

Handout 5

Voting Methods

<p>Six possible voting methods are available to vote on motions or other business conducted in a meeting. The voting method used is determined by the type of business in question at that point in the meeting.</p>	
<p>Voice Vote</p>	<p>A vote by voice is the regular method of voting on any motion that does not require more than a majority vote for its adoption. The chair asks those in favor of the motion to say "Aye". Those who are opposed are asked to say "No." The president should not ask those who are opposed to "respond with the same sign" because it can be confusing to the members.</p>
<p>Show of Hands</p>	<p>As an alternative to voting by voice, a vote by show of hands can be used as the basic voting method in small boards or in committees, and it is used in some assemblies. An inconclusive voice vote is also sometimes verified by this method. Use of voting by show of hands in assemblies should be limited to very small meetings where every member can clearly see every other member present.</p>
<p>Simple Rising Vote</p>	<p>The simple rising vote, in which the number of members voting on each side is not counted, is used principally in cases where a voice vote has been taken with an inconclusive result and as the normal method of voting on motions requiring a two-thirds vote for adoption. The chair asks those in favor of the motion to rise and then be seated. The chair then asks those opposed to rise, and then be seated. Unless the vote is close, the chair should be able to determine at a glance whether there were more votes in the affirmative than in the negative or vice versa.</p>
<p>Counted Rising Vote</p>	<p>This method is often used on motions requiring a 2/3 vote or when an "uncounted" rising vote or show of hands is too close to call. The chair asks those in favor of the motion to rise. After counting, these members are asked to sit. The chair then asks those opposed to rise and after counting to be seated.</p>
<p>Ballot Vote</p>	<p>This method involves writing a vote on a slip of paper or prepared ballot. This is a good way to vote on controversial motions and is the prescribed method to vote for officers.</p>
<p>Unanimous Consent</p>	<p>In cases where there seems to be no opposition in routine business or on questions of little importance, time can often be saved by the procedure of unanimous consent. The method of unanimous consent can be used to adopt a motion without the steps of stating the question and putting the motion to a formal vote. To obtain unanimous consent, the chair states that "If there is no objection..., " the action that he mentions will be taken. If any member objects, the chair must state the question on the motion, allow any desired debate, and put the question in the regular manner. The correction and approval of minutes is an example of business that is normally handled by unanimous consent.</p>