

BOWLS TASMANIA SOUTH

PROCEDURES AND PROTOCOLS FOR DELEGATES' MEETINGS

PREAMBLE:

The Southern Tasmanian Bowls Association Inc, trading as Bowls Tasmania South, exists because a group of bowls clubs, with common interest and proximity of location, decided that it was necessary to formalise their relationship through the creation of the Association. Therefore, the Association exists for the benefit of its member clubs (Rule 5 of BTS Constitution), which also infers mutual obligations.

Rule 25 of the BTS Constitution provides instructions in regard to the holding of General Meetings of the Association, at which each member club is entitled to be represented by two delegates (the clubs' President and Secretary [or their nominee] – Rule 19).

All of the above would imply that General Meetings of the Association (aka "Delegates" meetings) should be conducted in a structured, formal manner, rather than being an ad hoc "talk fest".

It is in the interests of good governance of the Association that formal meeting procedures be adopted for General Meetings of the Association, to ensure that decisions of high quality, and acceptable to the majority of member clubs, are achieved, so that the BTS Board of Management has clear instructions in regard to decisions it will make that will have a direct impact on member clubs.

The Association has made changes to its constitution, recently, to engage more directly with the board of management of each of its member clubs, by designating presidents and secretaries as the official club delegates. This, in itself, requires a more structured approach to the way in which General Meetings are conducted. Furthermore, with the potential of 56 delegates attending each General Meeting of the Association, representing the 28 member clubs, there is a very strong argument for there being a formal structure put in place to ensure that each General Meeting of the Association is conducted in an orderly and timely manner.

FORMAL MEETING STRUCTURE:

1. **AGENDA:** the BTS Secretary, with input from the BTS Board, has primary responsibility for the formation and distribution of the agenda for each General Meeting of the Association. Items for inclusion on the agenda of each General Meeting of the Association may be generated by either the BTS Board, or the board of management of a member club. Items proposed for inclusion on the agenda should reach the BTS Secretary no later than twenty one days prior to the proposed date of the meeting. The BTS Secretary will ensure that the distribution of the agenda for each General Meeting of the Association will occur in timely manner, at least fourteen days prior to the proposed meeting, to enable the board of management of each member club an opportunity to make decisions as to how it will instruct its delegates to interact at the meeting on each item on the agenda.
2. **ELIGIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN GENERAL MEETINGS OF THE ASSOCIATION:** General Meetings of the Association are open meetings of which all players, registered with the Association may attend, but only the two delegates of each member club may speak on matters being discussed during meetings, and to cast a vote when a division is called by the Chair of the meeting. Club delegates will register their status with the BTS Secretary at the meeting venue prior to commencement, and will be issued with a card (or similar) to confirm their status. Other attendees, not being delegates of their club, will have **observer status** only, and will not be permitted to speak on any matter (unless given permission by the Chair of the meeting) and will not have any voting rights.

- 3. PUTTING PROPOSALS TO THE MEETING FOR CONSIDERATION BY MEETING DELEGATES:** each matter for decision by the delegates at General Meetings of the Association should be put as a motion, moved by a registered delegate to the meeting. Each proposal for consideration by the delegates must be seconded by another registered delegate before discussions may begin. It is not necessary for the seconder of a motion to be supportive of the proposal, but may second the proposal to allow the mover of the motion the opportunity to explain, more fully, the reasons for putting the proposal. The proposal, once seconded, will be accepted by the Chair of the meeting.
- 4. OPENING THE DEBATE ON A PROPOSAL ACCEPTED BY THE CHAIR OF THE GENERAL MEETING:** after a motion has been accepted by the Chair of the meeting, the Chair will invite the proposer (i.e. the mover of the motion) to speak to his/her motion, providing the other registered delegates with all of the reasons for putting the proposal to the meeting. It is important that the mover of the motion takes full advantage of this opportunity as it will not be possible to introduce any new information when he/she is invited to make closing remarks before the Chair puts the proposal to the meeting for a decision. The seconder of the motion will then be offered an opportunity to put further reasons for supporting the proposal, although the seconder of the motion is not required to take up the offer to speak at this time.
- 5. CONTINUING THE DEBATE ON A MOTION:** after the mover of the motion has concluded his/her opening address in support of the proposal, the Chair will invite a speaker in opposition to the proposal to address the meeting. The Chair will continue to invite speakers to address the meeting, until there are no further speakers to be heard, at which time the Chair will invite the mover of the proposal to make a final address to the delegates prior to a vote being taken on the matter.

Note Each speaker, either for or against the proposal, must be offering something new to the debate to continue to be heard. If, in the opinion of the Chair of the meeting, the current speaker is either off topic or not offering anything different from previous speakers, the Chair may request the current speaker to stop speaking and return to his/her seat.
- 6. CLOSING DEBATE ON A PROPOSAL:** when the Chair of the meeting is of the opinion that there are no further speakers, either for or against the proposal, the Chair will invite the mover of the motion to make his/her closing remarks. At this time, the mover will refrain from introducing any new material as there will be no opportunity for any other delegate to rebut such remarks. The mover, though, should take full opportunity to rebut any remarks that have been made by speakers opposed to the proposal, and to make a summary of all of the reasons, already put to the meeting, as to why the proposal should receive majority support from the delegates when the Chair puts the proposal to the meeting and calls for a division (vote).

