

A violin is positioned in the upper left corner of the image. Below it, a colorful beaded necklace with red, yellow, blue, and white beads is draped across the frame. The background is a dark, textured wooden surface.

MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO • MEETING PROCEDURES

MÉTIS RULES OF ORDER

Métis Nation
of Ontario 

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COMMON ABBREVIATIONS:

MNO: means the Métis Nation of Ontario

PCMNO: means the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario

CCC: means Charter Community Council

AC: means Advisory Councils (MNOYC, MNOVC, MNOWC)

AGA: means the Annual General Assembly

COI: means Conflict of Interest

SPP: means the MNO Statement of Prime Purpose

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INTRODUCTION

This document is intended to assist the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) in our nation building efforts. It is intended to help make the MNO a cohesive, vibrant, caring, respectful and knowledge driven democracy. The document reflects and promotes values from MNO's Statement of Prime Purpose (SPP) which states:

"We are a Nation, born of independence, and self-sufficiency whose teachings are founded on the values of honesty and truth...The strength of our society is based on democracy, freedom, fairness, equality, generosity, justice and the customary and written law of our people. Above all, we cherish harmony and peace."

Specific SPP goals that this document promotes are as follows:

- To establish democratic institutions on our inherent right of self-government;
- To encourage the full participation of all citizens in the Métis nation;
- To promote and foster community development;
- To establish effective means of communication for the Métis Nation;

Focus and Structure of This Document

This document focuses on making MNO meetings more inclusive, safe and respectful, efficient and effective, at both the Provincial, Regional, Community and Advisory Council levels, as well as for the Captains of the Hunt and all committees, working and advisory groups, and any other bodies established within the MNO.

The document covers meeting procedures and rules, and meeting culture (essential norms for effective deliberations).

The remainder of this document is structured as follows:

- Part 1 covers principles that apply to all meetings and gatherings within the MNO.
- Part 2 covers shared decision making parameters.
- Part 3 focuses on the governance bodies that use some formal rules of order.
- Part 4 provides evaluations for Meetings, Chairs, Members, and Decision Making Bodies.

Practicality of this Document

This document provides citizens and leaders with practical tools, to create a safe space and a level playing field in gatherings, and thereby make them orderly, well focused, efficient, equally inclusive, courteous and respectful. It is expected to help citizens and leaders achieve smart, thoughtful and informed decisions. This should bode well for a proud Métis nation.

Creating a Safe and Fair Meeting Environment

Secondly, besides providing core principles and procedures for meetings, this document provides practical tables and sample scripts to address common meeting scenarios.

Thirdly, this document emphasizes a collaborative approach to meetings and group decision making, whereby consensus is strongly preferred over the more common majority-based approach. This document was also written with the premise that meeting procedures must not be used for adversarial, manipulative or obstructive purposes. It encourages citizens and leaders to listen to and learn from debates, and strive to make fully informed decisions.

Collaboration and Consensus Building

Fourthly, in appreciation of its history of oral tradition and our respect for different learning styles, the MNO will explore alternative delivery methods for the material in this document. Those methods may include videos, podcasts, in-person and online training, individual coaching for leaders, and other options.

The Métis Rules of Order will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure continuity and up-to-date best practices.

PART 1

Meetings in General

The ultimate measure of success in meetings and gatherings within the MNO is the quality of the deliberations and the outcomes. Such outcomes should be arrived at with impartiality, thoughtfulness, care, and due diligence. To achieve these goals:

- Members should come to meetings fully prepared, having reviewed meeting packages, but they must also arrive with open minds, open to learning from colleagues and from professional advisors. Everyone must be committed to making fully informed decisions.
- Members should help make meetings and collective decisions truly representative of the knowledge and wisdom that are available to the group. It is not acceptable to deliberately or inadvertently block valid and necessary input, even when such input may stand in the way of a specific outcome that a person or a sub-group has advocated for.
- Members should recognize that some habits can, directly or indirectly, reduce the capacity to conduct meetings that are fully inclusive, efficient, and effective. Such habits should be abandoned, especially when they may suppress valid and essential input (see next table).

PROFESSIONAL COURTESY:
Coming to meetings prepared -
How do you prepare for meetings?

1.1 Habits that Can Diminish the Success of a Meeting

THE HABITS:

Interrupting other members in mid-sentence; or Speaking without being recognized by the Chair; or Overpowering other members with your voice.

Off topic discussions; or Straying away from the group's core mandate.

Small issues consume a great deal of time; or Some members ramble and take a long time to make their points; or Time is wasted at the start of a meeting, meaning there is less time and less patience for significant items later on the agenda.

Back and forth rebuttals between two or three members. Everyone else takes 'a back seat', or a spectator's position.

Personal attacks, insults and abuse are directed at people who share dissenting views.

The meeting environment becomes toxic, with heckling and booing or with loud and aggressive applause for some speakers.

THE POTENTIAL DAMAGE:

Input from assertive or outspoken members may be fully considered, while input from less assertive or less outspoken members may be suppressed. As a result, the group's decisions may become flawed

Time is consumed by off-topic or off- mandate discussions.
Less time is spent on core priorities and issues. This can lead to flawed decisions.

Not wanting to make things worse, some members may hesitate to speak and thereby withhold relevant input.

Lost time can mean a rush at the end of the meeting. The 'rush' mindset can make the meeting environment unsafe for new input, which, in turn, can lead to flawed decisions.

Less assertive members and their input are excluded from the process.

Valid input and concerns may end up being shared in parking lot conversations before or after the meeting, instead of informing the debate and enhancing decision making.

The quality of the discussion deteriorates and some people hesitate to share valid input, for fear of being personally attacked.

It can become scary to speak and express relevant and significant concerns or dissenting views. Some participants may be tempted to launch formal complaints about being bullied or about being defamed.

**Do these examples cover all meeting habits you have experienced?
What other Habits have not been addressed?
What are your recommendations for adding other examples?**

1.2 Fundamental Principles for Debates (The OFEEDS Principles)

Having identified habits that can diminish the quality of deliberations and decisions, everyone must be committed to embracing different habits that can help MNO leaders and citizens lead and serve the Nation better. In order to achieve inclusive, efficient, and well-focused deliberations, appropriate degrees of formality and decorum must be in place.

The six principles imbedded in the OFEEDS acronym (see below) must be supported by everyone. Members should abide by them and demand that others do the same. These six core principles can help the MNO engage everyone's passion and wisdom on 'a level playing field' while managing time prudently. Ultimately, the OFEEDS principles can help leaders and citizens achieve smart decisions for the Métis Nation of Ontario and its citizens.

The OFEEDS acronym stands for:

1. **Order**
2. **Focus**
3. **Efficiency**
4. **Equality**
5. **Decorum**
6. **Safe Meeting Environment**

ORDER: Only one person may speak at a time, and does so after being recognized by the meeting's Chair. The speaking order is established by the Chair, usually on a first come first served basis. The Chair may be assisted by another Officer, group Member or staff in placing members on the speakers' lineup.

FOCUS: Debates focus on one agenda item at a time and on the group's core mandate. For Councils, the focus should be on governance, and micromanagement of staff should be avoided. Focus also means that speakers must stay on topic and avoid digressions. To focus the debates on motions, it can be helpful if comments start with: *"I speak in favor of (or against) this motion, for the following reasons. First, _____, etc."*

EFFICIENCY: Time is spent on issues based on their importance. Tentative start and end times are allocated to core agenda items. The Chair can then advise the group of when the time which is allocated to an issue is running out.

Efficiency also means that members keep their comments concise, so as to allow time for their colleagues to also share their thoughts. In large gatherings, such as the Annual General Assembly, it is advisable to set time limits on speeches, and have timing lights or another method to inform speakers of when their time is running short (see AGA Standing Rules in section 1.5).

EQUALITY: No one speaks a second time on the same issue when other members want to speak on it for the first time. If a member who spoke on an issue wants to rebut statements that are made by others, the Chair would place him or her after all first-time speakers' have spoken.

The principle of equality is about fairness and a level playing field, but it is also about harvesting the unique nuggets of wisdom of people who are often silent in meetings. An intervention to consider is: *"Just a moment, _____. We have two people who want to speak on this issue for the first time. I'll add you to the second time speakers' lineup."*

DECORUM: Personal attacks are not tolerated. Members can state why they disagree with someone's proposal, but they must never attack the proponent or question their motives. Words like 'liar', 'dishonest' and 'having a hidden agenda' must not be uttered, and the Chair or a member must speak up immediately if and when this occurs.

