



CONSENSUS DECISION MAKING POLICY

It is OWCH policy to make decisions which concern the community by consensus. It is vital for all members, including non-resident members, of OWCH to be fully informed about consensus decision making methods. Facilitators need to remain neutral, use their listening skills and have confidence that a solution can be found.

- 1) Ideas, concerns and suggestions for change or development concerning the community may be presented in advance to the CBM (Community Business Meetings) as a proposal. If a proposal is made, the decision should be agreed using consensus by the members in attendance.
- 2) If differences of opinion arise, when a proposal is made, members present may “agree”, “stand aside” or “block”.
- 3) The member or members who block, must seek support and bring an amended proposal and any additional information within a time frame **to be agreed at the meeting**. (The aim should be the following CBM if at all possible)
If there is more than one counter proposal under discussion, it is good practice for those involved to work together to present one amended proposal.
- 4) All proposals and counter proposals with relevant information must be circulated at least one week before the next agreed scheduled meeting. It is the responsibility of every member to read the proposals provided in order to make informed contributions for effective consensus decision-making. Members should come to meetings with their minds prepared but not made up.
- 5) The facilitator of a CBM, at which a counter proposal is to be considered, should allow extra time on the agenda for full participation by all members present. Absent members may make their views known by email to the full membership prior to the meeting. After full discussion, (which may include working in small groups) the facilitator will ascertain the views of every member present regarding any proposals that have been submitted. If agreement is reached, the matter can be resolved then and there. In exceptional circumstances, it may be agreed at this CBM that more time is needed in order to further amend the counter proposal.
- 6) If a decision cannot be reached by consensus at the final meeting regarding an amended proposal, a decision will be made by a three - quarter majority vote of those present.

Adopted by consensus December 2019