

Substantive Notice: Explaining the Voting Process

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Purpose:

This document is intended to provide a status update concerning the process for voting on the proposal submitted for consideration at the 2018 Annual Business Meeting (ABM). It is also intended to provide some basic background information about the changes that were implemented in 2015 and 2016.

Background:

Like a lot of organizations, Recovering Couples Anonymous (RCA) has experienced some growing pains around how it conducts “business”. Just like couples in recovery, RCA has strived to apply the lessons we have learned and make improvements. During the 2014 Annual Business Meeting (ABM) in London, a member of RCA suggested some substantial changes to how topics were selected for discussion during the Annual Business Meeting. After additional discussion and debate the Board of Trustees developed and adopted a policy which incorporated most of the suggestions.

Introduction:

The By-Mail and Delegate Couple process for voting on proposals was adopted by RCA during the 2006 Annual Business Meeting and implemented for the first time at the 2007 ABM. This process gives each group one vote whether it be expressed by a delegate couple, a proxy couple, or by a ballot submitted via mail prior to the Annual Business Meeting. Neither the suggested changes nor the Board policy alter this core assurance of equality between the groups. Rather it is enhanced by providing groups an opportunity to determine the order in which proposals are presented on the Final Notice and ultimately the order they will be debated during the ABM.

Summary of the Phases:

Phase 1: Submission of Proposals [Completed]

The Structure Committee prepares a form for the submission of proposals. The form, instructions for completion of the form and notice of the December 1, 2017 deadline for submission were posted on the RCA website. The deadline for submission was determined in order to ensure sufficient time to complete the remaining tasks and still meet the legal requirements of providing sufficient notice of the issues to be considered at the Annual Business Meeting .¹

At this stage the final wording of neither the proposal nor the entire rationale were necessary. However, the clarity and completeness of the proposal and rationale will aid the groups as they do their best to arrive at an informed group conscience.

Phase 2: Selecting and Ranking of Proposals: [Completed]

There were only two proposals submitted for consideration at the 2018 ABM. It was the determination of the Structure Committee that the phase was not necessary for 2018.

If this phase had been needed then the Structure Committee would have compiled the proposals and prepared a document for the groups to provide their collective opinion as to the importance of the various proposals, i.e. a ranking form. This compilation of the proposals, the form, its instructions, and the deadline for submission would be posted on the RCA website.

The results of the rankings from the groups would be posted on the RCA website.

Phase 3: Voting on the Proposals

A document containing the final wording of the proposals is prepared. (May 2018) Included in this document are the rationales of the submitters and comments (if any) by the Structure Committee and the Board of Trustees. This document is posted on the RCA website. Concurrent to the posting is the opening of the discussion forums on the website. In order to easily follow the discussion there will be a separate forum for each proposal.

During this stage a group delegate form and a by-mail ballot are prepared and posted on the website. The completion of a delegate designation form is required regardless of attendance at the ABM. While it is possible to submit the form the morning of the ABM, it is extremely helpful for the best use of the limited time available for the meeting if it is submitted prior to the ABM. Instructions and deadline for submission of the by-mail ballot are also included in the posting. The results of the by-mail ballot are conveyed to the entire assembly on a proposal by proposal basis during the ABM. These results are included in determining the outcome of each proposal.

It should be noted that throughout these steps there is substantial coordination and communication between several of the RCA service committees and the Board of Trustees.

If the reader would prefer a more in-depth explanation of the voting process they may refer to the Voting Process Table.

End Notes

¹ RCA was incorporated in the state of Missouri due in part to the World Service Office being located in St. Louis at the time. Missouri state statute regarding business meetings of Non-Profit organizations has a 30 to 60 day notice requirement.