

UNSM Rules of Order Policy

It is the Policy of the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM) to conduct orderly, courteous, and productive meetings. For all proceedings not outlined here, the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall apply.

Unless otherwise noted in the UNSM Bylaws, this procedural policy shall apply to all meetings of the UNSM.

1. Definitions:

In this Policy:

- a) "Board" means the Board of Directors of the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities.
- b) "Executive Director" means the person acting as the UNSM lead administration official. The Executive Director or a staff designate shall execute the traditional duties of the Secretary/Treasurer position.
- c) "Presiding Officer" means:
 - I. The President when present at any meetings of the UNSM
 - II. The Vice President at a meeting in the absence of the President
 - III. Such other municipal elected official appointed by the membership in the absence of the President or Vice President.
- d) "Voting Delegate" means a municipal elected official of a member unit who is issued a voting card as outlined in the UNSM Bylaws.

2. Duties of Presiding Officer:

- a) Opens all meetings and presides by taking the Chair and calling members to order.
- b) Receives and submits, properly formulated and presented motions from eligible members.
- c) Puts to a vote motions which are regularly moved and seconded or which arise in the course of the proceedings and to announce the result of the vote.
- d) Declines to put to a vote, a motion which infringes upon the rules of procedure (i.e. motions which lack proper notice or motions deemed out of order).
- e) Enforces on all occasions, the observance of order and decorum.

- f) Makes decisions on all points of order that arise during debate. Such decisions are subject to appeal by a mover and seconder. The Presiding Officer may speak to points of order in preference to others. The Presiding Officer may invite discussion on a point if he or she has doubts on the subject. Where the Presiding Officer permits discussion on a point, no member may speak more than once.
- g) Assigns the floor and when two members seek the floor at the same time determines speaking order.
- h) May censure any person who:
 - I. While speaking impeaches the motives of another person
 - II. While speaking treats another person disrespectfully
 - III. Behaves in such a way as to interrupt the person speaking or the proceedings in general.
 - IV. Uses unbecoming or profane language
 - V. Willfully violates any other rule.

3. Minutes:

- a) UNSM staff shall keep minutes of the proceedings of every UNSM meeting.
- b) The Minutes Shall:
 - I. Contain all resolutions and motions passed. Mover and seconder names do not have to be recorded
 - II. Mention reports, petitions and other submitted papers submitted to a meeting, by their title only or by brief description (only accepted reports shall be entered at length)
 - III. Not be verbatim but may include bulleted summarized accounts (at the discretion of the Executive Director) of the major points for and against an issue from the debate.
 - IV. Have a collective focus based on the Parliamentary Principle that recording what got “done” is more important than what individual members “said” during debate
- c) UNSM staff are authorized to record meetings through electronic means to assist with the preparation of draft minutes. However, it is emphasized that the "official record" of the proceedings of UNSM meetings shall be the written approved minutes that are drafted shortly after completion of a meeting and brought forward to a subsequent meeting for formal acceptance.

4. Speakers and Time limits

- a) Only delegates or non-voting municipal representatives may address the Annual Conference without the permission of the conference.
- b) Only voting delegates may move and second motions.

- c) No delegate shall speak more than once on any motion except to explain a misconception of that delegate's remark.
- d) The mover of a substantive motion shall have the right to speak a second time to reply or sum up in closing the debate.
- e) No person shall speak for more than five minutes on any matter at one time without permission of the meeting which may extend the total time to ten minutes.
- f) No person shall stand, speak, whisper or behave so as to interrupt any person who is speaking unless it is to raise a point of order or to ask the Chair for permission to explain.
- g) When a delegate wishes to explain a misunderstanding, the delegate shall stand and ask permission of the Chair without further comment and if permitted can explain actual misunderstanding of comments.
- h) When a delegate speaks to order, the Question of Order shall be decided before the matter under discussion is proceeded with and when any person is called to Order he/she shall be seated until the point of order is determined.
- i) Any delegate and a seconder who feel aggrieved or rebuked by the Chair may appeal from such rebuke or censure to the members.

5. Persons not Members of the Board and Non-Members of the UNSM

- a) No person who is not a member of the UNSM shall be heard without the permission of the meeting.
- b) The Chair, subject to the objection of the majority of members, may extend permission for a non-member to be heard.
- c) No person may bring any sign, poster, placard or banner or any like device into a meeting room without the permission of the members.
- d) If any non-member in attendance at a meeting is disrupting proceedings, the Chair may order such person to leave the meeting. The Chair may request the presence of police as deemed necessary to take appropriate steps to carry out the order.
- e) If the disruption is being caused by a member, the Chair's order(s) are subject to the appeal of the members.

