

Rotary Council on Legislation 2016 Report to District 5010 Rotarians

Overview

The Council on Legislation (COL) is Rotary’s legislature. Meeting in the spring every three years, the Council is made up of one representative from every Rotary district (532 representatives were certified in 2016). Duane Benton (Kansas City) served as the chair of the 2016 Council held in Chicago on April 10 to 15. Gayle Knepper was D5010’s Council representative; PDG Jane Little, D5010’s alternate representative, also attended as an observer.

The purpose of the Council is to consider proposals by Rotary clubs, districts and the RI Board for changes in the way Rotary operates at every level of the organization. Club proposals must first be endorsed by the district to be forwarded to the Council. There were 117 proposed enactments and 64 proposed resolutions presented to delegates. The proposals reflect a wide range of issues of interest to Rotarians around the world.

The legislation adopted will become effective on 1 July 2016 and the RI Manual of Procedure MOP updated, except in the event of 5% or more votes from clubs opposing the action (see page 4).



Types of Legislation

A. Enactments

Proposals to amend the RI Constitution, the RI Bylaws or the Standard Rotary Club Constitution are known as enactments. Constitutional changes must be approved by a vote of at least 2/3 of the delegates.

B. Resolutions

Proposals in form of a resolution do not seek to change the RI constitutional documents, but express an opinion or make a

recommendation to the RI Board of Directors or Foundation Trustees, or ask them to do something. These may be approved by a simple majority vote.

If the resolution would require or request an administrative act that is within the discretion of the RI Board or the general secretary, the issue may also be handled through a *memorial to the Board*. A memorial is a request to the Board for action on a specific matter. In many cases where amending the constitutional documents is not necessary, the proposer’s purpose can be more efficiently and quickly accomplished by a memorial. The RI Board hears memorials at every meeting.

COL Legislation Action Highlights

One of the Rotary “traditions” in District 5010 is flexibility: flexibility to most effectively adapt to the changing and sometimes challenging conditions in our northern region of the world. This theme was also prominent at this year’s Council, identified as one of the most progressive in Rotary’s history.

Following is a summary of key proposals approved by delegates:

(a complete list of voting results can be found at <https://www.rotary.org/myrotary/en/document/vote-totals-2016-council-legislation>)

Flexibility in Meeting Schedules and Attendance

Council actions granted clubs more freedom in determining meeting schedules and membership. Several proposals which increased flexibility were introduced and approved early in the Council proceedings. These approved changes give clubs the ability to vary their meeting times, whether to meet in person or online, and if to cancel a meeting, while maintaining a minimum of at least two meetings a month.

The current club constitution in Article 6 indicates that clubs meet once a week; Article 9 provides that members must attend unless they make up 14 days before or after, attend a service project or a board meeting, and also provides for termination if a member doesn't attend or make up 50% of meetings, attend 30% of meetings at his/her own club or misses 4 consecutive meetings.

These requirements will remain in the standard club constitution and can still be followed by clubs if desired. The new enactment provides that club bylaws may alter these provisions. For example, to determine when and how often a club meets, while maintaining a minimum two meetings per month (there is not a definition of "meeting"). The club may set its own attendance requirements and modify or eliminate termination policies for missed meetings.

Membership Types

The second proposal gives clubs flexibility to determine their own membership rules and requirements. The standard club constitution, Article 7: Section 2, provides for two kinds of membership: active and honorary. That will remain in the standard club constitution and can be followed by clubs, as desired. This enactment provides the option that club bylaws may have provisions different from Article 7: Section 2. This allows clubs to have alternative types of memberships, such as corporate, associate, family, etc.



Clubs must opt into these new models of meeting times and membership and change its bylaws. These changes are not mandated for clubs unless a club chooses to make changes to meeting times and types of membership and adds it to its bylaws.