A SAFE MEETING ENVIRONMENT means that no form of harassment, bullying, or suppression of valid input occurs, and that no one will have a reason to complain that he or she felt unsafe to present a dissenting view. Members must appreciate the value of listening to and learning from dissenting views. They must not allow the enthusiasm for a seemingly exciting proposal to get in the way of learning about its potential risks.

The following behaviors can create an unsafe and toxic meeting environment: heckling, clapping, eye rolling, sighing, cursing under one's breath, and the likes. There are more subtle causes of an unsafe meeting environment, such as overwhelming enthusiasm for a proposal, which may make it awkward for one or more members to present valid concerns or warning signs that they perceive.

**No Bullying
No Harassment
Respectful Debate**

1.3 Why the 6 OFEEDS Principles are Vital

The OFEEDS principles are vital, for what they can create, and for what they can prevent. They can help you create strong, credible and thoughtful decisions that will likely be appreciated by today's citizens and by future generations. They will help you build a level playing field for all citizens and a strong Métis Nation of equals.

The OFFEDS principles can also help you prevent flawed decisions that can reduce organizational capacity and boost risk and liability. These principles can help reduce the likelihood of costly formal complaints about bullying and harassment

1.4 Intervening in Defense of the OFEEDS Principles

The OFEEDS principles must be at the core of conducting effective Métis Nation meetings. However, they will only be firmly in place if each leader and each member knows them and is ready to speak up in defense of the process. For a meaningful implementation of the six OFEEDS principles, the Chair and everyone else must consider the following five phrases:

1. Treat the process and the six OFEEDS principles as 'your best friend.'
2. Understand the process and follow it, even when it is inconvenient to do so.
3. Ensure that everyone else appreciates and willingly follows the process.
4. When the process is breached, the Chair or any member should be prepared to defend it.
5. If you defend the process, it will defend you and the organization from harm.

1.4.1 The Meeting Chair as the Chief Defender of the Process

The Chair must act as the 'chief defender of the process', i.e.: the person on whom everyone depends to explain the process, to observe compliance with it, and to enforce the process consistently, with a blend of gentleness and firmness. Everyone must support the Chair's efforts to enforce the OFEEDS principles when facing a damaging breach of process. Usually, an intervention by the Chair consists of 4 steps:

1. The Chair interrupts a member who is not following the process.
2. The interrupted member stops talking in order to hear the reason for the interruption.
3. The Chair explains the reason for interrupting, e.g.: "We need to get back on topic."
4. The interrupted member gets back on topic and resumes speaking.

1.4.2 Individual Members as Partners in Defending the Process

No Chair is capable of catching every breach of process. Therefore, if the Chair misses or ignores a damaging breach of procedure, members must speak up in defense of the process. The steps are as follows:

1. A member (Member A) speaks up: "Point of Order."
2. The Chair interrupts another member who may be speaking: "Just a moment..."
3. The Chair then recognizes 'Member A' to state the rule that may have been breached.
4. 'Member A' explains the perceived breach: "Member B is speaking on this issue for the second time and Member C has been waiting to speak on it for the first time."
5. The Chair makes a ruling on whether the point of order or is not well taken:

- a. Chair: "The point of order is well taken. Member C, you may speak now."
- b. Chair: "The point of order is not well taken. My list tells me that Member B is speaking for the first time on this issue. Member B, please continue..."

NOTES:

There are two cautions to consider about the use of points of order:

- A point of order must only be used to point to a breach of procedure. A member must not use a point of order to interrupt another member in order to argue against their views.
- A point of order should not be raised about small imperfections whose impacts are minimal, e.g.: a minor or very brief deviation from the core agenda topic, where it will take more time to process the point of order than the amount of time that the deviation would consume.

1.4.3 A Sample Opening Script for a Meeting's Chair

Welcome everyone to this meeting of the _____ Community Council.

We have a busy agenda today and we need to be focused and efficient, so that we can give all items the attention they need, and so we can make reasonably informed decisions on all of them, including those that are set for late on the agenda. You'll see estimates of time on the agenda. The allocation of time is tentative and I need your support to make it work.

We have a couple of complicated issues on the agenda, and I need to remind everyone of a few basic rules for debates. The key rules were captured on a one-page summary called "Discussion Guidelines for Community Council Meetings."

To start, I ask that you wait for me as Chair to recognize you before you speak. Please stay on topic, and please keep your comments reasonably brief. If you want to speak a second time on an issue, please wait until first time speakers have spoken. Please avoid personal attacks, and help us work together to create and maintain a safe meeting environment.

Does anyone need clarifications on why these basic discussion guidelines are important? (Pause) Thank you. I am counting on your support as we progress through the meeting."

1.4.4 Ad-hoc scripts for a Meeting's Chair

IF THIS OCCURS:

A MEMBER CAN SAY SOMETHING LIKE THIS:

Interruptions, or a shouting match

"Councilor _____. Please let Councilor _____ finish." OR
 "Can we please have one person speaking at a time?" OR "Can we please wait to be recognized before speaking?"

Off topic discussions

"I need to interrupt you. We need to focus on the motion to _____."
 "Just a reminder. We are dealing now with the amendment to _____."

Time is being wasted and the agenda is busy.

"We have _____ more items to address today. We need to move on." Or "Can we please keep our comments brief? Our time is running short." Or "Are we ready to vote on this item? We have 3 more items today."

Repetition

"Does anyone have something new to add? If not, shall we move on?"

Dominated debate

"Can I take a moment to remind members that we would like to hear from people who have not spoken on this issue?" Or
 "Some Members want to speak for the first time. So we will allow them to speak before others who have already spoken on the subject item."

Personal attacks

"I need to interrupt you. We must focus on issues, not personalities." Or "Members, this issue is tough, but we must remain civilized and respectful."

An unsafe meeting environment

"Can we please lower the tone of this debate? We need to make our meeting environment safe as we make important decisions."

A Meeting Chair's Potential Response to an Egregious Breach

In the event that a certain Member, after being warned to refrain from a serious procedural breach (such as a personal attack, or conduct that can make the meeting environment toxic), repeats the breach, the Chair may need to respond more firmly and if necessary remove the Member from the meeting. The next time the same breach occurs, the Chair can/should start by calling a short break.

After the break, the Chair can open with a statement like this:

"Members, before we continue with the meeting, I need to address the issue of decorum. As I said several times in the past, we are free to disagree with other members, and we are free to question whether a proposal or an idea is good or bad. But we must never personalize the debate by attacking the person who shares an idea. We must observe decorum and maintain a safe meeting environment.

As you may have noticed, just before the break, one of our members made a statement that contained what I consider to be a breach of decorum. This is not the first time this has occurred, and, despite previous warnings, it continues to occur. I need to warn the member and everyone that, if this repeats itself, we'll need to look at disciplinary measures to ensure that the meeting environment is kept safe and our very fundamental rules are observed.

Again, disagreement with others is a basic right under parliamentary procedures, but attacking any member personally is a line that we must never cross. Is this clear? Can I count on your support by observing this important rule? If the member continues to disrupt you will be asked to leave the meeting.

As a reminder, in case I do not notice a breach of decorum and you do, I remind you of your right and duty to immediately raise a point of order on the matter.

Thank you very much for your support in making us a strong community, an effective and respectful democracy, and a part of a cohesive, united and proud Métis Nation of Ontario."

After the above comments, the Chair can continue with the meeting.

**Have we provided ample examples of simple scripts?
What other examples are we missing?
Can you provide other examples?**

1.4.5 A 'Cheat Sheet' for Members to 'Defend the Process'

It is important that not only the Chair, but also all Members, understand and appreciate the value of the OFEEDS process, follow the process willingly, and defend it when needed.

IF THIS OCCURS:

A MEMBER CAN SAY SOMETHING LIKE THIS:

Interruptions, or a shouting match

Say: "Point of order". Then wait to be recognized by the Chair. When recognized: "Can we please have one person speaking at a time?" Or: "Can we please hear people out without interruptions?"

Off topic discussions

Say: "Point of order," and wait to be recognized by the Chair. When recognized: "Can we please get back on topic?"

An agenda item takes too much time. The agenda is busy.

Say: "Madam Chair." When recognized: "Can we move on? It's running late and we have a lot to get done." Or "Can we please keep our comments brief?" Or "Can vote and move on to the next item? Out time is running short."

