

PRA Procedures for Voting at Meetings Held Online

Per the Executive Committee, January 2021

The purposes of our voting procedures are to have an open and frank discussion and to allow everyone an opportunity to speak on an issue. Voting at an online meeting presents some challenges, but the bylaws provide guidance by specifying who can vote and by basing procedures on Robert's Rules of Order. These procedures are not onerous; they help ensure that the goal of a full discussion can occur, and that voting can proceed in an orderly and understandable manner.

1. Who can vote?

The bylaws state that "All individuals over 18 currently residing in a member household are entitled to vote." [Article III, Section 2]. For votes taken at the winter and spring meetings in 2021, the Executive Committee has decided that a "member household" is a household that has paid association dues for at least the previous calendar year, i.e., 2020.

2. Notifying members that there will be a vote.

We will follow the bylaws and notify members in advance that there will be one or more votes and the subject of those votes. The bylaws require a notice one week in advance. For the past few years, we have been notifying members at least two weeks in advance through the listserve, newsletter, website, email, or USPS delivered mail; we will continue this practice.

3. Procedure for voting during the meeting

We will follow Robert's Rules as closely as possible.

- Before a vote, the chair will determine that a quorum is present by asking those in attendance who are members to raise their hand via Zoom or by actually raising their physical hand so that it can be seen on the screen by the chair.
- A motion must be made, e.g., "I move that we adopt the 2021 budget as proposed by the treasurer in the newsletter and displayed in this meeting."
- A motion must then be seconded.
- Discussion will follow after the second.
- Any member who wishes to speak will be recognized.
- During discussion, the chair will indicate who is to speak. The chair may mute anyone attempting to speak over someone else or speak out of turn; the chair will un-mute them when it is their turn to speak.
- Amendments may be made to the item being proposed, e.g. "I think the amount for the project we have been discussing should be X and move that the amount for special beautification projects in the 2021 budget should be X instead of Y."
- Votes on proposed amendments follow the same procedure, i.e., a second, the discussion, a vote on the amendment.
- When all amendments have been dealt with, a vote takes place on the original proposal, as amended if it has, in fact, been amended.

- The vote will be tallied as follows:
 - The yeas will be called; those voting “yea” will raise their hand via Zoom or by actually raising their physical hand so that it can be seen on the screen by the chair.
 - The nays will be called and will indicate their vote in the same way.
 - Those abstaining will so indicate in the same way.
 - Per the bylaws, the outcome of a vote will be decided by a majority of those voting.
 - If no one objects, a non-controversial motion can be passed by “general consent”

4. Discussion.

Discussion during a vote is important and deserves a separate comment. Members may indicate that they wish to speak by raising a hand using the hand feature in Zoom or by actually holding up their hand until recognized by the chair. A vice chair may be designated to assist the chair by making note of those who have raised their hand in either manner. The chair may then note they will be recognized to speak and in what order. [This will allow those who have physically raised their hand, to lower it, knowing that the chair will call upon them in the order specified.] The vote will be called when the chair determines that all who wish to speak have had an opportunity to do so.