

***Electronic Business Meetings***  
***Voting on Motions and the Admission of Candidates for Membership***  
***(Assemblies should follow the same guidelines)***

**Background**

On March 13, 2020, in response to the Coronavirus pandemic, the Knights of Columbus Supreme Council issued guidance strongly recommending that councils temporarily cease in-person events and continue operations **without** face-to-face contact. With these emergency restrictions in place—and recognizing that these are extraordinary times for our members—the Supreme Council temporarily authorizes councils to conduct business by holding **electronic meetings** and conducting **voting** using any number of tools (e.g., Skype, Google Groups, and other teleconference services).<sup>1</sup> Local councils are in the best position to determine what options work best for its members.

Best practices for voting on motions and the admission of candidates for membership are offered below.

**Electronic Meeting Votes - Motions and Admission of Candidates**

During this extraordinary time, councils are permitted to hold electronic business meetings in order to adopt motions and to admit candidates for membership. The parliamentary procedures set forth in *Roberts Rules of Order* must be followed when holding electronic meetings. Motions can be made, seconded, discussed, and voted on. Council officers are encouraged to practice with the electronic meeting format to determine if the online meeting platform can handle these parliamentary steps.

**Quorum:** Choose an electronic meeting platform that informs the host of the number of participants.

**Motions, seconds, and discussions:** While there are times when the host will want to keep participants on mute to avoid microphone feedback, electronic meeting platforms typically allow participants to “raise their hand” to speak. The host should be able to open the electronic meeting so that all participants can speak.

**Voting:**

- **Audibly:** If all participants can speak at the same time on your electronic meeting platform, the typical calls of “All in favor/All opposed” and responses of “Ayes and Nays” can be used.
- **Visually:** If there is no audio, but you can see everyone’s faces, a visual thumbs up or thumbs down will work.
- **Voting tools:** If needed, incorporate a voting tool into your electronic meeting. Some electronic meeting platforms have built-in survey tools that can be used to facilitate voting.

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<sup>1</sup> Pursuant to Charter Constitution and Laws Sec. 9, the Board of Directors “shall have general supervision of the affairs of the Order, shall cause the laws of the Order to be faithfully executed and administered, shall exercise all executive authority through itself or committee over the state and subordinate councils, chapters and members of the Order, shall have full control and management of all matters as to and of ... all other concerns of the Order, ... and shall have full power and authority to interpret the laws of the Order of the Knights of Columbus, consistent with the spirit thereof, and the well-being of the Order....”

### **Email Voting Between Meetings – Only for admission of Candidates for Membership**

During this extraordinary time, the use of email to vote on the admission of candidates for membership is permitted. The following procedure is recommended:

1. Grand Knight sends an email to all members, asking for feedback (discussion) on the admission of a candidate. All candidate information available should be provided, and all feedback should be returned within two days.
2. Based on feedback, the Grand Knight can decide if the admission of the candidate should go to vote.
3. If a vote is to be taken, the Grand Knight emails all members, asking for a vote on the admission of a candidate
  - a. All candidate information is provided in the email
  - b. Appropriate (non-confidential) feedback, provided from Step 1, is included in the email
  - c. A deadline for responses of at least two days is set
4. Members individually email their approval or disapproval to the Grand Knight within the set time period.
5. Once the deadline to email a response has passed, the Grand Knight can determine passage based on a majority vote.