

# GPM Rules of Procedure

## 1. INTRODUCTION

These are the procedures for use at Green Party of Manitoba meetings (conventions, annual general meetings, council meetings, committee meetings, workshops, etc.).

## 2. DEFINITIONS

- a) **Green Party of Manitoba:** Also referred to as the GPM in this document.
- b) **Chair:** Also known as the facilitator or moderator, leads meetings and recognizes the speakers. See also *Section 5. FACILITATION*.
- c) **Co-chair:** Appointed (as needed) to assist the chair and maintain the speaker's list or substitute for the chair if the chair needs to step down temporarily. See also *Section 5. FACILITATION* and *Section 6. SPEAKERS' LIST*.
- d) **Recorder:** When the GPM Secretary is not present, the recorder records the minutes of any GPM meeting. See also *Section 9. MINUTES*.
- e) **Timekeeper:** A person who keeps track of the time spent on each area of discussion so that the meeting may meet its time commitments. See also *Section 10. TIMEKEEPING*.
- f) **Voting card(s):** At a Convention, Annual General Meeting or other large gathering a set of coloured voting cards, may be used to indicate voting members' votes: a green card indicates that the motion is understood and agreed to; a yellow card indicates that more clarification or information is needed before the motion can be agreed to or rejected; a red card indicates that the motion is understood and objected to; a blue card indicates a request for a point of order; a black card indicates abstention.
- g) **Session:** Different parts of the same meeting as determined by the agenda.
- h) **Concurrent Session:** Agenda time where more than one sub-meeting, workshop, presentation, or combination thereof, is simultaneously taking place, at different locations.
- i) **Plenary:** The meeting of the whole group with no other concurrent sessions of the group taking place.
- j) **Point of Order:** A way of signaling for clarification, language translation, procedural suggestion, or additional information. See also *Section 6. POINTS OF ORDER*.
- k) **Poll:** A way to determine how a motion is being received by those present by holding a trial, non-binding vote.
- l) **Motion:** A proposed course of action, documented by the recorder, for the consideration of all present.
- m) **Amendment (or Friendly Amendment):** A modification or addition to the motion proposed by a member at the meeting. The main motion's speakers' list may be suspended and a separate speakers' list may start in order to moderate discussion on the amendment.

- n) **Deciding Vote:** The acceptance or rejection of a motion, by the voting members present, either by show of hands (at smaller meetings) or by voting cards (at Conventions or other larger meetings). See *Section 3. PROCEDURE*.

### 3. PROCEDURE

- a) **Presentation:** The chair will present or ask for the presentation of a motion, resolution, proposal, or issue to be considered.
- b) **Silence:** The chair will then ask for a moment of silence during which everyone will be asked to note any questions they have concerning the resolution, proposal, or issue just presented.
- c) **Questions and Clarifications:** To facilitate efficiency and group understanding, the chair will ask if anyone requires clarification concerning the motion, resolution, proposal, or issue just presented. If so, the presenter will then speak to these. The chair will ask everyone to listen and to strike off their own questions as they hear their questions answered. The resolution or proposal may not be amended at this time.
- d) **Discussion/Amendments:** The chair opens the floor to discussion and/or amendments, sets or confirms a time limit, and monitors the meeting for possible solutions and/or agreement. Where it is not obvious that a majority of members present either agree or do not agree with a proposed amendment, the chair will poll the meeting for clarification.
- e) **Testing for Agreement:** If a decision is to be made and if there appears to be general agreement with a motion or motion as amended, or there is no further discussion, the chair will ask the recorder to read back the motion or item proposed and test for agreement by asking if anyone is strongly opposed to the motion. Agreement should not be interpreted to mean unanimity, only that all members can accept the particular motion.
- f) **Noting Objections:** If any member has a strong objection to the motion, they may signify verbally and/or by raising their red voting card when the test for agreement is made. In doing so, the person objecting should be prepared to state the reason for the objection including the basic GPM value that is at issue.
- g) **For Informal Settings:** In smaller meetings, where there is objection to the proposed agreement;
- 1) One at a time, the chair will have the meeting briefly hear from each member who objected to the motion.
  - 2) For each objection, the chair shall ask for discussion or amendments to address the objecting members' concerns. If there is agreement on any amendments, those amendments will be added to the motion currently under consideration.
  - 3) When all objections have been heard, the chair shall re-test for agreement.
- h) If agreement cannot be reached, the chair will poll the meeting to determine if:
- 1) the motion should be tabled (and therefore be off the agenda for the rest of this meeting),
  - 2) the motion should be returned to its sponsors for more work (where an improved version may be reintroduced at the meeting if there is time or reintroduced at a subsequent meeting),
  - 3) the meeting shall proceed to a deciding vote on the motion.
- i) **Voting Cards:** If a deciding vote on a motion is to occur, a vote by show of hands (at smaller meetings) or voting cards (at Conventions, Annual General Meetings, or special meetings called of

the general membership), will be conducted. The various categories of votes (see also Section 2. Definitions, Voting Cards) will be counted separately and recorded in the minutes. A motion passes if more than 60% of the voting members present vote in favour of the motion. Amendments to the Constitution shall be adopted if more than 75% of the votes cast are in favour.

#### **4. VOTING RIGHTS**

- a) Only members who have been members of the Party for the previous 30 days before a meeting shall be eligible to vote or count in quorum. Any member eligible to vote may make, withdraw or move to amend any motion. In the case of any dispute over a member's eligibility to vote, the members at the General Meeting may decide for that meeting only.
- b) Any person who does not meet the criteria of a "member" above, cannot vote or otherwise prevent agreement from being expressed toward a motion.
- c) The chair and co-chair cannot prevent agreement and cannot vote except in the event of a tie.

