

Northeast Community Council General Meeting Procedures *The quick guide to Robert's Rules for general membership meetings*

Welcome to the Meeting!

So, who's in charge?

- **The Chair:** The meeting is led by the Chairperson, usually the President. The Chair manages the proceedings, determines the flow of the meeting, and maintains order. The Chair also has the final authority to steer the meeting to meet the needs of the council.

Ground Rules for Discussions:

- **Recognition:** To speak, you must be recognized by the Chair. At the General membership meetings, simply stand or raise your hand to let the chair know you desire to speak. We use microphones, so wait for someone to hand you a mic, then state your full name and if you are a member or guest before sharing your comment or question.
- **Equal Time:** When a topic is being discussed, everyone has an equal opportunity to speak. The Chair usually ensures this by limiting how long each person can talk (usually 1 to 2 minutes). The President will usually publish the amount of time that each person gets on the agenda.
- **Respect:** Treat others with respect. No interruptions or personal attacks are allowed! To prevent chaos in the meetings, address your comments to the chair or to the presenter and not towards other members or guests with whom you may disagree.
- **Motion:** A topic is formally introduced through a motion. Someone must "move" for it, and another must "second" it before discussion begins.

Discussion Flow:

- **Alternating Comments:**
 - The discussion alternates between speakers for and against the motion.
 - If you wish to speak in favor, say your name then "For" or "Against" when recognized.
 - The Chair will call on speakers alternately to maintain balance in the discussion within the time allotted on the agenda, but no worries, every effort will be given to provide everyone with a chance to use their voice.

Voting:

- **Decision Making:** After discussion, the motion is put to a vote.
 - A simple majority decides unless otherwise specified by our bylaws or Robert's Rules.
- **Voting Methods:** Can be by voice, show of hands, or ballot at the discretion of the Chair or, in some instances, by request of the members.

Other Procedures:

- **Point of Order:** If you believe the rules are not being followed, you can always say "Point of Order" and wait to be recognized to address this with the Chair.

Tips for New Attendees:

- **Prepare:** Have an understanding of the agenda items before the meeting.
- **Participate:** Your voice is important. Feel free to contribute to discussions.
- **Learn:** If unsure about procedures, ask for clarification from the Chair, the parliamentarian, or a seasoned member.

Final Note: This document serves as a basic guide. For more complex situations, refer back to Robert's Rules of Order or consult with the Parliamentarian or Chair.