

Senate Operations Review Committee
Meeting of February 26, 2009

Amendments to the Senate Rules of Procedures

Introduction

A number of circumstances over the past few years prompted a review of the Senate Rules of Procedures, including Senator J. Welsh's concerns about nominating procedures which were raised at the May 21, 2008 Senate Meeting.

Senate Rules of Procedures specify that any amendments to the Rules require a Notice of Motion given at the previous meeting. This Notice was given at the January 29, 2009 Senate Meeting.

Review of the Issues

Proposed Amendments to Senate Rules of Procedures

Current

16. Record of Voting

When a vote is taken in the Senate, any member may require that the numbers, or that the member's own vote, be recorded in the minutes.

Proposed

III. Voting

16a. ~~Record of Voting Rights~~

All Senators, including Ex Officio members, have full voting rights. Voting rights are limited to those Senators present at the time of the vote. Proxy votes are not permissible. In the case of a tie, the Chair has a casting vote.

III. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

18. Definition

The Senate may at any time form itself into a committee of the whole body. The purpose of this procedure is to allow less formal discussion of a complex or controversial issue which, nevertheless, requires some action to be taken.

19. Procedure

A committee of the whole is ordinarily appointed by a motion "that the motion (designated by the substantive issue or the names of the movers) be considered in the committee of the whole with (name of person) in the chair".

A motion made in committee of the whole need not be seconded, and the rule limiting the number of times a member may speak shall be withheld except that no member may speak more than once to any question until every other member choosing to speak shall have spoken.

Committee of the whole is terminated by passing a motion "that the committee of the whole now rise and report". The person who acted as chair of the committee of the whole then reports to Senate, usually in the form of a motion "that Senate concur with the decisions made in the committee of the whole, nameperq-1(co)-aur n

- (4) When vacancies arise on Standing Committees outside of the regular period for election to Standing Committees, the Nominating Committee will be asked to nominate replacements as soon as possible. Action will be taken by the Senate at the same meeting at which the slate is presented, it being understood that provision will be made for further nominations from the floor of the Senate as long as nominees are present to indicate their willingness to take office if elected, or they have accepted the nomination in writing before hand. Such nominations must be supported by at least five senators. Voting will be done by means of a paper ballot.
- (4) When vacancies arise on Standing Committees outside of the regular period for election to Standing Committees, the Nominating Committee will be asked to nominate replacements as soon as possible. Action will be taken by the Senate at the same meeting at which the slate is presented, it being understood that provision will be made for further nominations from the floor of the Senate as long as nominees are present to indicate their willingness to take office if elected, or they have accepted the nomination in writing before hand. Such nominations must be supported by at least five senators. Voting will be done by means of a paper ballot.

In circumstances where electronic voting is necessary, the Nominating Committee shall present a slate of nominees to the Senate prior to the date scheduled for the vote. Nominations, in addition to those presented by the Nominating Committee, may be received electronically, or in writing, by a date specified by the Secretary of the Senate, and must be accompanied by written evidence that the nominee is willing to serve along with the name of 3 members of Senate. If there are additional nominations, the Secretary of the Senate shall transmit to all Senators electronically a ballot containing the biographical information or other comments (up to a limit of 75 words) of the nominee(s). In order to be valid, ballots shall be returned to the Secretary of the Senate on or before a specified date. The result of the vote shall be transmitted to the Senate.