Dominated debate

Say: "Mr. Chair." When recognized, you can say: "It would be great to hear from citizens who have not spoken and may have something to offer. Would any of our other people here like to share some thoughts?" Or "Can we hear from _____? She/he has had experience with _____."

Personal attacks

Say: "Madam Chair." When recognized, you can say: "Can we please focus on issues, not personalities?" Or "Can we please lower the tone of this conversation?"

An unsafe meeting environment

Say: "Mr. Chair." When recognized, you can say: "Can we please lower the tone of this debate? We need to make our meeting environment safe as we try to make important decisions." Or "Madam Chair. Can I ask my colleagues to show respect and listen to others with open minds? I noticed some dismissive gestures when other citizens speak. As a nation, we deserve better."

IF THIS OCCURS:**A MEMBER CAN SAY SOMETHING LIKE THIS:**

Amendments: The wording of a motion is flawed.

Obtain recognition and say something like:
"I move to amend the motion by replacing the words _____ by _____. Or by adding/ inserting text or by deleting text (see section 3.9, scripts D and E)

Referral: Analysis is needed for an informed vote.

Obtain recognition and say something like:
"I move that the main motion be referred to the Director of for analysis and report at the next PCMNO meeting." (see section 3.9, script F)

Postponement: The motion is not urgent and it's late.

Obtain recognition and say something like:
"Mr. Chair. It's late and this motion can wait. I move that the main motion be postponed until the next PCMNO meeting." (see section 3.9, script G).

1.5 Sample Standing Rules for Annual General Assemblies

Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) Annual General Assembly (AGA) Date and Time

STANDING RULES

The rules of order below are intended to facilitate progress, include Citizens in orderly debate and decision making, and to ensure fairness, equality and common sense.

1. All MNO General Assembly Business will run in accordance with the MNO Bylaws, the MNO Statement of Prime Purpose, and the applicable provisions in MNO's Métis Rules of Order.
2. MNO Citizens in good standing are entitled to speak and vote at the AGA. Proxy voting is prohibited. A Citizen may not transfer their voting clicker or band to another Citizen. A Citizen who leaves the meeting must turn over their voting clicker or band to the staff. At the discretion of the MNO Chair or Vice-Chair, a staff member or advisor may be invited to provide operational information or professional advice.
3. A Citizen who wishes to speak at the AGA must approach a microphone, wait to be recognized by the MNO Chair or Vice-Chair, and open by stating their name. The MNO Chair or Vice Chair may interrupt a Citizen so as to explain a rule or to address a procedural breach, and a Citizen so interrupted must stop speaking and wait.
4. On each issue or debatable motion, each Citizen will be entitled to speak up to two (2) times, each time for no longer than three (3) minutes. Speaking a third time or longer than three minutes will require permission from the Assembly. The initial reading of a motion by the mover to the Assembly will not be timed.
5. Notwithstanding clause 4, accommodations may be made to allow additional time for a Citizen with disabilities to debate a motion, at the Chair's discretion.
6. To speak a second time on the same motion or agenda item, a Citizen must wait until those who wish to speak on it for the first time have done so. A Citizen who has questions may ask one follow-up question within the same three-minute time slot.
7. Debate must focus on the pending motion or agenda item.
8. If progress is slow or time is running short, the MNO Chair or Vice-Chair may encourage an end to the debate after what the MNO Chair or Vice-Chair considers to be a reasonable debating time. If a Citizen objects to ending the debate on a motion, the MNO Chair or Vice-Chair must take a vote on whether debate will end.
9. Citizens must conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the MNO Statement of Prime Purpose. Speakers must observe decorum, must avoid personal attacks and disorderly or discourteous behaviors, and are expected to help maintain a safe and respectful meeting environment.
10. If possible, decision making will be by consensus. In the event that consensus seems difficult or impossible to achieve, a formal vote will be taken, and the outcome will be determined under the provisions in the MNO Bylaws.

PART 2

Shared Decision Making Parameters

DRAFT

2.1 The Jigsaw Puzzle Analogy

Besides following the OFEEDS process, Métis gatherings also have a substantive mandate. They are duty-bound to achieve fully informed votes. Each meeting participant must be prepared to share their own unique insights, while also listening and learning from the insights of others.

Group decision making should resemble the construction of a jigsaw puzzle, where different pieces of the puzzle ‘reside’ in the brains of various meeting attendees. To arrive at fully informed decisions, it is critical to maintain a safe environment, so all relevant ‘pieces of the puzzle’, including positive views and dissenting ones, can be shared and enrich the conversation and knowledge base.

To further promote informed decision making, participants must come to meetings with open minds (not ‘empty minds’), being prepared to integrate the various pieces of the jigsaw puzzle, learn from the debates, and, if needed, change their positions based on this learning.

To make sure that the pieces of the puzzle are reliable and strong, participants must prepare for meetings, and read and absorb all relevant factual materials.

The table below illustrates how common habits can undermine the ‘jigsaw puzzle’ approach, diminish the group’s capacity to make fully informed decisions, and potentially damage the Nation.

PROBLEMATIC HABIT	POTENTIAL DAMAGE	POTENTIAL INTERVENTIONS
Silent members withhold dissenting views or ‘out of the box’ observations.	Without their input, flawed decisions may be made. The Nation may end up paying the price for their silence.	Invite them and their input to the conversation. Clarify at orientation time that “Silence is NOT golden.”
Some members do not fully prepare for a meeting.	This can slow the meeting down, frustrate their colleagues, and lead to flawed decisions.	Share feedback with them privately or with the entire group (at the start of a meeting or at an orientation).
Some members commit their votes in advance of a meeting.	Minds are closed. Listening and true learning will not happen. The Nation may end up paying the price for flawed decisions.	Reinforce the duty to come to meetings with open minds. Establish a culture of life-long learning with the group at orientation time.

PROBLEMATIC HABIT	POTENTIAL DAMAGE	POTENTIAL INTERVENTIONS
Members send text messages or post entries on social media at meetings.	These Members are distracted and may not be listening to important details. They may also upset their colleagues and distract them from the agenda.	Pick up the pace of the meeting, so people are not bored. Set the rule of 'No calls, texting, emailing, or social media posts during meetings.'
There is a rush towards the end of a meeting.	Making important decisions in a hurry is dangerous. The likelihood of mistakes rises.	Plan a timed agenda, especially if issues may be time consuming. At the meeting, keep things moving.

2.2 Confidentiality and Closed Meetings

In general, there should be transparency and public access to most meetings and documents. However, there are times when it is necessary to place risk management ahead of transparency and discuss sensitive issues in a closed meeting (or 'an in camera meeting'). Such issues may involve litigation (potential or ongoing), sensitive personnel matters, negotiations of important contracts, and others.

Attendance at a closed meeting is limited to the voting members of the body and individuals that they invite to attend the meeting or a portion of it. Outsiders are usually invited to attend because of their unique knowledge relevant to the issues at hand (e.g.: legal or financial expertise).

Some public bodies conduct too much business behind closed doors and keep too much information confidential. Such practices can erode public trust and confidence in the decision-making process. They may even lead to the validity of some decisions being challenged, on the ground that they were made behind closed doors without a legitimate reason for it. A public body should consult its legislation and bylaws for clarity on what types of issues can or must be discussed behind closed doors.

It should be noted that items should not be placed on the agenda of a closed meeting if the sole reason for doing so is to allow a robust discussion and make members comfortable asking 'stupid questions.' The legitimate reason for going behind closed doors should be to protect the organization from risk, rather than protecting the elected members from embarrassment.

Members must keep confidentiality and will avoid divulging what was done or said in a closed meeting. Leaks from closed meetings can erode trust among Members and may stifle discussions in subsequent closed meetings (people will hesitate to speak for fear of being quoted publicly). Leaks can also damage the organization and place its interests or the privacy of individuals or third parties at risk.

A Member who believes an item was mistakenly placed on a closed meeting agenda should raise this point during the closed meeting, and the group should then decide whether the item would be kept on the closed meeting agenda. Similarly, if - in the midst of an open meeting - Members realize that an item that requires confidentiality was mistakenly placed on its agenda, they can take the required steps to transfer the item to the agenda of the next closed meeting.

Minutes of a closed meeting should include only the topics that were discussed and the decisions that were made. There should be no record of what was said in the debate. All documents related to the meeting should be kept confidential, until the body collectively votes to declassify them.

PROBLEMATIC HABIT

A Member leaks confidential details from a closed meeting.

