



ZONE GUIDELINES

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Disclaimer

These Zone Guidelines are meant to provide guidance and consistency to Zone Directors in the process and details of conducting Zone meetings. These Zone Guidelines will make reference to sections of NCPEI's By-Laws where applicable. Between any inconsistency in this document and the NCPEI By-Laws, Robert's Rules of Order, or other Canadian laws, the latter shall take precedence.

[Article VI, Section 17] "Zone meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the Zone Guidelines, as approved by a simple majority (50% + 1) of the Directors from time to time and made available on the Native Council website."



Purpose of Zone Meetings

In general, Zone meetings are held for the purpose of discussing the political nature and future of the Native Council. This includes topics relating to Board of Director meetings, discussion items at General Assemblies, the financial position of NCPEI, desired amendments to the NCPEI By-Laws, etc.

In contrast, quarterly Townhall meetings are hosted by the President & Chief to discuss the programs, services, policies, and external advocacy of the Native Council. Likewise, Local meetings are hosted by Local Presidents as needed for entertainment and cultural purposes. It is encouraged that discussions meant for Townhall or Local meetings are not discussed at Zone meetings, and vice versa. Some concerns brought forward by members at Zone meetings are better addressed to NCPEI head office.

Planning a Zone Meeting

Zone Directors are required to hold a minimum of four Zone meetings annually [Article VI, Section 17]. Zone Directors are encouraged to hold Zone meetings in the week(s) prior to Board of Directors meeting, rather than the week(s) after a Board of Directors meeting. NCPEI head office shall provide assistance and coordination support for Zone Directors and encourage different Zones to coordinate their meeting times.

Zone Directors can begin to schedule a Zone meeting by determining an agenda, date, time, and place in agreement with their other Zone Director. Zone Directors must send their notice of intent to hold a Zone meeting, including details, to the NCPEI head office preferably seven days in advance of the notice deadline (see below) so that the notices can be prepared and sent to all respective Zone members in time. Zone meeting notice deadline and limitations include:

- Notices must be mailed out and received by members twenty days in advance of a Zone meeting [Article VI, Section 5] or to a minimum of seven days with Board approval [Article VI, Section 17];
- An annual Zone meeting must be called twenty days ahead of an NCPEI AGA [Article VI, Section 3] or a regular Zone meeting called ten days ahead of an NCPEI Special General Assembly [Article VI, Section 4]; and
- Zone meetings must be conducted at an in-person location unless a 75% majority of the Board of Directors approve for an electronic meeting [Article VI, Section 19];

Zone meetings that must be postponed for unforeseen circumstances (e.g. storm dates) can be arranged with less than seven days notice, but preferably more than 24 hours notice, so long as it is agreed by the Zone Directors and communicated on NCPEI social media platforms.



Zone Meeting Agenda

Zone Directors should come prepared for each Zone meeting with an agenda covering the following items:

- Welcoming and opening prayer;
- Brief report (preferably written) of the agenda items discussed at the last Board meeting and potential agenda items for the next Board meeting;
- Discussion regarding the quarterly Zone Directors' report, President & Chief report, financial reports, program reports, and other such reports made available to the Zone Directors and with a copy brought to the Zone meeting for the Zone Director to reference;
- Member's questions, comments, and/or concerns regarding new discussion items to bring to the next Board of Directors meeting;
- Necessary agenda items, such as elections or delegate selection; and
- Summarizing any 'next steps' from the meeting and closing prayer.

Zone members in attendance may, by formality, put forward a motion to approve the Zone meeting agenda and add other discussion items. The Zone Directors shall chair all Zone meetings [Article VI, Section 17], though they also have discretion to appoint another person to temporarily chair some agenda items.

