

## Motions Reference Sheet for Boards and Committees

(Sections 64-73 of Administrative Order One sets out the rules for motions.)

A motion is the vehicle used by the Committee to request action by the committee's governing body.

A motion requires a mover and seconder and should request a specific action.

A motion must be in keeping with the mandate of the Committee.

A motion should be clear in intent (concise, unambiguous and complete)

\*\* A Committee member may contact the Legislative Assistant for help with developing a motion. They will work with the member to ensure that the motion is within the mandate of the committee, presented in the appropriate format, makes a specific request and is clear as to intent.

### Steps for Handling a Motion

A voting member of the Committee will move a motion- introducing it for debate

Another voting member seconds the motion- seconding does not mean endorsement of the motion, but only agreement that it should be discussed

Debate- once debate begins, ownership and control over the motion become collective. The issue is discussed ensuring all members have an opportunity to contribute.

Amendment- a procedure used to introduce a motion to change the wording of another motion before voting on it.

The question is called on the matter once it is recognized that the issue has been dealt with sufficiently. Any voting member of the Committee may call for the question at which time discussion on the matter must cease.

The Chair puts the motion to a vote - a best practise is to ensure clarity by repeating the motion before the vote.

The Chair will ask for all those members in favour (voting members will respond with Aye or similar word) Then the Chair will ask for those opposed (voting members will respond with Nay or with a similar word)

The Chair announces the outcome- the motion is passed or the motion is defeated.

## Sources of Motions

A Committee can anticipate that they will deal with motions in a variety of scenarios.

Staff Recommendation:

The Committee receives a staff report containing a staff recommendation.

The staff recommendation is the motion the Committee is to consider.

The Committee may approve the recommendation, reject the recommendation or amend the recommendation.

For example:

Approval of a Motion

THAT the Committee has reviewed the application and recommends approval of the application

THAT the Committee has reviewed the application recommends approval of the application, with consideration to the following matters:

Rejection of a Motion

THAT the Committee has reviewed the application and recommends rejection of the application for the following reasons:

## Staff Request for Input:

The Committee receives a memo from staff requesting their input on a matter. Staff will provide an explanation or presentation of the matter and request the Committee provide specific input.

The Committee will then discuss the contents of the memo and staff's explanation/presentation providing their input.

The Chair, with assistance from the legislative staff, would summarize the key points of input which would form a motion.

The Chair or legislative staff may read the motion prior to the vote.

## Committee Member Initiative:

A Committee member may initiate a motion on any matter within the mandate of the Committee.

The member is required to provide to the Legislative Assistant written copy of the motion (see Attachment No. 1) with an explanation of the purpose of the motion prior to the meeting package being distributed.

## Amending a Motion

A voting member of the Committee may propose amendments while a main motion is being debated.

An amendment is a proposal to change the working of a motion by adding, inserting, deleting or replacing text before voting on it.

An amendment requires a mover and seconder.

The Chair will then ask if anyone would like to comment on the amendment. Debate/discussion may follow

A vote would then be taken on the proposed amendment

The Chair would announce whether the amendment has been approved or defeated

If approved, the motion to amend would be included in the original motion and a vote taken on the motion as amended.

If defeated, the proposed amendment would be recorded in the minutes as having been put and defeated.

The original motion would remain unchanged and discussion would continue.

## Reasons to Amend a Motion

Unclear motion

Incomplete motion

New point raised in the discussion/debate

To put emphasis on a certain aspect of the motion

## Voting

(Sections 92-98 of Administrative Order One sets out the rules for voting.)

Votes can be taken orally or by show of hands

Most decisions require a majority vote (more than 50% of the votes cast) to be PASSED

Amending the agenda requires a 2/3rd's majority vote

Apart from a member who has declared a conflict of interest, all members, including the Chair, must vote on all motions of the Committee

Abstentions are interpreted as a vote against the motion

If a motion has no seconder, the motion is LOST and no further discussion is required.

If a motion results in a tie vote the motion is DEFEATED

## **Quorum**

(Section 132 of Administrative Order One sets out the rules for quorum.)

A quorum is the number of members who must be present to make valid decisions

A quorum for a council/board is a majority of the voting members

If a decision is made in the absence of a quorum, it is not a valid decision

## **Conflict of Interest**

The member is required to declare a conflict prior to the Committee considering the matter and take a seat away from the table.

The member is not permitted to involve themselves in any discussion/presentation of the matter

The member does not vote on the matter

Once the matter has been decided, the member may resume their seat.