POTENTIAL DAMAGE

Trust levels will be diminished and the team will break up. In the presence of the Member who broke confidentiality, others may be afraid to speak up at a subsequent meeting, the meeting environment may become toxic, and this can undermine informed decision making. Lastly, the leak may create a liability for the MNO, possibly in the form of an unwelcome and costly lawsuit.

POTENTIAL INTERVENTIONS

There must be a discussion about confidentiality at orientation time. If a leak is identified, the concerns about it must be shared with the individual and with the group. If leaks by a Member are deliberate and persistent, disciplinary action may be necessary to protect the MNO from risk and liability.

2.3 Duty to Accept Collective Decisions

It is the goal of the MNO that, as a norm, collective decisions will be reached by consensus. If everyone comes to meetings with an open mind and listens fully and openly to the debates, the likelihood of a split vote or a narrow majority will be small.

If a new issue is evolving in a way that points to the possibility of a split vote, and the decision is not urgent and the body can responsibly wait, the decision can be postponed to a subsequent meeting. In this case, efforts should be made before the next meeting to determine whether differences can be reconciled without diluting the strength of the decision.

If, despite the efforts to achieve consensus, unanimity cannot be achieved, a formal vote may finally be needed to bring closure to an issue. In such instances, there will be “a winning side” (a majority) and “a losing side” (a minority). In such cases, it should be clear that, once a decision is made, it is no longer a majority decision. It is a collective decision, and the minority is duty bound to accept it as a legitimate collective decision and move on.

It should be noted that an abstention should not be seen as ‘breaking consensus.’ The outcome of a vote is determined based on the votes that are cast, excluding abstentions.

If new information becomes known later that justifies re-visiting the decision, the body can rescind or amend the decision at a subsequent meeting (see part 3 of this document).

THE HABIT

After a meeting, a dissenting Member publicly attacks a decision that was made by the group.

POTENTIAL DAMAGE

This breaks up the team and diminishes trust levels on it. Team spirit is lost, mistrust rises, and dysfunction is not far off.

POTENTIAL INTERVENTIONS

It must be clarified that dissenting members must share input during the meeting, before a difficult decision is made. The duty of others is then listen to the dissenting perspective with an open mind and a respectful disposition. If this occurs, it is more likely that the dissenting member will accept the collective decision and move on, as per his/her duty (even if the decision remained unchanged).

2.4 Balancing Constituency and Organizational Interests

Members who represent a constituency at the PCMNO or the Annual General Assembly (AGA) or Community Council Annual General Meeting (AGM), or any meeting setting, must remember that their primary duty is to represent the MNO as a whole, and balance its interests ahead of CCC or other interests. They may bring and share relevant input from their communities (wearing the constituency / Regional Councillor / Council member hat). But having done that, they must listen and learn from other views, and then vote with the full Nation in mind (wearing the MNO hat). To prevent undue pressure on representatives, all Charter Communities should be made aware of how the 'two hats' process works. (Further discussion needed on the wording and intent of 2.4)

THE HABIT

A member takes directions from their constituency on how to vote at a meeting.

POTENTIAL DAMAGE

This Member is not likely to listen to valid input at the meeting, claiming "My hands are tied." The decision making body can therefore become fragmented and contentious.

POTENTIAL INTERVENTIONS

At the start of a meeting or an AGA, everyone should be reminded and asked to consider that, although they may bring input from their communities, their ultimate duty is to look after the full community.

2.5 Conflict of Interest Guidelines

This section supplements and does not replace the MNO Conflict of Interest Policy for MNO Elected Officials (MNO Policy #2015-002).

Conflict of Interest (COI) guidelines are intended to protect the integrity of decision making processes. They exclude members from debate and decision making if their ability to act objectively may be impaired by personal interest. COI guidelines will increase the likelihood that decisions are balanced and fair to and in the best interests of the Nation and are also viewed as such.

A decision maker who believes they have a personal COI should proceed as follows:

- Officially declare the COI as soon as they become aware of it.
- Leave the meeting after making the declaration and before discussion on the issue commences, to avoid any possibility of influencing the debate and the outcomes in any way.
- Avoid influencing the decision in any way (at the meeting or away from the meeting).
- The minutes of the meeting should capture the COI declaration and the fact that the member was absent while the issue was discussed and voted on.

A Member who receives feedback on being perceived to have a COI on an issue should not respond defensively. Instead, the member should examine the issue openly and act with the best interests of the Nation in mind. If in doubt, it may be prudent to obtain legal advice on whether a COI exists.

THE HABIT

A Member of the PCMNO or a Community Council, who stands to uniquely benefit from a transaction, does not disclose his/her interest and takes part in the debate and the vote.

POTENTIAL DAMAGE

This is very serious, amounts to an abuse of power for personal benefit (for the individual) or nepotism (for the benefit of a close family member). It can diminish MNO Citizens' trust in their elected leaders and damage the cohesion and the spirit of the Nation.

POTENTIAL INTERVENTIONS

Conflict of interest (COI) guidelines must be clearly explained at orientation time. Members who stand to uniquely gain from a collective decision must declare the COI and leave the meeting while the specific issue is debated and decided by those who are not affected by the COI. The COI declaration and the Member's departure from the meeting must be captured in the minutes.

THE HABIT

When someone suggests to a colleague that they may have a personal COI on an issue, the individual becomes harsh and defensive.

POTENTIAL DAMAGE

If this happens, it becomes difficult for Members to share valid concerns and uphold the integrity and objectivity of the decision making process. In the presence of allegations of nepotism and abuse of power, the Nation's trust in its elected leaders is bound to be diminished.

POTENTIAL INTERVENTIONS

It should be clarified at orientation time that a COI, as such, is not 'a bad thing', but something that may occur from time to time. When a potential COI is indicated, the affected leader should listen with an open mind and, if the feedback is valid, respond to it with integrity.

DRAFT

PART 3

FORMAL RULES OF ORDER

Part 3 of this document is intended to establish the relevant formal rules of order for meetings of the following Voting Bodies and Committees thereof, include, but are not limited to:

- The Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario (PCMNO)
- Charter Community Councils (CCCs)
- Advisory Councils (ACs)
- Working Groups
- Captains of the Hunt (COTH)
- The Annual General Assembly (AGA) of the Métis Nation of Ontario

The following general principles relating to rules of order must be considered:

- Formal rules of order are not appropriate for use during informal general conversations (i.e. an informal general discussion with a partner, information presentations, general discussions, or with other council members without quorum) In such settings, it is important to keep discussions natural and free flowing. The only procedures needed in such settings are within the OFEEDS acronym, discussed in Part 1 of this document.
- Formal rules of order are not appropriate for use during informal general conversations (i.e. an informal general discussion with a partner, information presentations, general discussions, or with other council members without quorum) In such settings, it is important to keep discussions natural and free flowing. The only procedures needed in such settings are within the OFEEDS acronym, discussed in Part 1 of this document.
- If a damaging breach of a rule of order occurs, the meeting's Chair must bring attention to it (see Part 1 for sample interventions). If the Chair does not notice such a breach, a Member may point to it by raising a point of order. Points of order should not be raised on minor breaches, if it is clear that no one's rights are violated and no real harm is inflicted on the conduct of the meeting, e.g.: a minor deviation from the agenda which consumes very little time.

- Formal rules of order must never be used to engage in adversarial tactics in order to manipulate or force voting outcomes. Such practices would be insulting and disrespectful of the MNO and can undermine the efforts to build a nurturing, unified, respectful, and cohesive Nation. Such practices may also confuse, intimidate and potentially stifle members who are less familiar with formal rules. In short, such practices would undermine the vital goal of a level playing field democracy.
- Consistent with the principles of nation building, it is MNO's preference that, as much as possible, governance decisions would be reached by consensus or at least by substantial majorities. Although narrow majority decisions are not explicitly prohibited, MNO believes that too many of them could divide the Nation and diminish its capacity to serve its present and future citizens.
- This Part of the Métis Meeting Procedures document is not, and will never be, a comprehensive manual that seeks to codify every conceivable parliamentary complexity. Such manuals exist, but they are incompatible with MNO's preference for simpler and more collaborative governance. In the event that a procedural issue arises which this document does not cover, a Chair may consult the MNO leadership and, if needed, an outside professional, to explore the best way to address it.
- The formal rules of order that are contained in this Part 3 of this document apply only in cases where the MNO's applicable legislation, Bylaws, or Policies are silent.

