

PTA Voting Guidelines

General Rules for Voting at a General Membership Meeting

- Refer to your bylaws for specifications for the vote you are planning whether it be election of officers or your nominating committee or for voting on an important motion.
- Individuals may join a PTA on the day of an election or vote, prior to the meeting being called to order, as prescribed in the unit's bylaws.
- PTAs are not permitted to allow proxy voting.
- You must have a quorum to conduct a vote. Check your bylaws for your unit's quorum.
- The President is always permitted to vote when the vote is by ballot.

Special Rules for Election Voting (Officers or Nominating Committee)

- If the current President of a unit or council is a nominee for a second term (if the bylaws permit), the President is still the Chair and conducts the election.
- If only one person is nominated for a position, a voice vote is permitted if the bylaws provide for it.
- If more than one person is nominated for a position, a ballot vote is required.
- It is permissible to use a voice vote and ballot vote in one election. Use a voice vote for uncontested offices and a ballot vote for those that have two or more nominees.
- The President may conduct one voice vote for all non-contested positions, if unanimous consent is given or the Chair may hold a voice vote for each individual position.
- In a contested election, each candidate (the nominee nominated by the Nominating Committee and the nominee(s) nominated from the floor) should be permitted to give a speech, but the speech should be limited to not more than ten (10) minutes.
- When the ballots are counted by the tellers, each candidate may designate a person to be present during the counting, just as an observer with no tallying or speaking privileges.

Script for Conducting a Voice Vote

President: When there is one candidate nominated for each office (or in case of nominating committee – position on the committee), according to our bylaws, the ballot may be dispensed with and the election may be held by voice. I would like to vote on the entire non-contested slate of candidates by casting one voice vote for all candidates. Are there any objections to this procedure? (Pause) Since there are no objections, all those in favor of electing the candidates as presented (name all candidates) please say "aye". All those opposed, please say "no".

Note: In a non-contested election, no one is permitted to vote no according to Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, 11th Edition, Page 431, lines 4-16, but you still call for the no's. If one person objects to the voice vote being taken for all candidates at one time, the President repeats the script above for each position on the Committee.

The ayes have it and you have elected the following to the _____ (board or nominating committee). (read names)

Rules for a Ballot Vote

- The membership list must be available for verification of a person's eligibility to vote.
- No one may vote unless they are a dues paying member.
- Anyone may join the evening of the vote and be eligible to vote if they joined before the meeting was called to order (as prescribed in the unit bylaws).
- Ballots must all be the same color and size. In the case of a contested election, you may use preprinted ballots.
- Ballots must be given to only those eligible to vote that are present at the time the voting is taking place.
- Ballots are counted before they are distributed because the number of eligible votes has already been determined by the Secretary and verified by the President.
- The President appoints three (3) to five (5) members to serve as tellers. The President should also designate one of those tellers to serve as the head teller. In the case of an election, no teller shall be anyone nominated. The tellers have the ballot box in view at all times and are the individuals responsible for counting the ballots after everyone has cast them.
- The President is always eligible to vote when the vote is by ballot.
- The President explains to the members how to fill out the ballot. In the case of an election, the names of the candidates should be written so all can see, either on a black board or a flip chart.
- In the case of an election, the name of the individual nominated by the Nominating Committee is listed first and then the nominee(s) from the floor are listed in the order they were nominated.
- No one shall touch the ballot other than the voter.
- The voting member folds their ballot one time and then places their ballot in the ballot box.
- The ballot box should be placed on a table in the front of the room and always guarded by a teller.
- The President must ask if all who wanted to cast a ballot that was eligible to do so has had enough time to vote and then announce that the polls are closed.

- The tellers take the ballot box to a quiet or separate area to count.
- During the counting of the ballots, one of the tellers should read each ballot out loud while two other tellers record the votes on their tally sheet. To be absolutely sure of the votes cast, this process should be repeated once.
- The majority wins the motion or election. A majority is more than half of the votes cast. (Example: 46 votes were cast. One half of 46 is 23 and the majority is 24. If the number of votes cast was 45, the majority is 23.)
- All tellers should sign the final tally sheet presented to the President.
- The head teller, as designated by the President, brings the tally sheet to the President and the President announces the result.
- The Secretary shall provide an envelope for all ballots and the tally sheets to be placed in after the election results have been announced by the President. After completion of an election or balloting on a motion, unless the voting body directs otherwise, the tellers place the ballots and tally sheets in the custody of the secretary, who keeps them sealed until the time within which a recount may be ordered expires and then destroys them. A recount may be ordered by the voting body, by a majority vote, at the same session at which the voting result was announced, or at the next regular session if that session is held within a quarterly time interval. A recount may also be ordered as a special session properly called for that purpose, if held within a quarterly time interval of the session at which the voting result was announced and before the next regular session. (RONR, 11th Edition, pages 418-419).

Script for appointing a Tellers' Committee

The President should appoint three to five members and designate one of them to be the head teller.

President: Since we are going to be voting by ballot, I will appoint a Tellers' Committee. The chair appoints 1. _____, 2. _____, and 3. _____ to serve on the Tellers' Committee, and _____ will serve as the head teller.

Give them the Tellers' Committee Instructions to review prior to tallying the votes. If you have determined that you will be having a ballot vote prior to the meeting, you can give the Tellers' Committee their instructions ahead of time. You still have to appoint them at the meeting, though.

Script for Conducting a Ballot Vote

President: We have a quorum and have determined that there are _____ voting members present. Will the tellers please distribute the ballots?

The names of the candidates for the position of _____ are _____ and _____. Using the ballot provided, write your choice(s) for election, then fold your ballot once and place it in the ballot box. (adjust script as required for multiple positions or if using a pre-printed ballot).

After allowing sufficient time to vote then:

President: Have all voted who wish to vote? Will the tellers please collect the ballots and tally them?

Other business may be conducted while the ballots are being tallied.

Script for Announcing the Ballot Vote Results

President: Is the Tellers' Report ready to be presented?

The head teller reads the report to the membership, but does not declare anyone elected.

President: "The Chair declares (name of person) _____ received a majority vote and has been elected as _____." (adjust script as required for multiple positions).

The report is entered into the Minutes and becomes official.

After the Election

Induction of officers for most units occurs at the Council luncheon in May. Refer to your bylaws regarding when newly elected officers take office or any other transitional procedures that your unit may follow.