

COMMITTEE “BEST PRACTICES”

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

- ❑ 5 – 7 Members (only a suggestion. Actual count determined based on the needs of the committee)
- ❑ Prioritize Diversity (i.e. gender, experience, club, region)

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

- ❑ Secretary/Note-keeper (rotating responsibility?)
 - ❑ Idea for ‘virtual secretary’ - record the meetings and then rewatch and make minutes
- ❑ Succession Planning - If it is a committee-appointed chairmanship, the committee should periodically discuss who will chair the in the future
- ❑ Committee Recruiting - Chairs and committee members should encourage friends/peers to listen in on meetings to see if they might be interested in joining in future

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- ❑ ABSOLUTELY must be OPEN (unless specifically exempted in Bylaws)
- ❑ Be Predictable - Recommend same time; same day; same week; every month or bi-month cycle
- ❑ Be Transparent - Schedule and post the agenda and materials online five days prior to meeting if at all possible

COMMITTEE AGENDA

- ❑ The Chair is responsible for getting agenda posted (see above)
 - ❑ OPTION: some committees rotate responsibility for preparing agenda. This allows each committee-member to highlight his/her priorities if they so choose
- ❑ Presentations by non-committee members should be encouraged so long as such presentations are scheduled on the agenda ahead of time, allowing committee-members time to come prepared for the topic of the presentation.

COMMITTEE CONDUCT

- ❑ Robert’s Rules of Order are to be used. This does not mean that the person presiding at the committee needs to be an expert parliamentarian, but rather that

the person presiding must take responsibility for conducting the business of the committee in a fair and effective and respectful manner.

- ❑ Members of the committee should be heard first. Although committee-members are not required to speak on every matter it is still good practice for the chair to recognize each committee member on any given topic.
- ❑ It is important to stay on point. Avoid detours into separate topics or areas subject to responsibility of other committees. If necessary, point out that such detours can be addressed at a future meeting.
- ❑ Visitors ARE allowed to attend committee meetings (unless a specific exemption exists in the bylaws). Visitors are allowed to speak (“have voice”) at committee meetings subject to the discretion of the presiding chair. That discretion must be exercised reasonably.
- ❑ Visitors must respect that the committee has a responsibility to focus on the duties of the committee as reflected in the agenda. If a visitor wishes to make a presentation to a committee then the visitor must contact the committee chair, if at all possible, ten days prior to the meeting and request to be placed on the agenda. The committee chair will work with the requestor to determine how and when the request can be addressed.
- ❑ NOTE: online and teleconference meetings can be challenging due to background noise. Participants and visitors are encouraged to use their “mute” button when they are not speaking in order to try and minimize background disruption.
- ❑ IMPORTANT: the chair or presiding member determines “who has the floor”. No member or visitor shall speak (“have the floor”) until he/she is recognized by the chair or presiding member.
- ❑ NOTE: Robert’s Rules do allow for limiting the duration and number of times that somebody may speak on a specific topic. Any such limits (e.g. 2 minutes; or total of 3 times speaking) should be announced at the time of the agenda. The chair or presiding member may exercise discretion to allow a deviation from such limits if such deviation is in the best interests of the committee.
- ❑ Committee members owe a duty of loyalty to the committee. This does not mean that members must agree with every committee action. However committee members should refrain from criticizing or undercutting committee actions outside the committee. Committee members must respect the will of the majority.

COMMITTEE RECORDS

- ❑ There must be “minutes” or some kind of notes kept of every committee meeting. Such a record is not expected to be a verbatim record, but it should reflect who

was present; who participated; the topics discussed; and any useful details that may be relevant to future discussions.

- ❑ The minutes/notes must be forwarded to MNSI for posting. Such minutes/notes should be considered open or public unless the Bylaws or the Board specify differently.
- ❑ It is recommended that the minutes/notes include some type of “TO DO” or “ACTION ITEMS” list. This serves to help the committee and the membership to anticipate future actions of the committee.
- ❑ Remember that committee minutes serve as a historical record for our organization, and every effort should be made to craft and file them.

- MNSI Governance Committee August 2020