Minutes and Attendance

Zone Directors are responsible for ensuring that minutes are taken for a Zone meeting and provided to NCPEI head office within two weeks of the Zone meeting [Article VI, Section 17]. The minutes shall reflect the discussion that takes place at the Zone meeting and the individuals who participated in those discussions. The minutes shall also include a complete list of attendees, which shall be determined by the following process:

- Zone Directors shall provide a sign-in sheet at each Zone meeting and remind attendees to sign the sheet;
- The sign-in sheet shall not be signed by other individuals on another person's behalf, especially for absent attendees (e.g., even for medical or work purposes);
- Individuals who attend an in-person Zone meeting by electronic means (i.e. "call-ins") shall have their name removed from the sign-in sheet;
- Individuals who attend in-person for less than $\frac{1}{2}$ (50%) of a meeting's stated duration shall have their name removed from the sign-in sheet;
- The Zone Director shall make edits to the sign-in sheet (with their signature) to ensure compliance to these rules.

Upon receipt of draft Zone meeting minutes, NCPEI head office shall edit Zone meeting minutes to ensure consistency of document formatting and content. Zone meeting minutes are considered in draft until they are automatically approved at the next Zone meeting if no objections are raised. Sign-in sheets and minutes are available for review by NCPEI membership at the Zone Directors' discretion.



The sign-in sheets are used in determining priority selection of delegates at NCPEI AGAs. With respect to the count of Zone meetings attended, the following additional considerations are used:

- The list of meetings attended shall only count for officially called Zone meetings with proper notice. The Zone Directors or other Zone members may choose to host other 'Community Meetings of the Zone' that do not count towards the number of meetings attended;
- Zone members are only eligible to vote in the Zone meeting for the Zone in which they normally reside [Article VI, Section 3]. Zone members interested in attending Zone meetings in another Zone are entitled to attend, but shall not have the right to vote;
- If a member attends multiple Zone meetings within a quarter, whether in their own Zone or in other Zones, attendance at multiple meetings within the same quarter shall only be counted once;
- The sign-in sheets shall be the definitive proof of attendance. Names can only be added retroactively to approved sign-in sheets if the individual is listed in the minutes as part of a discussion or if a difficult-to-read signature needs clarification. It is ultimately each attendee's own responsibility to sign the sign-in sheet and to provide their most recent contact information.

The sign-in sheet shall be available to be signed by other guests and prospective members. However, the attendance of these individuals shall not count towards the number of meetings attended.

Voting and Quorum

Only full voting members who reside in that Zone may vote [Article VI, Section 3]. Only members who are physically present may vote; there shall be no proxy voting [Article VI, Section 11]. All motions of the Zone require a 50% + 1 majority (a whole number greater than half) to pass. For ease of reference [By-Laws Appendix A]: if 10 or 11 votes are cast, the necessary votes in favour must be 6 in both cases.

There is no minimum quorum necessary for a Zone meeting, so long as proper notice has been made. Quorum for the remainder of the meeting shall be determined as half of the voting members present at the start of the meeting. If half of the voting members leave a Zone meeting, the meeting is deemed to not have quorum and no further business may arise from that Zone meeting.

Annual Zone Meetings

Annual Zone meetings must be held a minimum of twenty days prior to the date of the NCPEI AGA [Article VI, Section 3]. These annual Zone meetings must include agenda items for the election of any vacant Zone Director positions, the selection of AGA delegates and alternates, and discussing business that may arise at the AGA.



Election of Zone Directors

Zone Directors are elected for a term of three years [Article VII, Section 25]. The term of office begins and ends at the close of the Zone meeting.

Intent to run for Zone Directors, including a biography, must be received by the NCPEI head office seven days in advance of the annual Zone meeting [Article VI, Section 12].

If a vacancy occurs in a Zone director position throughout the year, an interim Zone Director can be elected at the next Zone meeting [Article VI, Section 10] or be appointed by a Board motion [Article VIII, Section 23]. Interim Zone directors shall only serve until the next annual Zone meeting [Article VI, Section 10].