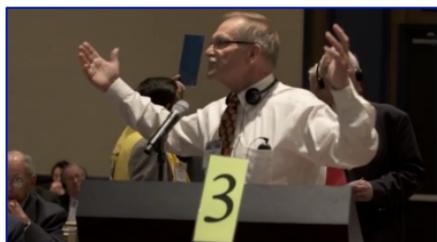
Membership Criteria

In another action increasing both flexibility and simplification, six membership criteria were removed from Rotary's Constitution; instead, clubs can use a streamlined requirement for member qualifications.

The current RI constitution requires "Adult person of good character and good business, professional and/or community reputation." In addition, it requires the member have position as proprietor, partner, etc., of business or profession, be retired from such position or be a community leader.

The new enactment eliminates these specific business and professional criteria and provides only that "A Club shall be composed of adult persons who demonstrate good character, integrity and leadership; possess good reputation within their business, profession and/or community; and are willing to serve in their community and/or around the world."

The decisions provide flexibility to clubs by providing the opportunity to better reflect the needs and more effectively grow Rotary in their own communities.



Rotaract Members Permitted to be Rotary Members

An enactment was approved that permits Rotaractors to become members of Rotary clubs while still in Rotaract. Statistics show that only 5% of Rotaractors currently become Rotarians. This change will encourage those who would like to become Rotarians (after being to be invited and approved) while still being a Rotaractor. This opens the way to greater involvement between Rotaractors and Rotary, and supports Rotaractors in the membership transition process. The goal is to increase the number of qualified young leaders in Rotary.

Dues

Delegates approved a \$4-a-year increase in Rotary International per capita dues starting in 2017-18. In surveys, 9 out of 10 Rotarians have asked Rotary to provide more services. However, the five-year financial forecast shows that, without a dues increase, service to clubs and districts would need to be drastically decreased. Rotary reserves would also dip below mandated levels by 2020. RI per capita dues are currently \$55 per year. Dues will be \$56 in 2016-17; \$60 in 2017-18; \$64 in 2018-19 and \$68 in 2019-20. The 2019 Council will establish the rate after that. This change will provide Rotary with greater financial strength and build a more sustainable organization for the future.

The increase in dues will be used for steps including the enhancements of Rotary's website, improving online tools and adding programs and services to help clubs increase membership. More detailed information can be found at:

<https://www.rotary.org/myrotary/en/document/ri-five-year-financial-forecast>
<http://echo4.bluehornet.com/ct/85300107:Tu4kmNYNp:m:1:1167429956:0550BC164C70A93C50B5B9E0AD86C804:r>

Admission Fees

Removing the reference to admission fees from the bylaws was also approved. The standard club constitution calls for every new member to pay an admission fee and dues as prescribed in club bylaws. The proposer's reason for the suggested change was that admission fee concept "does not project a modern image of Rotary."



E-Clubs

This approved enactment removes the distinction between traditional clubs and e-clubs. It was recognized that clubs have been meeting in a number of ways: regular clubs can have digital meetings and e-clubs can have in-person meetings. Given this flexibility, the distinction was no longer meaningful. Clubs that have "e-club" in their names may retain it.

Other Club-Related Legislation Approved

Includes:

- Addition of a purpose statement to the club constitution: "The purpose of this club is to pursue the Object of Rotary, carry out successful service projects based on the Five Avenues of Service, contribute to the advancement of Rotary by strengthening membership, support The Rotary Foundation, and develop leaders beyond the club level."
- Allowing members to attend meetings either in-person or online
- Modifications to processes for excused absences and for cancelled meetings
- Requiring written minutes of club board of directors' meetings
- Adding club treasurer as an officer and board member, in addition to immediate past president, president, president elect and secretary
- The "Rule of 85" now will state that the person being considered for this exemption must have been a member of one or more clubs for at least 20 years before being granted the exemption



- Standing club committees are now club administration, membership, public relations, foundation and service projects. (Some clubs still use the avenues of service for the committee structure.)
- Transferring or former Rotarians are ineligible for membership in a club if they have debts to another club.

