

**Election of officers** Elections are usually held during the “new business” portion of a meeting. Here’s one way they may be conducted:

- The Chair states the positions up for election and the clean time required.
- The Chair calls for nominations for a single position.
- Members nominate other members. (They may also nominate themselves.) Nominations can be seconded, but some groups don’t require this. Nominees must accept or decline a nomination. Nominations continue until a member moves to close nominations.
- The Chair asks nominees to leave the room.
- The Chair announces the name of each nominee, members vote by a show of hands, and the Secretary tallies the vote. The number of votes received by each nominee is not entered into the meeting record. The Chair votes only in the event of a tie.
- The Chair calls the nominees back into the room.
- The Secretary or Chair congratulates the winner or winners. The vote count is not announced.
- Repeat this process for each position.

#### **A few other things**

**Tabling:** If someone motions to table a motion that needs a second, then the members vote on whether or not to table. The tabling of a motion overrides further discussion of the topic.

**Format Changes:** There is a suggested process for format changes:

- A motion is made to vote on any proposed change at the next business meeting. The change is not voted on immediately.
- If the motion to vote on the change carries, this proposal is announced at the meeting for the next month.
- It is then discussed and voted on at the following month’s business meeting.

**Note:** *It is suggested that proposed format changes not be decided by group conscience during a CMA meeting. Officers may suggest that these matters be brought up at the next business meeting.*

**Digressions:** If a motion is on the floor, other topics are not to be discussed. If someone brings up another topic during the discussion of a motion, the chair should say, “There is a motion on the floor.” If someone is rambles during discussion, the chair can say something like, “Is this a pro or a con?” to help refocus the discussion. ■



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# WHAT IS A BUSINESS MEETING?

WHY DO WE NEED THEM? WHAT GETS ADDRESSED? WHO CAN ATTEND? HOW DO WE ELECT OFFICERS?

Crystal Meth Anonymous

**BUSINESS MEETINGS** This pamphlet discusses the purpose of business meetings and offers a sample format for them. The following are only suggestions based on our experience. Each group is autonomous and conducts business according to its own group conscience.

#### **Why do we need business meetings?**

Business meetings take care of logistics necessary to keep a meeting going. Business meetings help ensure CMA meeting time is dedicated to recovery, not business details. Business meetings often address matters such as:

- Finances**—what to do with donations, paying the rent, and purchasing items such as banners, literature and chips
- Format**—changing from a “round robin” to a “show of hands” format, creating a timekeeper or eliminating or adding a fellowship break
- Scripts**—creating or delegating the revision of them
- Service positions**—electing, creating, eliminating or modifying responsibilities
- Intergroup**—discussion of the group’s involvement with the Intergroup

#### **How often do we have business meetings?**

Each group is autonomous. Business meetings may be held as often as an individual group chooses—monthly, every other month, quarterly, as needed or whenever. The meetings are generally held immediately after a regular CMA meeting.

#### **What are the responsibilities of the Chair and Secretary during business meetings?**

Business meetings are usually led by the Chair of the most recent regular meeting. The Secretary takes notes or keeps minutes. (Notes are less detailed than minutes.) It is a good idea to put any notes from business meetings in a folder or notebook, so there is a record, especially when it comes to motions that have been passed or tabled. The Chair cannot make a motion, second a motion, call to question or offer a pro or con. The Chair does not vote,

except to break a tie. When a tie occurs, it is suggested that the Chair vote for the status quo, but it is the Chair’s prerogative to vote as he or she wishes. The Secretary can make motions, vote and otherwise participate like any other member. It is a good idea for Chairs, Secretaries and other members to announce an upcoming business meeting at least a week in advance.

#### **Who can attend a business meeting?**

It is customary in CMA to include all who are interested in a group’s business meeting. Many of us choose not to vote at meetings of groups we do not attend regularly, since we might not be aware of those groups’ practices and needs.

**One possible format** This business meeting format follows an informal version of *Robert’s Rules of Order*. Twelve Step programs have a history of following formats like this one:

**I. Convene** The Chair opens with the Serenity Prayer.

**II. Read the Traditions** The Chair asks, “Can someone read the 12 Traditions and/or the 12 Concepts please?”

**III. Consider the Treasurer’s report** The Treasurer offers a report and answers any questions that may arise from it. A motion should be made to accept, reject, or table the report. The motion needs a “second.” Then, a member should “call to question,” or request a vote on the motion at hand. The Secretary records this process. If the Treasurer is not present, a motion may be made to table the report until the next meeting.

**IV. Hear from the Group Service Representative (GSR)** The GSR discusses Intergroup activities and relays any announcements.

**V. Revisit any old business** The Secretary reads old business. He or she reviews any motions that were considered at the previous meeting and reminds the group of

any unfinished business. Though it is really the Secretary’s job to outline old business, members also are usually allowed to bring up such items.

**VI. Address any new business** The Chair calls for any new business. Members may make motions after being recognized by the Chair. A motion must be seconded. If no one “seconds,” the Chair confirms that there is no second, and the motion is not discussed further. If a motion gets a second, the Chair restates the motion. The Chair asks for discussion. In our experience it is beneficial to limit discussion of a particular motion to two pros and two cons. The Chair recognizes speakers. It is a good idea for the Chair to adhere to the two-pros, two-cons format somewhat strictly here. After the discussion, someone calls the motion to question. The Chair should again restate the motion and hold a vote by a show of hands. The Secretary counts votes but does not need to enter them into the record. The Chair states whether the motion was carried or defeated. The secretary records this.

**Note:** *A member may make a motion to have an “open” discussion of an issue if he or she thinks the two-pros, two-cons format is insufficient or that the issue at hand is too substantive for an abbreviated debate. It is a good idea to seek a time limit for open discussions. CMA decisions should be made by substantial unity from all interested parties, whenever possible. Sometimes this requires an extended discussion. When time does not allow for a lengthy discussion, the topic may need to be tabled and resumed at a later date.*

**VII. Adjourn** When a motion is made to close and it is seconded, the group votes on this. No more new business is discussed unless the vote to close does not pass. Members usually close the business meeting with a prayer. ➤