

## Role of Chair and Vice Chair in Consensus Processes

*In a traditional process that makes decision by majority vote, the Chair (or Vice Chair, if the Chair is absent) decide what is on the agenda and call for votes. If no Parliamentarian is present, the Chair (or Vice Chair) ensures that proper protocol is used during meetings. In a facilitated consensus process, the agendas are driven by the overall process and decision making steps agreed to by the group. Specific meeting activities are designed by the facilitators, with input from all the members. The facilitators help the group follow the agreed-upon discussion guidelines. Therefore, the duties of the Chair and Vice Chair are quite different in consensus-based processes than in traditional processes.*

### Primary duties of the Chair and Vice Chair

- Chair (or Vice Chair if Chair is absent) determine if a quorum is present (defined as 50% of the members plus one) and, if so, call the meetings to order and adjourn the meetings.
- The Chair and Vice Chair serve as sounding boards for the facilitators in thinking through process steps and meeting activities.
- The Chair and Vice Chair coordinate and/or support follow-up with members who miss meetings to keep them up to date.
- The Chair and Vice Chair oversee and coordinate the work of any subgroups, to ensure that the subgroups coordinate among themselves and are accountable for the tasks they agree to perform.
- If requested by any group member, the Chair and Vice Chair serve as media contact for that member, if the member prefers not to talk to the media personally.
- The Chair and Vice Chair assist the facilitators in drafting the Task Force report. (All members will review the draft and the group will seek consensus on the final version.)
- The Chair and Vice Chair coordinate presentation of the oral report to the Council, ensuring that other members are informed about their roles and responsibilities.

### Qualities Sought In Chair and Vice Chair

- a. Knowledge and experience in managing complex group processes.
- b. Experience in managing volunteer groups and coordinating the efforts of multiple groups.
- c. Ability and willingness to respond to communication within 24-36 hours.
- d. Excellent synthesis and writing skills.
- e. Time and willingness to attend most, if not all, of the Task Force meetings.
- f. Knowledge and understanding of consensus-based decision making.
- g. Good listening skills, collaborative approach to group work.
- h. Ability to put the good of the Task Force as a whole in front of any personal benefit.

### Proposed Process for Selecting These Roles

1. Identify those members who are interested in serving in one of these roles and who believe they have the qualities listed. Ask each interested member to think about their qualifications.
2. Group as a whole identifies their INTERESTS relative to these roles.
3. Interested members speak for 2 minutes each about how they meet the interests and the qualifications.
4. Group brainstorms options that might meet the interests. (E.G. This could be specific people for each role or it might be an idea like "we rotate these roles every month".)
5. The group seeks consensus on one or more options that would best meet all the interests.