Rotary International-Related Legislation Approved

Includes:

- A Rotary International standing committee on membership was approved to align with RI's strategic plan. (Previously, it was appointed on an ad hoc basis.) Moving from an ad hoc to standing committee will give membership annual emphasis and also long-term consistency, and create an ongoing focus on Rotary's top internal priority.
- The creation of a Council on Resolutions was approved. This separate governing body will meet online every year. It will review resolutions (recommendations) sent by clubs and districts to the RI Board. The Council on Resolutions will free the triennial COL to concentrate only on enactments (changes to Rotary's governing documents), shortening the COL by a day and saving \$300,000.

Resolutions Approved

Include:

- An affirmation that eradication of polio is Rotary's highest goal and that no other corporate project will be adopted until certification of eradication.
- Request that the Board consider retaining a professional consulting firm for a comprehensive review of RI and The Rotary Foundation's current corporate governance structure, and bring its findings and recommendations, including specific proposals, to the 2019 Council on Legislation.

Final Report of Action and Club Opposition to Legislation

An official report of action will be compiled, sent to clubs and posted online by Rotary International within two months of the COL. Clubs will also have an opportunity to oppose any approved legislation during the following two months through a form included in the report.

If at least 5 percent of the votes entitled to be cast by the clubs oppose an action, the legislation will be suspended and the general secretary will conduct a ballot-by-mail. A majority vote would cause the proposal to be rejected. All Council actions otherwise go into effect 1 July.



Review COL Actions with Your Club and Consider a Proposal for the 2019 Council

You are highly encouraged to hold a discussion of Council actions with your club at an upcoming meeting or at its next assembly. If you would like more information or help in planning this assembly, please contact Gayle or Jane.

In addition, we ask your club discuss your interests and concerns about Rotary and what changes you feel would make Rotary better and more effective worldwide, and consider submitting a resolution for the 2019 Council on Legislation. Please contact us to discuss the process and the changes you would like to suggest, and we will assist your club with development of the proposed legislation. We will also be sending additional information and guidelines later this year. Proposed legislation from clubs will be due approximately February 1, 2017 so it can be approved for submission at the District Conference business meeting in May 2017

Attend a Webinar: *Council 2016 Changes: How Can My Club Take Action?*

Mark your calendar to participate in one of the upcoming D5010 webinars. This session will summarize the key outcomes of the 2016 Council and discuss actions your club can take to benefit from the new flexibility options which will go into effect on 1 July.

The dates for the webinars are:

Wednesday, June 15 OR Thursday, June 23
5:30 to 6:30 pm AKDT; 6:30 to 7:30 pm PDT

The content is the same on both dates; it is offered twice to fit more schedules. Details and a link to register will be sent to all Rotarians in early June via ClubRunner email. Please encourage your board and club members to participate. Your club may wish to establish a central webinar location so a group of members can attend and discuss together.



Questions? More Information?

Please contact Gayle or Jane at any time for more information, with questions, to assist your club with its discussion of the Council's decisions or to discuss the possibility of submitting a proposal for the 2019 Council.

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In Appreciation

A big round of applause to the following D5010 Rotarians who have dedicated time and energy for nearly seven months to review and provide recommendations on the Council on Legislation proposals prior to the Council meeting, and to participate in D5010's strategic planning process.

D5010 COL & Planning Work Group

Alana Bergh	North Pole
Andre Layral	Fairbanks Sunrisers
Bonnie Venton Ross	Whitehorse
Brad Gamble	Eagle River
Bryan Zak	Homer Kachemak Bay
Diane Fejes	Anchorage
Gayle Knepper	Anchorage East
Harry Kielling	Anchorage
Jane Little	Homer Downtown
LaMarr Anderson	Palmer
Mark Hill	Anc Gateway
Matthew Pyhala	Soldotna
Michelle O'Brien	Ketchikan First City
Mike Jeffery	Barrow
Mike Pollen	Fairbanks