At the Zone meeting, the election process shall be held with respect to Robert's Rules of Orders, summarized as follows:

1. Only candidates who have followed the proper process for declaring intent to run shall be eligible to be placed on the first ballot [Article VI, Section 12] and shall have their names read aloud;
2. Eligible candidates will need to be nominated and seconded by voting members in attendance and will need to verbally confirm their nomination;
 - a. Candidates who do not receive a nominator and seconder, or who are unable to verbally confirm their intent to run at the time of nomination, are removed from the ballot.
3. Each of the nominated candidates shall be provided a brief opportunity for a speech, followed by a shared Question & Answer period for all candidates.
 - a. The Chair shall enact any time restrictions necessary to conduct the meeting in time.
4. Each candidate shall be given the opportunity to appoint a scrutineer, if they so choose. A scrutineer need not be a member of NCPEI. The scrutineers, alongside a staff member appointed by NCPEI, shall oversee the process and fairness of all voting.
5. A secret ballot voting process must occur, even if there are the same or fewer candidates running than vacancies available [Article VI, Section 12].
 - a. Votes must be cast by secret ballot [Article VI, Section 9]
 - b. Scrutineers and candidates are allowed to vote, unless they are not eligible voters (see Voting and Quorum section above)
 - c. The scrutineers and appointed staff shall jointly resolve any issues or circumstances that may arise during voting, such as ballot mistakes and accommodations for disabilities
6. Voting shall continue until a candidate has received 50% + 1 (a whole number greater than half) of the votes cast [Article VI, Section 12]. For ease of reference: if 10 or 11 votes are cast, the necessary votes in favour of one candidate must be 6 in both cases.
 - a. The first time that a candidate does not receive 50% + 1 of votes cast, other names may be taken from the floor and added to the ballot [Article VI, Section 12].
 - b. Each time that there are three or more candidates on the ballot and a candidate does not receive 50% + 1 of votes cast, including the first time, the candidate with the fewest votes cast in their favour is removed from the ballot.



- c. If there are two vacancies, each vacancy requires its own election. All names that had once been placed on the first ballot, including any names taken from the floor, are automatically placed on the second ballot. No new names may be taken from the floor.
7. The successful candidate(s) are typically given a brief opportunity for a speech.
8. A motion to destroy ballots must be taken from the floor. If passed, the ballots are delivered to the appointed NCPEI staff member overseeing the election for later destruction and the scrutineers are informed to not discuss the number of votes cast for any candidates.
 - a. If the motion is defeated, NCPEI shall keep ballots at head office for one year. The number of votes cast for each candidate may or may not be revealed based on Zone discussion.

Selecting Delegates and Alternates for NCPEI's AGA

The NCPEI AGA delegate list will consist of twenty delegates and five alternates from each Zone [Article VI, Section 13]. All Directors, including the President & Chief, Youth Director, and Elder Director, are automatically selected as delegates for the Zone in which they reside [Article VI, Section 13]. If an election for a Zone Director occurs at the same meeting, the election must occur prior to the selection of delegates.

Resolution 2021-03. Be it resolved that potential delegates for the AGAs be picked first from the members who have attended either zone or town hall meetings in the year prior, excluding the one where delegates actually get picked.

Resolution 2023-06: Be it resolved that the process for delegates selection be clarified that delegates will be prioritized based on the number of meetings they had attended, such that a member who attended three meetings has priority over a member who attended two meetings, etc.;

The required remaining delegates and alternates are selected based on the number of Zone and Townhall meetings they have attended since the last AGA, excluding the current meeting for selecting delegates. See the section on Minutes and Attendance for details on counting meetings attended. A list of Zone members with their number of meetings attended ("meeting list") shall be prepared by NCPEI head office and provided to each Zone Director prior to the Zone meeting for delegate selection. The process for selecting delegates shall then proceed as follows:

1. All Directors residing in that Zone are first added as automatic delegates;
2. The meeting list shall be read, beginning with those who have attended the most meetings. Each Zone member whose name is read off must either: 1) give verbal confirmation at the time their name is read off that they wish to be a delegate, or 2) have given prior written confirmation to their Zone Director that they wish to be a delegate.
3. Names continue to be read off until the remaining number of delegates is less than the number of members who have attended the same number of meetings on the meeting list (i.e., three members but only two delegate spots). In this case, each candidate must confirm their wish to be a delegate as previous but the names are selected at random (i.e., ballots placed in a box and drawn) to fill the delegate list in order of selection.