3.1 VOTING: The Consensus Approach

It is MNO's preference that each of its decision making bodies seek to achieve consensus on substantive decisions, especially when the stakes are high. Narrow majority decisions, although not prohibited, should be avoided whenever possible by applying the following measures and criteria:

- The Chair and each Member must be committed to a learning model for decision making, as an essential tool for optimizing the quality of collective decisions. If everyone is committed to such a model, creativity will rise, and so will the capacity to identify all legitimate needs and ensure that as many of them as possible are addressed. If all relevant views and perspectives are listened to, the likelihood is high that everyone will support or at least accept the outcome.
- Conversely, the desire to achieve unanimity on a contentious issue should never create weak and meaningless outcomes, or ones that are diluted and descend to 'the lowest common denominator'. Such outcomes can amount to a capitulation to entrenched and 'entitlement-driven' views. In such cases, the members of the voting body, having listened to all perspectives with open minds, should be comfortable moving forward with less than a unanimous outcome.
- In some cases, if efforts to address legitimate needs are unsuccessful and a decision can wait, the decision making body may vote to postpone the decision until a subsequent meeting, with the hope that 'the pause' would help address valid issues while retaining the strength of the proposal.

3.2 VOTING: Majority, Abstentions, Ties, Chair's Vote, Quorum

- If unanimity (or 'consensus') cannot be reached, a motion requires a majority vote to be adopted. A majority vote means that more than 50% of the votes that are cast are in favor of the proposal.
- Abstentions are not counted as 'cast votes' and therefore do not affect the outcome. For example: Suppose 11 Members are present. If 5 of them vote in favor of a motion, 3 vote against it, and 3 abstain, the motion is adopted by a vote of 5 yes votes to 3 no votes (and not a majority of the total number of the Members present, which would be 6 out of 11). Abstentions do not count as votes cast and therefore do not break consensus.
- Note: Abstentions are usually justified when a Member does not support a certain motion but does not feel strongly enough to vote against it.
- In order to avoid inadvertent abstentions, the Chair must repeat the motion which is voted on clearly, loudly and slowly, and must never rush the voting process. The goal is to ensure that everyone knows that a vote is being taken and knows the precise wording of the motion. When taking a vote, a Chair must call for the affirmative votes first, and then the negative votes.
- A tie means that a motion did not receive a majority of the votes cast and was therefore defeated. It does not mean that the group is deadlocked.
- The Chair refrains from voting only to break a tie and cause the motion to pass or to be defeated.
- Regarding a quorum:
 1. A quorum is the number of Voting Members who must be present to conduct business.
 2. A quorum is usually determined as per the MNO Bylaws.
 3. In bodies for which the Bylaws are silent, or when registration is done in advance, a quorum is a majority of the voting members that are present in person or on Zoom at the start of the first meeting day.
 4. Quorum is 50% +1 of those in attendance.
 5. A decision which is made in the absence of a quorum is not valid.

3.3 VOTING by Unanimous Consent

Some votes can be taken informally, by the Chair simply asking whether there are objections to a certain action. This procedure is referred to as unanimous consent. It enables the group to make routine and non-controversial decisions informally and quickly. Unanimous consent is not appropriate for making substantive or contentious decisions.

Examples of voting by unanimous consent include:

- **Changing the agenda:** "Is there any objection to changing the agenda to consider item 7 now? (Pause)? There being no objections, we will proceed now to item 7, and then return to item 3."
- **Extending the time for an item:** "Is there any objection to extending the time for this discussion by 10 minutes? (Pause). There being no objections, the time has been extended until 3:40 p.m."
- **A `Friendly Amendment`:** "Is there any objection to adding `including taxes`? (Pause). There being no objections, the words are added and the main motion reads: `To purchase a new desk at a cost not to exceed \$1000, including taxes.` Is there debate on the amended motion?"
- **A Short Break:** "Is there any objection to a ten-minute recess? (Pause) There being no objections, we are in recess. We will resume in 10 minutes."
- **Adjournment:** "Is there any other issue to come before the meeting? (Pause) There being no further issue come before us, the meeting is adjourned."

For more examples of the use of unanimous consent, see sample scripts in Section 3.9

Does this explanation clarify what you need to know about Unanimous Consent?

3.4 Handling Main Motions

A main motion is a substantive proposal to take action or formally express a view. The 6 steps of handling a main motion are as follows:

STEP	LANGUAGE	PERTINENT POINTS
1. A member makes a motion	<p>"I move that _____" or</p> <p>"I move that the following resolution be adopted: 'Resolved, That _____'."</p>	<p>1. Make sure the motion is concise, complete and unambiguous.</p> <p>2. The Chair may require a main motion or an amendment to be submitted in writing.</p>
2. Another member seconds the motion.	"I second the motion" or "Second"	Seconding does not mean an endorsement of the motion, but only agreement that it should be discussed.
3. The Chair states the motion.	"It is moved and seconded that _____. Is there any debate on this motion?"	<p>1. The Chair may rule that a motion is not in order (giving the reasons for the ruling) or direct that it be submitted in writing.</p> <p>2. Once debate begins, ownership and control over the motion become collective. From now on withdrawing or amending the motion requires the group's consent, rather than the mover's consent.</p>
4. Debate and amendment	The motion is debated and possibly amended by the group.	Debate is closed by the group, collectively (possibly by unanimous consent), and not by one person calling "Question."
5. The Chair puts the motion to a vote.	<p>"There being no further debate, we will proceed to the vote. The motion is that _____. Those in favor of the motion raise one hand. Thank you. Those opposed raise one hand. Thank you."</p>	<p>Ensure clarity by repeating the motion before the vote.</p> <p>Project your voice and DO NOT rush the vote. Take your time. Treat it as a sacred moment.</p> <p>Note: Abstentions do not count as votes cast and therefore do not break consensus (see 3.2).</p>
6. The Chair announces the outcome.	<p>"The motion is adopted" or</p> <p>"The motion is defeated." "The next item of business is _____."</p>	

See Section 3.9 for sample scripts for motions, amendments, and other procedures.

3.5 Frequently Used Secondary Motions

STEP	LANGUAGE	PERTINENT POINTS
Point of Order	Points to a violation of a rule, policy, or bylaw.	The Chair makes a ruling on whether the point is well taken or not, or may ask the group to make this decision.
Appeal	A member who disputes a Chair's ruling can appeal it. The member can make a motion, immediately following the ruling, to appeal the Chair's ruling. Another Member may second the appeal.	The ruling is put to a vote: The Chair will ask those in attendance "Shall the Chair's ruling be sustained?" A majority vote against a ruling reverses it.
Amend	A motion to change the wording of another motion before voting on it.	Usually only one primary amendment and one secondary amendment can be considered at the same time.
Commit/Refer	A motion to send a main motion to a committee or staff	Should include some instructions for the committee, e.g.: What questions will it address? When will the committee report?
Postpone to a certain time	A motion to postpone the pending main motion to a certain time.	Should specify the day and time to which the motion is to be postponed.
Limit or Extend Debate	A motion to limit or extend debate on a motion, e.g.: "I move to extend debate on this motion by 5 minutes".	
End Debate	A motion to close debate and vote immediately: "I move to end debate."	The Chair can check informally if there is unanimous consent to ending the debate. If there isn't, a vote on ending debate is taken.
Table	This motion should not be used, as it often confuses members. Instead of moving to table, the motions to postpone or refer should be used (see scripts F and G in section 3.9).	
Withdraw	Before debate begins, a motion may be withdrawn by the mover. Once debate begins, the assembly needs to agree to the withdrawal.	

3.6 Re-Visiting Previously Made Decisions

Some rule books dedicate many pages to the rules on revisiting a previously made decision. This section seeks to simplify and streamline this process. The key points are as follows:

- a. Given new information, a motion that was adopted may need to be rescinded, amended, or suspended. Advance notice of the motion to rescind, amend or suspend an adopted motion and the reasons for it must be given to the voting body. The motion to rescind, suspend or amend a previously adopted motion requires a two-thirds vote. It can be made by any member (regardless of their original vote). This motion can only be made if the original decision can be fully or partly reversed, amended or suspended.
- b. With the benefit of new information, a motion that was defeated in one meeting can be reintroduced as a new motion at a later meeting if it is believed that, with the benefit of new information, the motion (or a modified version of it) would be adopted.
- c. A frequent use of motions that re-visit previous decisions can portray the voting body as unreliable and untrustworthy. Therefore, re-visiting previous decisions should be the exception and not the norm. This can be achieved by the following two measures:
 - Voting bodies must embrace the principle of fully informed decision making, especially when decisions are significant or contentious. They must refuse to proceed with rushed or uninformed votes, especially when the stakes are high.
 - Voting bodies must refuse to engage in small time politics, game playing and an adversarial culture. An example is when a Member takes advantage of the absence of opponents of a contentious motion and re-introduces it then, in order to achieve a favorable result without their objections. Such destructive practices fly in the face of MNO's nation building efforts and must not be tolerated.

