is taken.
- Full and free discussion of every main motion is a basic right.

Basic Definitions

- Motion – A formal proposal made to bring a subject before an assembly for its consideration and action. Begins with *"I move that..."*
- Second – A statement by a member who agrees that the motion made by another member be considered. Stated as *"Second,"* or *"I second the motion."*
- Amendment – Before the vote is taken on a motion, it may be discussed and amended by:
 - Striking out words
 - Inserting or adding words
 - Striking out words and inserting others in their place

Basic Actions

- Obtain the floor (the right to speak) by being the first to raise your hand and being recognized by the Chair. Speaking while another has the floor is out of order. Must be recognized by the Chair before speaking.
- Debate cannot begin until the Chair has stated the issue or substance to be discussed which can be done by noting the specific issue on the agenda.
- Before a motion is stated by the Chair (the question) members may suggest modification of the motion.
- The "immediately pending question" is the last question stated by the Chair.
- The member moving the "immediately pending question" is entitled to preference to the floor.



- No member can speak twice to the same issue until everyone else wishing to speak has spoken to it once.
- All remarks must be directed to the body. Remarks must be courteous in language and deportment.

Other Ground Rules

- Respect each other:
 - Listening is important
 - One person speaks at a time
 - Don't interrupt
- Respect the group:
 - Every idea is worthy, but make your points brief (no longer than two minutes)
 - Make your points succinctly
 - Everyone has an equal right to talk
 - Listen to what others say and encourage others contribute to the conversation
 - Individual perspectives are important, but remember that the whole of the group is greater than the sum of its parts
- It's okay to disagree but do so with curiosity, rather than hostility:
 - Challenge ideas, not people
 - No "zingers", cheap shots, or raised voices
 - Disagreement is an opportunity to learn
- Keep the conversation productive:
 - Explain your reasoning
 - Keep an open mind
 - Avoid passing judgment
- Be responsible for the energy you bring into the room.

Failure to adhere to the ground rules may result in removal from the Stakeholders Council.