

ST 05/2020

JP/AV

August 2020

AGM NOTES ON AMENDMENTS, COMPOSITING AND BALLOTTING FOR ORDER OF DEBATE OF MOTIONS

1. AMENDMENTS

- A)** Decisions about what constitutes a proper amendment depend upon the Chair's ruling. Prior to the deadline for receipt of amendments, the Napo Chair/Co Chairs can offer to the proposers an early indication of an intended ruling on any amendment deemed to be improper. The following principles apply in helping to determine a proper amendment. An Amendment:
 - i) must be relevant to the original motion;
 - ii) must retain some of the original wording;
 - iii) must not represent a direct negative to the original motion nor subvert the main purpose of it.
- B)** Once formulated, the process to deal with the amendment is not complicated but the following points should be noted:
 - i) Responsibility lies with the proposer of the amendment to discuss with the proposer of the motion whether or not the amendment is acceptable.
 - ii) That discussion should be done before the start of the AGM and the Steering Committee informed of the outcome as soon as possible.
 - iii) If an amendment is acceptable to the proposer of the motion, the AGM must give final agreement. The movers of the amendment should, therefore, remain and be prepared to speak to AGM if necessary.
 - iv) If an amendment is being proposed to a motion which may be composited, the movers of the amendment will be included in any discussions on compositing.

2. COMPOSITING

- A)** Standing Orders allow for the compositing of motions, emergency motions and/or amendments. This process can attract significant advantages for the following reasons.
 - i) Limited time for debate at AGM places constraints on the number of motions which can be called.

- ii) An issue may attract a number of motions, each addressing the issue in varying ways. The ballot on motions may not show a clear preference for any one of them. If a composite can be agreed then votes cast in the ballot will be aggregated.
 - iii) If the first motion of a series of motions on the same topic is passed, then it is possible that the remainder would fall as, under Standing Orders, they would be seen to be seeking to amend the first decision.
 - iv) Complicated debate could arise if members felt obliged to oppose motions because they had a preference for an alternative motion on the same issue.
- B) The rules for reaching an acceptable composite are as follows:
- i) An element of each of the original motions and amendment(s) must be incorporated into the proposed composite.
 - ii) Elements of the original motions and amendment(s) may be omitted from the proposed composite.
- BUT**
- iii) NO new material may be introduced into the proposed composite. The definition of 'new' includes any attempt to 'update' motions via compositing.
- C) Compositing may often appear more difficult than it is because although a broad agreement may be apparent, original motions may contain significant differences in degree or intent. In such cases it would be proper to formulate the main body of a proposed composite and then put the disputed element(s) in the form of an amendment or amendments. The whole package can then be dealt with by AGM, following the normal rules of debate.
- D) Any motion may be withdrawn in favour of either a single motion or an agreed composite. Responsibility then lies with the proposers/seconders concerned to decide who will propose and second the motion to AGM. The Steering Committee must be informed of all such decisions.
- E) The process of compositing needs to begin as soon as AGM motions are published, the aim being to reach a conclusion before AGM. The Steering Committee will take an active and enabling role in this process. Branches and individuals must ensure that they identify two people, with authority to make decisions, and who are available **between 17 August – 7 September 2020.**
- Once a composite has been agreed, it should be forwarded immediately to the Steering Committee, clearly showing the proposer and seconder.
- F) The deadline for finalising composites: **12 noon on Monday 7 September 2020.**

3. BALLOT FOR THE ORDER OF DEBATE

- a) A ballot form will be made available to all members.
- b) **ALL** members are encouraged to vote.
- c) The ballot results will be published and available at AGM.
- d) The final order of debate will be published and made available at AGM as soon as all possible compositing is complete.

4. ORDER OF DEBATE

Each Committee will have one motion debated in turn until all Committees have had their highest voted or sole motion debated. Thereafter the remaining motions will be debated in descending order as determined by the ballot.

5. MOTIONS, AMENDMENTS AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Where two individual members, branches or Committees have submitted a motion, amendment or a constitutional amendment for debate, the proposers and seconds are required to be present at the time of their motion/amendment/constitutional amendment being called to propose and second, unless in exceptional circumstances the AGM decides otherwise.

Copies of all proposing speeches, where possible, should be handed to the Steering Committee table after delivery. Once any substantive motion is passed, the copies will be forwarded to the relevant Committee to assist in implementation of policy.