3.7 Chair's Voting and Debating Rights & President Privilege

Chair's Voting Rights

In a Council or Committee meeting, the Chair may only vote in the event of a tie. The chair can also abstain from voting which would defeat the motion because a tie cannot be carried.

At the MNO Annual General Assembly, the Chair ordinarily protects their impartial position by abstaining from votes. However, the Chair may vote (but does not have to) if their vote would alter the result (e.g.: by making a tie or breaking a tie).

Chair's Debating Rights

In a Council or Committee meeting, the Chair may debate a motion while presiding, but on the same basis as other members, i.e.: The Chair adds their name to the speaker's lineup and waits for their turn to speak, and, when they want to speak on the same issue a second time, they must wait until first time speakers have spoken. The Chair must not engage in back and forth rebuttals, as this would be unfair to other members.

At the MNO Annual General Assembly, the Chair avoids taking advocacy positions on motions. If a crucial point was omitted and the Chair wants to make it, they would vacate the Chair (usually the PCMNO Vice-Chair, or at a community level the Council President or alternate then takes over the Chair duties), and resume the Chair once the motion has been voted on.

President Privilege

As the provincially elected leader and chief spokesperson, the role of President of the MNO is a substantive role. The role of President is part of a long history of leadership that has guided the Métis in their fight for rights, recognition and justice since the 1800's. By electing a President, Ontario's Métis citizens have entrusted this person with great responsibility to lead the MNO forward in the best interests of future generations of Metis Citizens and Communities.

Métis citizens understand that President is heavily relied upon. As a result, the Métis Rules of Order have always assigned the President privileges to ensure stability in dealing with political conflicts, and the deployment time and resources.

One of these President privileges is the right to set a certain number of protected items on the agenda at every Executive Committee meeting, PCMNO meeting, Annual

Assembly meeting, and Special Citizen Meeting. The President also has the right to call special PCMNO meetings and Executive Committee meetings, and has no limit to their debate time in any MNO meeting. The President is also able to, within the limits of the Rules of Order, shorten or extend debate time at meetings. The President also serves as an ex officio (i.e. by virtue of one's position or status) officer to all MNO committees.

Protected President's Agenda Items

At the beginning of every meeting the agenda is reviewed and items taken off or added before attendees vote on its approval. The President can list three items which must be addressed as priorities and which cannot be altered. This does not include the President's Report, which is in addition to these three protected items. This privilege can be exercised at PCMNO meetings, Executive meetings, General Assemblies and Special Meetings of Citizens. The President's protected items have a distinguishing mark and must be addressed first.

While the President can list three agenda items that must be addressed as priorities, the number of items will be proportional based on the number of meeting days.

Example:

1. Call to order
2. Opening Prayer
3. Minutes of last meeting
4. President's Report
5. Self-Government negotiations (P)
6. Canadian constitutional issues (P)
7. Métis registration (P)
8. Treasurer's Report

3.8 Agendas, Minutes

The agenda is usually drawn up by the Chair, with input from Members and from Staff. When designing an agenda for a meeting, consider these factors:

- The agenda should generally follow the sequence established in Bylaws or Policies. The Bylaws/Policies may also impose deadlines for submitting documents for a meeting.
- Most agenda items should be pre-scheduled, with last minute items being the exception, and not the norm. Relevant documents should be circulated (and read) before the meeting. They should be easy to review and action-oriented (including decision-making options and motions where needed). At the meeting, only the key points and proposed actions need to be discussed.
- Presenters of reports should receive confirmation of the time when they'll be asked to speak, how much time will be available for the presentation for addressing questions, and how they will be notified that their time is running out.
- The number of items on the agenda should be reasonable, to help ensure that each of them can receive proper attention within the available time. It may be wise to estimate how much time will be required for each major issue and allocate time accordingly.
- Members who want to present their own motions should make them available by the deadline set in Policy/Bylaws, so they can be circulated and reviewed before the meeting.
- Members are able to present a motion on the floor or during a meeting. This does not apply for special business resolutions during the MNO's AGA.

Minutes are a historical record of a meeting's deliberations and decision-making processes, focusing primarily on what was done by the group (collectively) and not on what each member said or did.

Verbatim minutes should be avoided, unless required for legal reasons. Alternatively, the group should have "decisions-only" minutes or "anecdotal" minutes (which capture only the key points made, with minimal or no attribution of comments to individuals).

3.9 Sample Scripts

SCRIPT A: CHANGING THE AGENDA

Chair: "Next on the agenda is item number 3..." (Interruption by member A).

Member A: "Mr./Madam Chair."

Chair: "The chair recognizes member A."

Member A: "Can we please change the agenda and deal with item 7 now? I have just received an urgent call and need to leave in 10 minutes."

Chair: "Is there any objection to changing the agenda and dealing with item 7 now?" (PAUSE).

SCENARIO 1: There is no objection to the proposed change

Chair: "There being no objection, we will deal with item 7 now, and return to item 3 afterwards."

SCENARIO 2: There is an objection to the proposed change

Chair: "There are objections to changing the agenda, and we will take a show of hands. Those in favor of changing the agenda, please raise one hand. (PAUSE). Lower your hands. Those opposed to changing the agenda, raise one hand. (PAUSE). Lower your hands."

If the vote is in favor of the proposed change:

Chair: "The agenda has been changed. We'll deal with item 7 now and get back to item 3 afterwards."

If the vote is against the proposed change:

Chair: "The agenda will remain unchanged. The next item is number 3."

**Does this cover what you need to know about the Agenda?
Do you have additional comments to add?**

SCRIPT B: PROCESSING A MAIN MOTION

Chair: "Next on the agenda we have a motion relating to an awards event. This motion was submitted in writing ahead of the meeting by Member A. The chair recognizes member A to make the motion."

Member A: "Mr. Chair. I move that we hold an awards event on a date to be determined by the Events Committee."

Member B: "Second".

Chair: "It is moved and seconded that we hold an awards event on a date to be determined by the Events Committee. Member A, would you like to speak to the motion that you made?"

Member A: "Yes, Mr. Chair. I am in favor of the motion and urge my colleagues to vote in favor of it. My reason is that I believe there are several individuals who have done exceptional work for us and they deserve some recognition for their great efforts."

Chair: "Is there any further debate on the motion?"

Member C: "Mr. Chair."

Chair: "The Chair recognizes member C."

Member C: "Mr. Chair, I speak against the motion. One of our sister organizations tried this idea recently. It was a bit of fun for them, but it also proved to be a waste of time and efforts."

Chair: "Is there any further debate on the motion to hold an awards event on a date to be determined by the Events Committee? (Pause)"

There being no further debate, we will vote.

The motion is that we hold an awards event on a date to be determined by the Events Committee. This motion requires a majority vote.

Those in favor of the motion raise one hand. (PAUSE) Lower your hands. Those opposed to the motion raise one hand. (PAUSE). Lower your hands.

The motion is adopted/defeated.

The next item on the agenda is _____."

Does this cover what you need to know about Processing a Main Motion?

SCRIPT C: CLOSING DEBATE

AT THE CHAIR'S INITIATIVE

Chair: "Our time is running short. Does anyone have any new input to add and, if not, we will now end the debate and vote on the main motion. Are there any objections? (PAUSE) There being no objections, we will proceed to vote on the motion, which is to hold an awards event in April.

Those in favor of this motion please raise one hand. (PAUSE). Lower your hands. Those opposed raise one hand. (PAUSE). Lower your hands. The motion is adopted, and we have agreed to hold an awards event in April. The next item of business is _____."

Does this cover what you need to know about Closing a Debate?

AT A MEMBER'S INITIATIVE

Chair: "Is there any further discussion on the motion to hold an awards event in April?"

Member A: "Mr./Madam Chair."

Chair: "The chair recognizes member A."

Member A: "Our time is running short. I move the previous question." (or: "I move to end the debate and take the vote on the motion now.").

Member B: "Second".

Chair: "It is moved and seconded that debate be ended and that we proceed to the vote on the main motion immediately. Those in favor of ending debate please raise one hand. (PAUSE) Lower your hands. Those opposed to ending debate raise one hand. (PAUSE). Lower your hands."

