



Council Catholic Women's League of Canada
Nova Scotia Provincial Council
Past President
Communique #1

Catholic and Living It !

To: Diocesan Past Presidents: Cleo Windsor and Janet Terrio
cc. Diocesan Presidents: Janice MacDougall and Sandra Kline
Nova Scotia Provincial CWL Council Executive Officers
National Past President and Chairperson of Laws Anne-Marie Gorman

From: Glenda Carson, Nova Scotia Provincial Past President.

Date: February 7, 2022

Happy New Year!! It is hard to believe we are already in our second month. While we are still in a state of pandemic frustration and uncertainty, it does appear that we are in a much stronger position to face upcoming challenges than ever before.

The information in this communique addresses the instructed voting procedures for the motions related to the national per capita fee and the League constitution and bylaws changes. It also reviews some aspects of council election procedures that may be helpful. Some of this information has been requested by council presidents and members. Please ensure parish past presidents and presidents have access to this information.

1. Instructed voting for the national motions on the per capita fee increase and changes to the national constitution and bylaws:

While there is some leverage in our current provincial COVID restrictions to allow our councils to meet, it is understandable that many members are hesitant to gather because of the ease of transmission for the Omicron variant. Only about one half of our parish councils across the province have completed their instructed votes for the motions. The deadline for returning the instructed vote forms is March 28, 2022 so hopefully that will provide time for parish councils to meet and complete the voting. I echo the faith of our national past president, Anne Marie Gorman, that “councils will do the very best they can to ensure they have exercised their membership rights and duty to be part of the process to move the League forward”.

Quorums and voting majorities:

In her communiques dated October 26, 2021 and January 12th, 2022, our national past president, Anne-Marie Gorman reviewed the procedures related to rescinding votes for councils that have already submitted their instructed votes forms as well as information regarding quorums and determining majorities when voting on the motions. The communiques are available on the national website. As well,

the votes required to adopt the motions can be found on the recording form for a council's instructed votes. The following examples are adapted from Anne-Marie's communique and the instructed votes forms.

A quorum of 10% of the membership must be present for the voting to proceed. This includes the president or her delegate. For example:

- If the council has 50 members, you need at least five members present.
- If the council has 43 members, at least five members must still be present since there cannot be part of a member. The number required is therefore rounded up to the next number.
- The per capita fee increase requires a majority of the members present to vote yes. For example:
 - If 12 members are present at least 7 must vote "yes".
 - If 9 members are present, at least 5 members must vote "yes". Again, you would round up to the next number.
- The constitution and bylaws motions require that 2/3 of those present vote yes.
 - If 12 members are present, at least 8 must vote yes. ($12 \times 2/3 = 8$).
 - If 10 members are present at least 7 must vote yes. ($10 \times 2/3 = 6.67$ or 7 rounded up)
- If there is a tie in votes for either the per capita fee motion or the constitution and bylaws, the motion is defeated.

While the treasurers can be called upon to lead the voting procedure for the motion for the per capita fee, the voting on the constitution and bylaws is lead by past presidents.

Completing the instructed votes recording forms: The forms must be completely filled out and signed. If an error has been made, a replacement form may be requested from the national office. As well, if members feel they would like to rescind or re-take the vote on a motion after the forms have been sent in, just inform the national office and they will provide a replacement form. The recording forms are in triplicate Instructions on where to forward them is found at the bottom of the form.

Debating the motions: Some members have expressed concern that the only discussion regarding the motions takes place at the parish council level. It is only members, at the parish council level, that direct decisions regarding changes in the constitution and bylaws and per capita fee. Their instructed vote cannot be changed by other levels of our organization. The voting procedures at the diocesan, provincial and national levels are largely verification and tallying of the instructed votes.

Instructed voting at the diocesan and provincial council levels: Voting delegates (presidents or their designates) will hand in their forms at the time of registration for the council in convention (diocesan or provincial). The voting forms are verified by the council carrying out the instructed vote. During the voting procedure the number of votes cast will be compared to those received at the time of registration. It is important, therefore, that a council's president (or designate) is registered for the convention/AMM and is present for the voting session in order for their council's instructed vote to be counted.

2. Elections:

The special three-year executive terms that were required because of pandemic restrictions are starting to come to an end. *The National Manual of Policy and Procedure* and the *League Constitution & Bylaws* thoroughly cover the nomination and election procedures at all council levels. These are the best resources to follow when planning an election, in addition to any addendums made by councils in their own policy and procedure supplements. Usually the current past president is the chair of a nominations committee since she is not eligible for nomination.

- For both of our diocesan councils, it is important that the election registers are reviewed annually and brought up to date with any changes in the parish council executive members. This can be done through collaboration between the recording secretary and the past president. The register needs to reflect the three-year terms for those moving into past president roles as well as executive members on the diocesan and provincial level. Once the three-year terms are completed, councils will revert back to two-year terms at all levels.
- Many councils are struggling to fill executive roles for their elections. This has been a long-standing concern for our organization across Canada and is one of the areas of focus for our League strategic planning. Councils have historically embraced various strategies to assist in forming executive teams. While co-chairs and co-presidents are not officially recognized within our organization, this is often an approach that has proven successful for some councils. It is important in such circumstances that role responsibilities and lines of communication are clear. For example, it is important to identify would be the person to receive emails and communiques from other council levels. As well, although not part of the formal election procedure, officers and standing committee chairs often are appointed to more than one role, with other members informally assisting the chairperson. It is said that councils need to do whatever they can to remain active. But it is important that solutions are legitimate in relation to our organization's constitution and bylaws and policies and procedures. If this is not possible, it is encouraged that councils reach out to the presidents or past presidents at other council levels to assist with problem solving.

There is great sensitivity across our organization to the fact that many frustrating challenges are being experienced by members and council executives at all levels of our organization. The supportive nature of our CWL sisterhood, the gifts we bring through our faith, and an ability to embrace needed change are all keys to our future success. In the simple words of Saint Teresa of Kolkata, "together we can do great things."

Our Lady of Good Counsel, pray for us.

God bless,
Glenda