

Alabama/NW Florida Area 01 Assembly

Floor Procedure Guidelines

The 2003-2004 A.A. SERVICE MANUAL states: "Uniform practices throughout the Fellowship are in no way obligatory, or even practical in many cases. It is important for the area to agree upon a set of procedures, and each individual assembly is the best judge of whom it will seat.

WHAT ARE THESE GUIDELINES SUPPOSED TO DO?

This material was compiled by A.A. members of the Alabama/NW Florida Area (01) assembly and is intended as a guide to conducting business on the floor of the assembly.

WHO ARE VOTING ASSEMBLY MEMBERS

The Area G.S.R.'s and the area committee members consisting of the D.C.M.'s, Area Chairperson, Secretary, Registrar, Treasurer, Delegate, Alternate Delegate, and Chairpersons of the: Finance, C.P.C, P.I., Archives, Treatment, Grapevine, Convention, Literature, Stucture & Proceedings and Corrections sub-committees are voting members of the Alabama/NW Florida Area Assembly. Alternates attending in place of an absent member are also voting members. All voting members must sign in by 9:00 am Sunday morning.

WHO HAS A VOICE AT THE ASSEMBLY

All voting members, past delegates and the Intergroup Central Office liaison committee Chairperson, Chairpersons of Ad Hoc committees and anyone requested by Area Chairperson to speak.

PLACING MOTIONS ON THE FLOOR

All motions should be submitted to the appropriate committee in writing by any voting member of the assembly. The respective committee must bring that motion to the floor with or without recommendation. Any voting member may place a motion directly on the floor, providing a written copy to the chair.

SECONDS TO MOTIONS

Any voting member of the assembly may second a motion by rising and saying "SECOND." A second does not mean the member supports the

motion, just that the member wants it to be considered and discussed. A committee recommended motion requires no second.

WITHDRAW AND AMENDMENTS TO MOTIONS

Permission to withdraw a motion may be requested by the sponsoring member. Amendments may be requested by any voting member (requires second). The Chairperson will then seek to obtain general consent of the assembly and, if obtained, announce the motion has been withdrawn or amended.

DEBATE AND DECORUM

When a motion is made, restated by the Chairperson and seconded debate can commence. Any assembly member wishing to speak in debate must come to the microphone and wait until no other member is speaking. Comments are limited to two-minutes, timed by the Chairperson. No member shall speak to the same motion more than twice in the same day and may not speak a second time until all other members have an opportunity to speak. In debate, a member must confine comments to the question immediately before the assembly and avoid references to personalities, remembering that it is the motion, not the person that is the subject of the debate. If the Chairperson is required to state a point of order or otherwise speak within the privileges of the Chairperson, then the member speaking will defer to the Chairperson. Such an interruption will not count toward the member's time to speak.

CALL THE QUESTION

A motion to close debate is commonly referred to as "CALL THE QUESTION." This motion can be used ONLY to close debate, NOT to prohibit debate, and is considered "out of order" if made before debate has begun. The call the question motion requires a second, is not debatable, and requires a two-thirds vote. This motion yields to the motion to "LAY ON THE TABLE."

LAY ON THE TABLE

A motion to LAY ON THE TABLE is to remove the motion from consideration until next assembly. It requires a second, is undebatable, unamendable, and requires a majority vote. A motion to lay on the table may be made at any time prior to the vote on the motion. The tabled motion may be considered at the next assembly, by a voting member of the assembly making a motion to, "take the table motion from the table." Such a motion requires a second, is undebatable, unamendable, and requires majority vote. If a motion is not taken from the table at the next assembly it expires upon adjournment of that assembly.

POINT OF ORDER

A point of order is an assertion that a procedure is being violated and a request that the Chairperson enforce the procedure. It takes precedence over any pending motion. It is in order when another has the floor, even if it is necessary to interrupt a speaker. It does not require a second and is not debatable or amendable. It is decided by the Chairperson, subject to appeal. To make point of order, a voting member of the assembly rises and says "POINT OF ORDER." The Chairperson asks the member to state his point, and the member does so at the microphone, being as specific as possible without entering into debate or asking a question. The Chairperson then rules on the point of order. A voting member of the assembly announcing "I APPEAL THE DECISION OF THE CHAIRPERSON" permits an appeal of the decision of the Chairperson. If a voting member of the assembly seconds the appeal, the Chairperson defines the issue involved, explains the reasons for his decision, and says, "SHALL THE DECISION OF THE CHAIRPERSON BE SUSTAINED?" An appeal is debatable, but no member may speak more than once in debate., but the Chairperson may defend his ruling once again at the end of the debate. A simple majority vote sustains or overturns the Chairperson's decision.

VOTING- SUBSTANTIAL UNANIMITY

For the Alabama/NW Florida Area Assembly, this is two-thirds of those voting on an issue, and applies to all matters coming before the assembly unless declared as a simple matter by the Chairperson.

VOTING - SIMPLE MATTERS

On simple matters (as declared by the Chairperson), a majority vote is enough. Even a "sense of the meeting" may take the place of a vote if no vote seems essential. In such a case, the Chairperson asks: " Is it the sense of the meeting that...?" If there are no "NO's, it is apparent there is accord. Otherwise, vote counts will be taken.

VOTING - ROLL CALL PROCEDURE

Any voting member of the assembly may request a roll-call vote. In this instance the Registrar will call the roll of the members signed in. To be eligible to vote, members must be signed in by the beginning of the business meeting. The vote of each responding member will be tallied by a least two persons designated by the Chairperson.

MINORITY VOICE

After the establishment or rejection of any matter of policy by a two-thirds vote, the minority will be given an opportunity to speak. Subsequent to minority comment, the Chairperson will ask if any person voting in the majority wishes to change their vote. If so, a new vote will be taken (Concept 5). No action can be reconsidered twice during an assembly.

ELECTIONS - THIRD LEGACY PROCEDURE

This procedure, considered unique to A.A. is used to elect delegate, alternate, delegate, and area officers. Procedures are outlined in the A.A. Service Manual. elections are held in October of even years.

FLOOR NOMINATIONS

For nominations from the floor at the Alabama/NW Florida Area Assembly, the nominator will provide a brief (less than 2 minutes) service history of the person they are nominating (July 1992 assembly). Nominations must be made by a voting member of the assembly, will be in writing, and provided to the presiding Chairperson of the election assembly prior to opening of the floor for business. A member may be nominated for more than one position, and the Chairperson of the election assembly will read the nominations to the floor.

WHO MAY VOTE

Business Meeting: All voting members of the Alabama/MW Florida Area Assembly.

Structures and Procedures: Structure & Procedures members only.

Finance Committee: Finance committee members only.

DCM Committee: DCM's only

Agenda Committee: Area Committee Members.

Other Committees: Any member attending a committee meeting may vote on committee matters

(These guidelines were prepared by the 1993-1994 Alabama/NW Florida Area Assembly with original approval at the July, 1994 Assembly. They were amended at the July 14, 1996 assembly, July 12, 1998 Assembly, January 12, 2003 Assembly and again at the January 11, 2004 Assembly).