Does this cover what you need to know about ending debate?

SCENARIO 1: The motion to end debate is adopted

Chair: "The motion to end debate is adopted. We will now vote on the motion to hold an awards event in April. Those in favor of this motion please raise one hand. (PAUSE). Lower your hands. Those opposed raise one hand. (PAUSE). Lower your hands. The motion is adopted, and we will hold an awards event in April. The next item of business is _____."

SCENARIO 2: The motion to end debate if defeated

Chair: "The motion to end debate is defeated. We will continue the debate on the main motion to hold an awards event in April. Is there any further debate on the main motion?"

SCRIPT D: HANDLING AN AMENDMENT (informal, probably non-contentious)

Chair: "Is there any debate on the motion to hold an awards event in April?" Member A:
"Mr./Madam Chair."

Chair: "The chair recognizes member A."

Member A: "I propose to replace 'April' with 'May'. I checked with several members and it works much better than April."

Chair: "Is there any objection to replacing 'April' with 'March'? (PAUSE)" There being no objections, the main motion has been amended to read:

'To hold an awards event in May.'

Is there any further debate on the main motion as amended?"

If not, we'll vote on the main motion, which reads:

"To hold an awards event in May."

Those in favor of this main motion raise one hand. (PAUSE) Lower your hands.

Those opposed raise one hand. (PAUSE) Lower your hands. The motion is adopted and we will hold an awards event in May.

Next on the agenda we have item _____, which is _____."

**Does this cover what you
need to know about Handling
an Amendment?**

SCRIPT E: HANDLING AN AMENDMENT (formal, possibly contentious)

Chair: "Is there any debate on the motion to invite Joe Famous to speak to us next month?" Member A: "Mr./Madam Chair."

Chair: "The chair recognizes member A."

Member A: "I move to amend the motion by replacing 'Joe Famous' by 'Tony Infamous'."

Member B: "Second."

Chair: "It is moved and seconded to amend the main motion by replacing the words 'Joe Famous' by the words 'Tony Infamous'. If amended, the main motion would read: 'To invite Tony Infamous to speak to us next month.' Is there any debate on the amendment to replace the words 'Joe Famous' with 'Tony Infamous'?"

Ending the debate and voting on the amendment:

Chair: "Is there any further debate on the amendment to replace 'Joe Famous' by 'Tony Infamous'? (PAUSE) If not, we will vote on the amendment. Those in favor of replacing 'Joe Famous' by 'Tony Infamous' raise one hand. (PAUSE) Lower your hands. Those opposed to the amendment raise one hand. (PAUSE) Lower your hands. The amendment is adopted and the amended main motion reads: 'To invite Tony Infamous to speak to us next month.' Is there any further debate on the main motion as amended?"

(Chair facilitates the debate and then takes a vote on the amended main motion).

SCRIPT F: A MOTION TO REFER

At the Chair's initiative (Informal):

Chair: "In light of the debate so far, it appears like we could benefit from an analysis of this proposed agreement by our Governance Committee. Is there any objection to referring the main motion to the Governance Committee, with an instruction to report back at Council's June meeting? (PAUSE) There being no objections, the motion is referred to the Governance Committee, with an instruction to report back to the Council at its June meeting. Next on the agenda we have agenda item 5, which is _____."

At a Member's Initiative (formal):

Chair: "Is there any further debate on the main motion regarding the proposed joint transportation initiative?"

Member A: "Mr./Madam Chair."

Chair: "The Chair recognizes Member A."

Member A: "Mr./Madam Chair. I do not believe we are ready to vote on this motion, plus the motion does not appear to be time sensitive. I move that the main motion be referred to the Governance Committee for review, with an instruction to report back at our June meeting."

Member B: "Second."

Chair: "It is moved and seconded that the main motion be referred to the Governance Committee for review, with an instruction to report back at the June Council meeting. Is there any debate on the motion to refer?" (Members debate the proposed referral).

Chair: "Is there any further debate on the motion to refer? (PAUSE)
If not, we will vote on whether to refer the main motion to the Governance Committee for review, with instructions to report back at the June Council meeting.
Those in favor of referral raise one hand. (PAUSE) Lower your hands. Those opposed to referral raise one hand. (PAUSE) Lower your hands."

If the motion to refer is adopted:

Chair: "The motion to refer is adopted, and the main motion on the proposed joint transportation initiative is referred to the Governance Committee for review, with an instruction to report back at the June Council meeting, at which time the motion will be scheduled for discussion under Committee Reports. Next on today's agenda we have item 5."

If the motion to refer is defeated:

Chair: "The motion to refer is defeated, and we will continue to debate the main motion regarding the joint transportation initiative. Is there any further debate on this main motion?"

Does this cover what you need to know about a Motion to Refer?

SCRIPT G: A MOTION TO POSTPONE/DEFER

At the Chair's initiative (informal):

Chair: "Members, it is getting late, and it appears like we're not quite ready to vote on the main motion, and that this decision can wait. Is there any objection to postponing consideration of the main motion until the next Council meeting? (PAUSE) There being no objections, the main motion is postponed until the next Board meeting and will be picked up as unfinished business. Next on the agenda we have agenda item 5, which is ."

At a Member's Initiative (formal):

Chair: "Is there any further debate on the motion regarding the joint transportation initiative?" Member A: "Mr./Madam Chair."

Chair: "The Chair recognizes Member A."

Member A: "Mr./Madam Chair. The issue is new and is quite difficult, and I don't think it is time sensitive. I move that the main motion be postponed until the next Board meeting."

Member B: "Second."

Chair: "It is moved and seconded that consideration of the main motion be postponed until the next Board meeting. Is there any debate on the motion to postpone?" (members debate the proposed postponement).

Does this cover what you need to know about a motion to Postpone/Defer?

Chair: "Is there any further debate on the motion to postpone? (PAUSE)

If not, we will vote on whether the main motion should be postponed until the next Board meeting. Those in favor of postponement raise one hand. (PAUSE) Lower your hands. Those opposed to postponement raise one hand. (PAUSE) Lower your hands."

If the motion to postpone is adopted:

Chair: "The motion to postpone is adopted. The main motion regarding the joint transportation initiative is postponed until the next Board meeting. It will be picked up under unfinished business. Next on today's agenda we have item 5, which is ."

If the motion to postpone is not adopted:

Chair: "The motion to postpone is defeated, and we will continue the debate on the main motion on the joint transportation initiative. The motion is on the overhead screen. Is there any further debate on this main motion?"

PART 4

EVALUATIONS

Why Evaluations are Important

Evaluations are critical for maintaining the effectiveness of individuals and decision-making bodies. They should be done on a regular basis, so individuals and decision-making bodies can monitor their effectiveness, make adjustments when needed, and celebrate successes.

4.1 Evaluating a Council/Committee Meeting

	Ineffective Meeting 0 means as bad as it gets	Effective Meeting 10 means as good as it gets	Score
1	A weak connection between the agenda and the MNO's mission, vision and strategic goals.	A clear sense of purpose and a solid link between the meeting's agenda and the MNO's mission, vision and strategic goals.	
2	A disorganized and sometimes rushed decision-making process, with hasty solutions ('quick' motions) to poorly defined problems.	Logical and organized problem solving: first defining the problem, then evaluating potential solutions (based on set criteria), then choosing the best option, then assigning follow-up tasks.	
3	Members are late, leave early, are unprepared, use electronic devices for social media entries or to pick up texts and e-mails.	Members arrive on time, prepared, and have the knowledge to make smart decisions; They committed to being there, in body and in spirit.	
4	Decisions are made and motions are voted on without any clarity as to the precise wording. Action items are vague or non-existent.	Clearly articulated consensus (or motions) and follow up items. Concise minutes help ensure follow-up by capturing what was decided.	
5	Vocal members dominate discussions; quiet members and their input are left behind.	Participation is balanced. Members have equal opportunities to speak and influence decisions. Discussions are enriched by the diverse input.	
6	Members are silent when a dysfunction occurs for fear of insulting others. They tolerate chaos, repetition, digressions, and personal attacks.	Members act as partners in the process. They speak up if a dysfunction is damaging the quality of decisions or the process itself.	
7	Meeting is slow and monotonous. Some people ramble and no one asks them to be brief. Some fall asleep. Conversely, things may move rapidly, and people are afraid to raise valid concerns for fear of slowing the meeting down.	Time is well managed. The pace is dynamic and engaging but comfortable (not too fast nor too slow). Members speak concisely. More time is spent on significant issues and less time is spent on minutiae.	
8	Rules for participation are not in place, leading to a sense of a 'free for all'. Alternatively, rules are used too rigidly, stifle creativity and curtail a natural flow of ideas, thereby making the meeting too formal and stuffy.	Essential rules are established: wait to be recognized before speaking, stay on track, be brief and concise, be respectful of others, etc. Rules are used flexibly, so they promote efficiency without stifling vital debate.	
9	Personal attacks and insults are rampant. The climate is adversarial, with each faction using manipulative tactics to achieve its goals.	A respectful and civilized tone is kept, even when issues are contentious. The focus is on issues and not on personalities. The group works as a team to advance MNO's mandate.	
10	The group is distracted by logistical problems: a hot or cold room, outside noise, faulty projector, catering issues, and so on.	Logistical details are handled flawlessly through meticulous planning and preparation, and do not become a distraction.	
	GRAND TOTAL	Add the numbers on the right hand column. Minimum = 0. Maximum = 100.	

