



Working with Consensus Decision Making*

"Simply stated, consensus is different from other kinds of decision making because it stresses the cooperative development of a decision with group members working together rather than competing against each other. The goal of consensus is a decision that is consented to by all group members. Of course, full consent does not mean that everyone must be completely satisfied with the final outcome - in fact, total satisfaction is rare. The decision must be acceptable enough, however, that will agree to support the group in choosing it."

Attitudes that Support Consensus

- The expectation of cooperation, of sharing information and resources
- An emphasis on mutual trust
- A belief in the common ownership of ideas
- Valuing feelings
- Valuing conflict that results from diverse points of view and is handled constructively
- Valuing the contributions of others
- Making an effort to equalize power
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*Taken from *Building United Judgement: A Handbook for consensus Decision Making*, Centre for Conflict Resolution. 1981.

- The Committee supports and will endeavour to reach decisions by consensus, whenever possible. We agree that any decision will be made in accordance with the mandate of the Committee and our mission statement and goals.
- The consensus process seeks to find solutions that everyone at a committee meeting can support. After thorough discussion of the issue, if consensus cannot be reached Roberts Rules of Order will be used.
 - 1) Where the decision is non-substantive. procedural or non-contentious, consensus is required only of those present at the meeting, with other committee members informed by the minutes except:
 - 2) Where a decision impacts directly on a member or an agency not present at the meeting, no final decision will be made until that agency expresses its position to the committee and consensus is achieved
 - 3) The committee would like to acknowledge that occasionally a member or members may feel it is necessary to choose to stand aside from a committee decision, thereby enabling the work of the committee to proceed.
 - 4) If the issue is identified as contentious and controversial, notice to add to the agenda of the next meeting will be made and distributed.