Note: at any time during debate on a motion the Chair may decide to close the matter if, in his/her opinion, there is nothing of further value to be offered from the floor of the meeting.
- 7. AMENDING A PROPOSAL BEING CONSIDERED BY THE DELEGATES:** an amendment to a proposal may be put and seconded at any time during debate of the proposal, but prior to the mover commencing his/her closing remarks, so long as the amendment, in the opinion of the Chair, is compatible with the intent of the original proposal. Once accepted by the Chair, the amendment will be debated in the same way as would have occurred for the original proposal (see Point 5/6 above). If, when the vote is taken on the amendment, the majority of the registered delegates cast in favour of the amendment the amendment becomes the motion. The Chair will read the amended motion immediately, and debate will continue on the amended motion until the Chair calls for closure. If the proposed amendment is lost, debate will revert to the original proposal.

A proposal may be amended a number of times, but only one amendment will be discussed at any one time. A further amendment will be put to the meeting only after a previous amendment has been resolved (i.e. either supported or rejected by the registered delegates). If a previous amendment has been successful, then subsequent amendments will be proposed for the motion as amended and not for the original proposal.

8. **PROPOSAL FAILS TO BE SECONDED:** if a proposal, put to the meeting, fails to be seconded by another registered delegate then the matter will lapse and the Chair will move to the next order of business on the agenda for the meeting.
9. **A PROPOSAL FAILS TO ATTRACT A SPEAKER OPPOSED TO IT:** if, after the mover of a motion, accepted by the Chair, has concluded his/her opening remarks no speaker in opposition to the proposal accepts the Chair's invitation to speak, the Chair will put the proposal to the meeting for immediate decision.
10. **A PROPOSAL IS PUT TO THE VOTE, WHETHER AMENDED OR NOT:** At the conclusion of the debate on a question that has been put to the General Meeting of the Association, the Chair of the meeting will call for a vote on the matter. Where the majority of delegates vote in favour of a proposal the Chair will declare the matter **CARRIED**. The BTS Board will take any action necessary to comply with the intent of the proposal endorsed by the meeting.
11. **THE PROPOSAL IS LOST WHEN PUT TO THE VOTE:** When the Chair calls for a vote on a question, after the conclusion of the debate on the matter, and those who vote against the proposal are in the majority the Chair shall declare the matter **LOST**. A further proposal, similar to the one put and lost earlier in the same meeting, cannot be put and will not be accepted by the Chair of the meeting. Notwithstanding this, a similar proposal may be included on the agenda for a future General Meeting of the Association.
12. **ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR DURING MEETINGS:** it is every speaker's right to be heard, if that speaker is adding new information to the debate. No one has a right to interject or speak over another person who has been recognised by the Chair and given permission to speak. All delegates, other than the delegate who moved the motion currently being discussed, will speak more than once on any matter being considered. Each speaker will ensure that he/she keeps their contribution to the debate succinct and to the point (two minutes for each speaker is a reasonable period of time in which to express a view or opinion). It is the Chair's responsibility to ensure that one (or a few) strong voices do not dominate proceedings, but that every delegate has a belief that he/she will be given the opportunity to make a contribution at any time during each meeting.
13. **VOTING ON A PROPOSAL:** after the mover of a motion has completed his/her closing remarks, or the Chair has decided to put a motion immediately due to a lack of opposition to it, the Chair will put the motion (or the motion as amended) to the meeting by reading the proposal in its entirety. The Chair will then ask those in favour to say "Aye" and then those opposed to it to say "Nay". The Chair will then declare the matter won or lost on the strength of the voices.

The Chair's ruling on the outcome of any vote taken at a General Meeting of the Association (i.e. declared on the strength of the voices for and against) may be challenged by any registered delegate. The Chair must order a recount if his/her ruling is challenged, while will be taken by a show of hands. The count of hands, for and against the motion, will verified by at least two members of the BTS Board, who will advise the Chair of the result. Once the result of the recount is announced by the Chair no further challenges will be accepted by the Chair.

At any time during a General Meeting of the Association the Chair will authorise the taking of votes by secret ballot, if there is a request from the floor of a General Meeting of the Association for the vote to be conducted in such manner.

14. CONTROL OF GENERAL MEETINGS: it is the responsibility of the Chair of General Meetings of the Association to ensure that each meeting is conducted within the Rules of the Association, and in accordance with these procedures. The Chair must conduct him/herself in an unbiased, fair minded manner, and refrain from participating in any debate on any issue, except where it is necessary to provide clarification to the delegates. If the Chair wishes to become personally involved in discussions then he/she must request permission from the delegates to vacate the chair, handing control of the meeting to another member of the BTS Executive Committee (i.e. a BTS Deputy President) while participating in the debate on the motion.

The Chair may cast a vote on any matter put to a General Meeting of the Association but may choose to maintain his/her impartiality by refraining from voting at all. At all times, when votes cast for and against a proposal are equal the Chair will declare the matter lost.

15. DISSENT IN THE CHAIRPERSON'S RULING: whilst it is the responsibility of the Chair to manage the meeting in an efficient manner, and to make rulings and judgements on a range of matters, the decisions of the Chair may not always be acceptable to delegates. In this latter case, a dissent in the Chair's ruling may be moved and voted on immediately. If the majority of delegates support the motion the Chair's ruling will be set aside. If the motion is lost then the Chair's ruling will stand, and the progress of the meeting will be affected accordingly.

**Approved by BTS Board
15 February, 2016**