AUGUST 16, 2025/NOVEMBER 15, 2025

Discussion and Voting at AWSC and Assembly Meetings Using KDBM

Presented by SCWS Chairperson and Delegate

TODAY'S TOPICS

- Why we use Knowledge-Based Decision-Making (KBDM)
- How topics are brought to Committee or Assembly Meeting
- What happens prior to Meeting
- Questions first and then opinions
- Dialogue before deliberation
- What happens after discussion?
  1. Need more information or more discussion
  2. Ready to make a decision and vote

Why Use Knowledge-Based Decision-Making (KBDM)

"By being part of an informed group conscience, gathering the information we need, letting our loving God guide us, and remaining trusted servants, we are all part of the group and support its decisions."

Paths To Recovery, p. 145

HOW BROUGHT TO COMMITTEE AND/OR ASSEMBLY MEETING

- Online Suggestion Form Completed by AWSC Members
- Recommendation by a formed Thought Force/Task Force/Work Group
- Recommendation from Ongoing Committee such as the Finance Committee or Alateen Resolution Committee

PRIOR TO PRESENTING, THE FORMED GROUP:

- Defines the issue
- Researches the issue
- Gathers information
- Answers the KBDM questions
- Develops a presentation

CONTENT OF DISCUSSION: QUESTIONS FIRST, THEN COMMENTS

- Questions should elicit new information about the topic and do not contain personal opinions or comments.
- Questions begin with *who, what, where, when, why*, and *how.*
- Refer to KBDM questions to ensure that they have been asked and answered.

PROCESS OF DISCUSSION: QUESTIONS FIRST, THEN COMMENTS

- Speak one to two minutes and 1 time for each discussion topic.
- Members who wish to speak, raise their Zoom hand or line up at the microphone.
- State your name and position.
- When the timer rings or signals, member finishes their sentence and step downs.
- Do not come to the microphone if your opinion has already been stated. Important to add additional facts, other pertinent ideas, or a minority opinion.
- Out of respect for those holding differing viewpoints, refrain from applause or other reaction when a member expresses an opinion with which you agree or disagree.

DIALOGUE BEFORE DELIBERATION

In consideration of the KBDM process for reaching an informed group conscience, *dialogue before deliberation* requires full discussion of the idea before a motion is presented.

AFTER DISCUSSION

1. More information or discussion needed
2. Move to accept original or amended motion
3. No motion and no further action needed

THIRD WARRANTY

"That all decisions be reached by discussion, vote and whenever possible by unanimity;

Here, on the one hand, we erect a safeguard against any hasty or overbearing authority of a simple majority; and on the other hand, take notice of the rights and the frequent wisdom of minorities, however small. This principle further guarantees that all matters of importance will be extensively debated, until a substantial majority can support every critical decision we are called upon to make in the Conference."

2022-2025 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, pp. 220-221

VOTING

- Before we vote, we'll define whether we need substantial unanimity or a simple majority on the issue.
- We use a simple majority vote on simple procedural matters, such as, approving Minutes, asking whether we're ready to vote, etc.
- We use the two-thirds substantial unanimity standard for *policies*, such as approving the ASBRs, new Coordinator positions, finances, etc.
- Abstentions are not counted toward the vote total.
- Members should consider all information presented, questions asked and answered, and opinions expressed when voting.
- All members of the AWSC have voice and vote at Committee Meetings. Guests and GRs do not have voice or vote at Committee Meetings.
- All members of the AWSC and GRs have voice at Assembly Meetings. Only GRs have vote at Assembly Meetings. Guests do not have voice or vote.

DECISION-MAKING

"In order to make an informed group conscience decision, members need access to all the information about the issue they are being asked to discuss, they need clarity on what their discussions hope to accomplish, and they are asked to trust each other's motives and capabilities. By sharing information as equals, taking time for discussion, and maintaining principles above personalities during the discussions, groups are often able to reach unanimity in their decisions. If unanimity is not reached in the allotted timeframe of the meeting, discussions may continue at another time. Once a group conscience decision is made, the entire group supports the decision."

2022-2025 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, p. 49

LINKS TO OTHER RESOURCES

- KBDM Background and Rationale
- KBDM Quick Reference Tool
- How is KBDM Different from Robert's Rules

Questions