4. After the list of twenty delegates is selected, the next five names selected following the above process shall be included as alternates. The order of names for alternates is important and shall be recorded on the delegate list.
5. If the membership list has been fully read and there are delegate and alternate spots remaining, other eligible names may be taken from the floor so long as they can provide verbal confirmation or prior written confirmation of their intent to be a delegate.
6. If there remains a shortfall of delegates and alternates by the end of the process, the Zone Directors may choose to have the NCPEI head office make a social media post asking for other names from the Zone [Article VI, Section 15]. Names shall be added to the delegate list on a first-come basis and shall continue until a full delegate list for the Zone is confirmed. If the Zone Directors do not provide this permission, it shall not be undertaken by NCPEI head office.

Zone Directors shall submit the delegate list to the NCPEI head office at least ten days prior to the AGA [Article VI, Section 14]. The Zone Directors shall not alter the delegate list after the Zone meeting, unless they can provide evidence of a written request to be a delegate was received prior to or during the Zone meeting. Once the delegate list is provided to the NCPEI head office, the copy held and managed by the NCPEI head office is deemed the true and definitive copy.

NCPEI head office shall contact each delegate to confirm their attendance and other AGA logistics. Any delegate who cannot be contacted within a reasonable period prior to the AGA or who is unable to confirm their attendance at the AGA may have their names moved to the bottom of the list, below all other potential names. Delegates who later confirm that they would be able to attend may or may not have priority over other alternates who have been contacted first.

Notwithstanding the above, NCPEI head office reserves the rights to make any and all other adjustments to the delegate list allowed by the By-Laws to ensure a maximum delegate count at the AGA.

Selecting Delegates and Alternates for the CAP AGA

The date and number of delegates for the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples' (CAP) AGA varies from year to year. All Board of Directors have priority selection as delegates [Article VI, Section 18], plus a Whip (delegate coordinator) selected by the President & Chief.

At the Zone meeting prior to the CAP AGA, names of alternates may be taken from Aboriginal members in attendance or from those who have provided written consent to their Zone Director prior to the meeting. There is no maximum list of alternates; all interested members shall have their names added to the list. Names received from previous years may continue to be listed in future years automatically.

Zone Directors unable to attend the CAP AGA shall be asked to designate an alternate from the names listed for their Zone. Any other vacancies in the delegate list caused by the changing number of delegates allowed by each Province or by Directors not designating an alternate shall be selected at random by NCPEI head office, alternating between Zones.



Zone Meeting Conduct

NCPEI is committed to ensuring a safe environment at all offices, events, and meetings. Zone Directors must chair Zone meetings in a way that respects the mental and physical well-being of all attendees. All attendees of Zone meetings must commit to promoting a positive, safe environment for others.

Zone Directors and/or chairs shall be empowered to ask any individual at a Zone meeting to leave the meeting if they present as a possible source of physical or mental harm to other individuals or possessions at the meeting. If a situation escalates further, the Zone Directors and/or chairs shall be empowered to call the meeting to a close and take further actions to ensure attendees may remain safe.

Any individuals found to have caused or give indications that they will cause an unsafe environment at any NCPEI office, event, or meeting shall be subject to being forbidden from future attendance by vote of the Board of Directors, until such time that the Board of Directors deem the individual to have reflected upon their actions. Notwithstanding, the President & Chief and Board of Directors reserve the right to pursue other legal actions against individuals for harms committed at NCPEI offices, events, and meetings.