4.2 Evaluating a Council/Committee Member

	Ineffective Member 0 means as bad as it gets	Effective Member 10 means as good as it gets	Score
1	Joins the group mainly to socialize, gain visibility, stature, influence and power.	Joins the Council altruistically to advance its mandate, and to serve the MNO, its Charter Communities, and its Citizens.	
2	Brings a low commitment level. Misses meetings, declines to take on any work, and always has excuses for non-performance.	Is reliable and conscientious. Prepares fully for meetings, attends them regularly, takes on assignments, and always delivers quality results.	
3	Tolerates mediocrity and flawed decisions. Has no interest in innovation and creativity.	Demands excellence of oneself and of others. Introduces freshness, creativity and innovation.	
4	Has a need to be popular with others and hence does not raise valid concerns about potentially risky decisions. Does not complain about process issues, except after a meeting.	Is prepared to raise tough questions, even if they slow things down, in order to help reduce risk. Does not hesitate to complain about meeting problems in a timely fashion.	
5	A single-issue advocate. Joins the Council or Committee to promote a narrow interest. Has a closed mind and unchangeable views, and is not interested in learning from others.	Places MNO interests ahead of narrow ones. Keeps an open mind and a natural curiosity. Is eager to learn from others and thereby make informed and balanced decisions.	
6	Unprincipled. Creates alliances and makes backroom deals to manipulate decisions. Finds the right words to promote the wrong goals. Will do anything to get re-elected.	Honest, principled, selfless and trustworthy. Acts with integrity. Embodies MNO's core principles and values. Re-election takes a backseat to doing the right things.	
7	Egotistical and functions as a lone operator. Treats others with disrespect. Irritable and uptight. Takes questions as personal attacks. Quick to dismiss new ideas.	Humble and ego-free and functions as a team player. Treats others as valued colleagues and partners. Mature, calm, patient, light hearted, and thick skinned.	
8	Undermines and attacks collective decisions publicly after they are made. Presents personal views as collective positions.	Accepts collective decisions. Represents the voting body correctly when requested to do so.	
9	Abuses powers for personal gain. Denies the existence of blatant conflicts of interest.	Adheres to the established code of ethics. Discloses conflict of interest in a timely manner.	
10	Leaks confidential information from closed meetings, thereby damaging trust and exposing the organization to risk.	Keeps confidentiality. Questions the inclusion of items on a closed meeting agenda when there seems to be no valid reasons for it.	
	GRAND TOTAL	Add the numbers on the right hand column. Minimum = 0. Maximum = 100.	

4.3 Evaluating a Council/Committee Chair

	Ineffective Chair 0 means as bad as it gets	Effective Chair 10 means as good as it gets	Score
1	Takes the job for the power or benefits. Enjoys the visibility with the media and the public. Refuses to share the spotlight with others.	Takes the job in order to serve and make a difference. Is selfless and committed to MNO's Statement of Prime Purpose.	
2	Is used to making unilateral decisions and giving orders to others. Biases debates in favor of certain outcomes. Uses threats and bullying.	Leads the Board in consensus building and making collective decisions. Engages all members as equal partners in the process.	
3	Possessive of the leadership role, making the organization dependent on him or her. Makes no room for others to succeed. Tries to contain the participation of new members.	Shares the leadership spotlight with others. Serves as a mentor and builds other leaders, thereby ensuring succession and continuity. Empowers members to excel. Recognizes contributions and achievements regularly.	
4	Timid and hesitant to intervene. Afraid of confrontation. Tries hard to please and doesn't know how to say no. Does not respond well to disapproval, criticism or anger.	Intervenes proactively to reduce problems. Addresses dysfunctions with a principle-based approach. Is capable of saying no, gently but firmly, to ensure fairness for all and to facilitate effective decision-making.	
5	Impatient, egotistical and short tempered. Treats criticism or disagreements as personal attacks. Is condescending and disrespectful towards those who dare contradict him or her.	Mature, patient, calm, reassuring, approachable, respectful, and supportive. Maintains freshness and a light touch. Is used to leaving his or her ego behind.	
6	Narrow-sighted, reactive and crisis driven.	Maintains a broad view of issues and is able to guide the group in debating tough issues.	
7	Disorganized and unprepared for meetings.	Organized and fully prepared. A role model and an inspiration for others to follow.	
8	Oblivious and unconcerned with relationship building, both internally and externally.	Builds and maintains relationships with Board members, the staff, the community, and external stakeholders and suppliers.	
9	Has a poor sense of timing. Does not know when and how to bring closure to discussions and move forward to facilitate group decision making.	Intuitive and responsive to moods and needs at a meeting. Balances the need to make progress (time management) with the need for democratic and effective decision making.	
10	Talkative and verbose. Offers rebuttals to every comment made by others. Unable to facilitate a logical flow and step-by-step decision-making, or summarize progress and initiate closure.	Communicates clearly, briefly, concisely and logically. Is able to clarify decision-making options or divide multi-faceted topics or decisions into manageable components.	
	GRAND TOTAL	Add the numbers on the right hand column. Minimum = 0. Maximum = 100.	

4.4 Evaluating a Council/Committee Collectively

	Ineffective Council/Committee 0 means as bad as it gets	Effective Council/Committee 10 means as good as it gets	Score
1	Bogged down in small details. Micromanages the CEO and staff. Focuses on minutiae and does not attend to long-term goals.	Proactive, planned, sophisticated and creative. Strategically focused, making room for Staff to excel. Operates from a strategic level.	
2	Tolerates low commitment levels, such as Members who often miss meetings or fail to keep their promises.	Fosters genuine commitment for the job. Members truly want to be there. They keep their promises, and deliver quality work.	
3	Embraces the status quo and blocks change. The opponents overpower the proponents.	Carefully scrutinizes proposals. Questions the status quo and welcomes new ideas. Engages both positive views and dissenting views.	
4	Fragmented. Driven by narrow interests and personal agendas. Has a win-lose culture: It's you against me. Narrow majority decisions are common. Meetings feel like a combat zone.	Works as a team. Has a win-win culture: It's all of us against the problem. Narrow majority decisions are rare. Meetings resemble a construction zone.	
5	Impatient and shows little interest in learning or making informed decisions. Council members talk more than they listen.	There is an appetite for learning from members, staff, advisors, and the community. Members listen more than they talk.	
6	Builds dependencies on key leaders. Delegates duties without clear deliverables and deadlines. Works hard, not smart.	Constantly expands its leadership base. Delegates duties, with clear deliverables and deadlines, to officers, staff, and committees. Works smart and hard.	
7	Maintains a slow, monotonous and boring pace. Performs routine, predictable and menial work.	Keeps a dynamic and engaging pace, with exciting progress and quality decisions made.	
8	Allows dominant members to control agendas. Quieter members, together with their ideas, knowledge and skills, are left behind.	Gives members equal opportunities to influence decisions, and provides them with the tools and knowledge to excel. Brings out the best in members and celebrates their successes.	
9	Provides unclear directions and poor leadership to the professional staff, and does not demand excellence of them.	Provides thoughtful and credible directions to professional staff. Promotes a safe work environment and rewards excellence.	
10	Detached from the community and ignores its input, or capitulates to vocal minorities.	Is in touch and in tune with the community and listens to its input. Provides quality leadership and keeps the community informed.	
	GRAND TOTAL	Add the numbers on the right hand column. Minimum = 0. Maximum = 100.	

Métis Nation
of Ontario 