

Review of Robert's Rules of Order RCOC Self Determination Advisory Committee

When SB468 created California's Self Determination Program in 2013, each regional center was required, by law, to establish a Self Determination Local Advisory Committee which would be made up of consumers, family members, the regional center's consumer advocate, and other advocates and community leaders who reflect the area's diversity. Meetings are expected to be open to the public and follow rules established by the Bagley-Keene Act, ensuring that members of the public are given at least a 10 day notice of an upcoming meeting and are able to provide input throughout meetings. Additionally RCOC makes meeting notices and minutes available on their website and created an online space for the public to submit comments and suggestions. The purpose of these committee meetings is to inform the public of information pertaining to the Self Determination Program.

RCOC's Self Determination Local Advisory Committee began meeting in June of 2015, and during the first meeting adopted the code of conduct commonly known as Robert's Rules of Order. The purpose of Robert's Rules is to establish a fixed order of business, define how motions can be brought forth and adopted, and to ensure that committee business can be completed in a democratic way. Robert's Rules also ensure that every member of the committee plays an equal role with the right and obligation to express their own opinions.

MAKING MOTIONS - Motions can be presented by committee members in the following order:

- 1) Committee member obtains the floor by waiting for the board chair person to call on them;
- 2) Committee member states "I move that we..."
- 3) Another committee member seconds that motion by saying, "I second the motion".
- 4) The chairperson restates the motion after which the committee members discuss the motion prior to taking a vote

DISCUSSION –Discussions around a motion should center on how the motion allows members of the group to meet their responsibility as members of the Self Determination Advisory Committee.

DISCUSSIONS THAT NEVER SEEM TO END - If a motion is being discussed and a fellow committee member feels that the discussion has gone on too long they may request that a vote take place in the following way:

- 1) Committee member may say, "I call for the question";
- 2) Another committee member must second the call for the question;
- 3) The chair will recognize the call, and the committee will be asked to vote on whether it is appropriate to end the discussion and vote on the motion as is;
- 4) For the discussion to end, 2/3 of the members must agree to move on to the vote;
- 5) The motion will be restated by the chair and committee members will be asked to vote on the motion;
- 6) The motion passes only if a majority of committee members are in favor, otherwise the motion fails. If a motion fails discussion may continue.

VOTING ON A MOTION – After a discussion, the following will occur:

- 1) The chair will restate the motion;
- 2) The chair will ask members to vote by stating “do you agree that…” or “do you disagree that…”
- 3) The committee votes;
- 4) The motion passes only if more than ½ the committee members vote for it;
- 5) The chair states whether the motion passed or failed.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FOLLOWING THE AGENDA - Robert’s Rules establish that each meeting must have a pre-determined agenda detailing the topics that will be discussed and voted on during a meeting. The committee chair is responsible for ensuring that the agenda is followed while each committee member is expected to be an active participant in reviewing and voting on all agenda items. Some agenda items are informative such as reviewing minutes and providing updates on committee reports. Some agenda items can be informally agreed upon through consensus (when everyone agrees without voting), while other items require a formal vote via the proposal of a motion.

WHEN TO MOVE ON TO THE NEXT AGENDA ITEM - It is essential that members and attendees of the meeting follow the agenda, and it is the responsibility of both the chairperson and fellow committee members to ensure this. If the chair or a committee member feels that a fellow committee member or a member of the public is moving off topic, talking about things other than what is being discussed or is not following Robert’s Rules of Conduct they have an obligation to request that the meeting return to its pre-established agenda. Committee members or the chair can do this in any of the following ways:

- 1) A Committee member can say, “Call for the question,” which will stop all discussion and allow the committee to vote.
- 2) A Committee member may request a “point of order” after which the chair will allow them to state their concern and the motion can be seconded. If the chair person does not agree with the point of order brought forth, then the original committee member and the person who seconded the motion can “appeal” the chair’s decision. Members of the committee will then be asked to vote in agreement or in disagreement with the chair’s decision.
- 3) The chair may call the meeting to order and the meeting will return to the last item on the agenda.
- 4) The chair may call to adjourn the meeting if the meeting continues to be disrupted and it is evident that the committee will no longer be able to conduct their pre-scheduled business.

While the committee welcomes comments from the public, those commenting are expected to show respect toward volunteer committee members and courtesy toward the efforts of the committee to conduct business as intended by law.