#### **5. FACILITATION**

- a) Every meeting will have a chair and, as needed, a co-chair.
- b) The chair is primarily responsible for:
  - 1) Interpreting these rules of order.
  - 2) Managing the meeting in a way that is consistent with these rules of order and responsive to the members in attendance.
- c) The co-chair is primarily responsible for:
  - 1) Assisting the-chair in managing the meeting.
  - 2) Keeping the speakers' list.
- d) The chair(s) are responsible for keeping the meeting focused on one issue at a time and may recommend to the meeting the division of items for specific discussion or decision.
- e) The chair(s) may recommend to the meeting the appointment of "helpers" to help either the chair or co-chair in maintaining the speakers list, displaying the wording of proposals before the meeting, maintaining the agenda, allotted times, priorities, etc., thus freeing up either the-chair or co-chair to focus more on other aspects of conducting the meeting.
- f) Any person may request the chair to test for agreement. The-chair will poll the meeting if it is not obvious that the meeting is ready for the test for agreement.
- g) The-chairs may not prevent agreement or vote.
- h) If any one of the two chairs wishes to participate actively in a discussion, object to a proposed agreement, or temporarily leave the meeting, the chair or co-chair must give up facilitation to the other chair who then may select from the meeting a stand-in co-chair for the duration of the discussion at hand. Any "step asides" of facilitation will be in effect until the matter under discussion is resolved. Following this, the original chair may regain their facilitation duties.

#### **6. SPEAKERS' LIST**

- a) Anyone may be placed on the speakers' list by signaling their intention to the chair, co-chair, or appointee maintaining the speakers' list. The meeting may decide to put non-members onto the speaker's list.
- b) The main motion's speakers' list may be suspended and a separate speakers' list may start in order to moderate discussion on an amendment. When the amendment is either carried or cancelled, the amendment's speakers' list is also cancelled and the next person on the main motion's speakers' list is granted leave to speak.
- c) The chair or co-chair has the responsibility to maintain a balance of perspectives.
- d) The chair(s) may recommend to the meeting to "close the speakers' list" and hear from only those already on the speakers' list in order to meet allotted time commitments or to proceed quicker if it is felt agreement is at hand.
- e) The speakers' list is cleared if the motion is agreed to, tabled, returned to its sponsors for more work, passed or rejected by a vote, or the agenda item ends.

## **7. POINTS OF ORDER**

- a) Any member of the meeting may signal the chair on a:
  - 1) Point of Clarification: if a procedure is not understood or a violation of these rules is believed to have taken place. In doing so, the section of these rules at issue must be identified at the outset. The chair may call for contrary views or rule on the point.
  - 2) Point of Order: a procedural suggestion that will aid or improve the facilitation of the discussion at hand.
  - 3) Point of Information (the facilitator or recorder may also request it)
    - i) when there is some item of information that is necessary for the discussion; or
    - ii) when there is an item in discussion which must be accurately recorded in the minutes.
  - 4) Point of Translation: when the meeting is being conducted in more than one language, and translation is needed.

## **8. CHALLENGING THE FACILITATION OR CONDUCT OF OTHERS**

- a) A member of the meeting, other than the chair, may challenge the facilitation or challenge the conduct of another person in the meeting if it is felt that:
  - 1) the chair has not made a fair and accurate ruling;
  - 2) a person is misrepresenting the rules for preventing a decision;
  - 3) a person is being obstructionist; or
  - 4) some other serious violation has taken place.
- b) Upon any such challenge listed in step (a), and for the duration of the challenge, the meeting closes to any further business. If it is the facilitation that is being challenged, the chair must immediately give up facilitation of the meeting to the co-chair, who in turn may ask for the appointment of a temporary co-chair .

## **9. MINUTES**

- a) When the GPM Secretary is not present, each meeting will have at least one person designated as a recorder to record the minutes of the meeting. For large, teleconference, or upon request of the members present at a meeting, electronic recording of the meeting will take place. The meeting minutes shall include (at a minimum):
  - 1) The title and purpose of the meeting;
  - 2) The date, time, and place the meeting is convened and adjourned;
  - 3) The names of all persons in attendance.
  - 4) The membership/voting status for all persons in attendance at Conventions and Annual General Meetings.
  - 5) The names of the chair, recorder(s), and timekeeper(s).
  - 6) Agenda items or discussion topic headings, the approved wording of any motions, and the context or rationale for a particular decision.
  - 7) Relevant attachments.
- b) The recorder shall ensure that completed minutes are forwarded to the party or meeting secretary for formatting, filing and distribution. The party or meeting secretary shall ensure that completed minutes are received from the recorders of each session.
- c) The recorder shall be permitted to participate actively in the meeting to the extent that her/his voting or membership status allows.

## **10. TIMEKEEPING**

- a) Each meeting will have a person designated as the timekeeper to keep track of time spent on agenda items.
- b) The timekeeper can notify the chair when: allotted time is close to running out; or allotted time has run out.
- c) The timekeeper shall be permitted to participate actively in the meeting to the extent to which her/his voting or membership status allows.

## **11. PROCEDURAL ITEMS NOT COVERED BY THESE PROCEDURES**

The chair has the authority / responsibility to address procedural items that might arise that are not already covered by these Rules of Procedure.