

To: All Unit Presidents
All County Presidents
All Department Officers
All Past Department Presidents

From: Debbie Noble, Chairman- Governing Documents Committee

Date: November 1, 2018

Subject: Governing Documents

Please feel free to share this with your members!

Over the last several months, we have had the opportunity to review Unit and County governing documents. As the units are updating their own documents, they have asked several recurring questions:

- 1) Does a Unit and County's governing documents have to include the new eligibility wording- The answer is "yes"- they must conform to National and Department.

Attached is a copy of the new eligibility wording

- 2) Does a Presiding Officer have a vote? The answer is "maybe" depending on if or how this is specified in your governing documents.

Attached is a printout from the Unit handbook on conducting Unit meetings- See "H" which states the President may vote according to local (unit) bylaws

Robert's Rules states she votes with the other members when it is a ballot vote; if it is a verbal vote, she refrains from voting UNLESS her vote will affect the result- meaning she would break the tie.

- 3) This final note is for clarification only- although the National governing documents – under duties of the office of Sergeant at Arms- state that the Sergeant at Arms maintains order at meetings, it is the Chair or Presiding Officer who wields the gavel, which is the symbol of authority. While the Sergeant at Arms certainly guards the door and maintains the flow of traffic, she should take her direction directly from the presiding officer. At no time should the Sergeant at Arms call directly for order from the floor.


CHAPTER VI Unit Meeting

Conducting a Unit Meeting

The manner in which a Unit meeting is conducted has a great bearing on its success or failure. Unless a meeting is well planned, intelligently conducted, and subjects are presented and discussed interestingly, members cannot be expected to be faithful in attendance. Routine business should be transacted in an efficient manner, yet the opportunity should be presented for active participation of members in the program. It is most important that Unit elections and all Unit business be conducted in accordance with Unit Bylaws, the current edition of "Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised," and Department and National Constitution and Bylaws. All Unit Presidents must remember to be impartial while presiding and not participate in discussion. The majority vote rules, but the minority has the right to be heard. Committee members and officers may transact detailed business and should only bring important matters before the Unit for decision. Special monthly activities should be stressed, and District and Department officers as well as local speakers should be asked to add interest to the programs. Variety should be introduced in music and entertainment.

The President as Presiding Officer

- a. Calls the meeting to order at the designated time and, if a quorum is present, proceeds with necessary business.
- b. Preserves order throughout the meeting.
- c. Follows the accepted order of business.
- d. Refers to herself as "the Chair."
- e. Decides parliamentary questions. The President states the motion clearly after it has been seconded and before allowing discussion.
- f. Takes no part in any discussion while presiding; refrains from expressing a personal opinion on questions before the house; avoids all personal bias when giving information to the organization.
- g. Calls upon the Vice President to preside if she wishes to speak on a motion or leave the chair. Remains out of chair until the vote on the pending motion is taken.
- h. May vote according to local Bylaws
- i. Recognizes a member who has not spoken previously on the question in preference to one who has spoken.

 **Robert's Rules say that the presiding officer (if a member) votes with the other members when a vote is by ballot; but for other forms of voting, the chair's duty to maintain the appearance of impartiality while presiding requires him to refrain from voting, except when his vote will affect the result.**

Eligibility



152

Eligibility Requirements for American Legion Auxiliary Membership

Membership in the American Legion Auxiliary shall be limited to the grandmothers, mothers, sisters, wives, and direct and adopted female descendants of members of The American Legion and to the grandmothers, mothers, sisters, wives, and direct and adopted female descendants of all men and women who were in the Armed Forces of the United States during any of the following periods and died in the line of duty during such service or who, having received an Honorable Discharge, died after service:

A woman who is eligible for American Legion membership is eligible to join the American Legion Auxiliary regardless of whether or not she is a member of The American Legion. However, eligibility of her female relatives (sister, mother, direct decedents) depends upon her membership in The American Legion.

Gulf War/War on Terrorism	August 2, 1990 to date of cessation
Panama	December 20, 1989 - January 31, 1990
Lebanon and Grenada	August 24, 1982 - July 31, 1984
Vietnam War	February 28, 1961 - May 7, 1975
Korean War	June 25, 1950 - January 31, 1955
WW II	December 7, 1941 - December 31, 1946
WW I	April 6, 1917 - November 11, 1918