6. Parliamentary Authority

As per Article 10 of the UNSM Bylaws, in all cases not specifically addressed in the procedural rules policy adopted by the UNSM, the rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR) shall govern UNSM proceedings.

7. Voting

- (a) Only elected members of council of a member unit shall be voting delegates at the Annual Conference, special meetings of the UNSM or caucus meetings held during the UNSM's Annual Conference.
- (b) The member unit shall forward to the UNSM Office a certified list of delegates before the meeting at which voting will take place.
- (c) On registration for the Annual Conference, delegates who are eligible to vote shall receive a voting card.
- (d) Voting cards are not transferable, and, if lost, no replacement will be issued.
- (e) All questions arising from any meeting of the members shall be decided by a majority of the votes cast. In the event of a tied vote, the motion is defeated.

7.1. Voting at UNSM Meetings including the Annual Conference and Special Meetings

- a) When the question on any motion is called for, the Chair shall first ask those delegates voting in the affirmative to display their voting cards prominently and then ask those delegates voting in the negative to do so. The Chair shall declare the result. If the Chair is in doubt as to the result, the Chair may call for a standing vote asking those voting in the affirmative to stand and be counted and then those voting in the negative to stand and be counted and then sit down. The Chair shall then declare the result of the vote.
- b) The Chair shall immediately call for a standing vote if any voting delegate calls for a standing vote before the Chair calls for delegates to vote by a show of hand/badges.
- c) When a majority of the voting delegates present so require, the vote shall be by ballot and the Chair shall appoint sufficient delegates to act as scrutineers.
- d) Unless otherwise provided for or required, a majority vote of voting delegates present shall determine all questions.

7.2. Voting at Caucus Meetings

- a) Voting at caucus meetings shall be by voting delegates only, and may be conducted by a show of hands or by ballot as determined by the meeting.
- b) Caucuses may adopt their own rules of procedure in the manner set out in Article 3.7(c) of the Bylaws.
- c) If a caucus does not adopt procedural rules, voting at all caucus meetings will be by voting delegates selected by the procedures set out in Section 8 of this policy.
- d) Each caucus shall hold an annual meeting at the UNSM Annual Conference following the election of President and Vice-President.
- e) Voting delegates may vote at the caucus meeting which pertains to the classification of municipality which they represent.

8. Rules of Procedure

- a) The following procedural rules shall apply to all meetings of the UNSM. These rules may be suspended by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present and voting at a meeting.
- b) Unless a voting delegate is personally interested in the result or is excused for voting by the Chair, each voting delegate present when a motion is put, including the Chair, shall vote on that motion.
- c) Only delegates and non-voting municipal representatives at the Annual Conference may address the Annual Conference without the permission of the Conference.
- d) When a decision on any question is demanded by the Chair, he/she shall first ask those voting delegates voting in the affirmative to display their voting badges prominently and then ask those voting delegates voting in the negative to do so and the Chair shall then declare the result. If the Chair is in doubt as to the result, the Chair may call for a standing vote by asking the voting delegates voting in the affirmative to rise and display their voting badges prominently and be counted and then sit down and then asking the voting delegates voting in the negative to rise and display their voting badges prominently and be counted and then sit down and the Chair shall then declare the result. The Chair shall call for a standing vote if any voting delegate calls for a standing vote before the Chair calls for the delegates to vote by displaying their badges.
- e) When a majority of the voting delegates present so require, the vote shall be by ballot and the Chair shall appoint two (2) or more delegates to act as scrutineers.

- f) Unless otherwise provided, a majority vote of voting delegates present shall determine all questions arising in the meeting.

9. Motions

Only voting delegates may move and second motions.

9.1 Substantive Motions

All substantive motions shall be moved, seconded, read aloud by the Chair before being debated and opened for debate after being read.

9.2 Money Matters

Every motion involving the expenditure of UNSM funds shall require one (1) day's notice in writing.

9.3 Endorsing Documents

When a report, bylaw, petition or other document is read to the meeting, the Chair will endorse upon it a note of the reading, the date, and the manner in which it was disposed of.

9.4 Suspending Rules

The meeting, by two-thirds (2/3) vote in any session, may suspend any rule of order provided in this policy.

10. Petitions and Correspondence

- a) Every petition or written application made at the meeting shall be legibly written or printed and shall be signed by every person required to sign.
- b) When a person presents a petition to the meeting, he or she shall acquaint the meeting with its contents and ask permission of the meeting for it to be read.
- c) Every petition or written application presented to the meeting shall have endorsed upon it the name of one or more of the petitioners or applicants and the substance of the matter contained in it.
- d) The meeting may resolve to hear the endorsement on a petition or written application in lieu of hearing read the petition or written application.

11. Date of Approval - Approved on November 6, 2014