



Deacons and Leaders Meeting Protocol / Terms of Reference

1. Protocol Statement

- 1.1 This Protocol / Terms of Reference is been implemented with a view to promoting meaningful, productive and praiseworthy meetings among ministers, deacons and the entire leadership of Rhema Miracle Centre Assemblies of God (RMC AOG).
- 1.2 The Protocol offers an account of how the leadership is expected to organize and move along our meetings. This is not a Policy Paper, albeit compliance therewith is key to the effective running of meetings. Please take it for what it is: suggestions that we trust will work well for us.
- 1.3 We intend to follow a few of *Robert's Rules of Order* in an indirect way.

2. Allocation of Roles at Meetings

- 2.1 The Chair of the meeting shall be the Resident Pastor or such other as the Resident Pastor shall delegate.
- 2.2 The Chair reserves the right to instigate a Rotating Chair.
- 2.3 The Chair shall prepare agenda for meetings, if desired.
- 2.4 The Chair is responsible for keeping the meeting organised and on track.
- 2.5 For the purposes of the meetings herein referred to, all attendees, unless otherwise indicated, shall be referred to as members.
- 2.6 There shall be a secretary at all meetings to record minutes, unless otherwise instructed by the Chair.
- 2.7 At all meetings the Chair will be required to vote on motions to break a tie.

3. Keeping Discussions on Target

- 3.1 All members shall attend meetings with an agenda, which will contain a list of all items to be discussed. Without an agenda sheet, members can easily get side-tracked by other discussions.
- 3.2 One challenge which is faced during meetings of this kind is the enjoyment of conversation not related to matters on outlined on the agenda for the day.
- 3.3 Members, through the Chair, shall stick to the topics that are on the agenda. If items come up for discussions that are not listed on the agenda, this shall be documented in the minutes so that it can be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

- 3.4 By sticking to the agenda, we can ensure that all items are discussed.
- 3.5 It is critical that meetings are kept on track at all times, to avoid unnecessary waste of time.
- 3.6 Minutes from the previous meeting shall be read and approved accordingly.
- 3.7 Matters arising or old business will be discussed first. The old business consists of items that were discussed in the previous meeting that require an update or vote.
- 3.8 The Chair shall introduce new business on the agenda. The new business will consist of new ideas and new topics that have not been previously discussed.
- 3.9 During the new business segment it is important to get feedback and comments from all members.
- 3.10 If conversation runs amuck, the Chair may say, "I will entertain a motion on the subject." If someone makes a motion and it is seconded, focus of discussion can now centre on the motion.
- 3.11 If no motion is forthcoming or if the matter is not appropriate for discussion at the meeting, the Chair will move for the meeting to progress onto the next item.
- 3.12 It is the Chair's duty to nudge members back into true leadership matters as set out on the Agenda.
- 3.13 Members are not to take offence if they are nudged to progress with strictly agenda items, as this is necessary to keep things on target.
- 3.14 Members must endeavour not to veer the meeting off tangent.
- 3.15 Members can offer a suggestion to the Chair that the board move on; but it is the Chair who must make the ultimate decision one way or the other.
- 3.16 If a member senses that the discussion is getting off the subject at hand, they might make a motion. It is then the Chair's job to ask for a second and then discuss the motion. This method of moving things along is open to all members except the Chair, who cannot make a motion and can only vote in the event of a tie. However, he may say, "I will entertain a motion on the subject."
- 3.17 If an issue is truly appropriate for discussion by all (appropriateness to be determined by the Chair), but discussion thereof is complicated and tentative, it can be suggested to the Chair that the issues are simply outlined and then a report brought to the next meeting.
- 3.18 The Chair may table (temporarily set aside) matters for the next meeting, as some things clear up with time – if it is a good idea this month, it will be a good idea next month.

4. Consent / Voting

4.1 There are two ways to pass motions: by vote or consent.

4.2 For many decisions, particularly important or potentially divisive ones, it is best to vote.

4.3 Items requiring action need to be voted on. In order to vote, a member will have to make a motion to vote. A second member will have to second the motion to show their agreement to vote on the item.

4.4 After taking a vote, the majority rules.

4.5 The voting procedure may sound like this:

Voting

Chair: I'll entertain a motion on this matter. (Remember, the Chair cannot make motions.)

Member 1: I move we purchase a new television for Sunday School, not to exceed £250.00.

Member 2: I'll second the motion.

Chair: Is there any discussion?

Discussion follows (if any)

Chair: If there is no other discussion, all in favour of the motion, please indicate by show of hands.

4.6 Where there is a tie, the Chair will vote on the motion.

Consent

4.7 Consent is used for non-controversial matters, and as leaders, we are encouraged to use this form of approval more often. For example, meeting minutes (reports) are typically accepted by consent or "thumbs up." When members are in obvious agreement with a matter, consent is used. A good rule is "when in doubt, bring it to a vote."

4.8 Consent sounds like this:

Chair: If there are no objections, we'll accept the minutes (or motion) by consent.

4.9 Where any member objects, the matter must be brought to a vote. The intention is to make it easy for members to express themselves.

4.10 Members are discouraged from saying one thing at a meeting (or being silent) and then expressing their disagreement after the meeting among other leaders or church members. We may call this the 'betrayal / backstabbing syndrome' and it is inappropriate, as it does not support the mission and vision of RMC AOG. Indeed, it is a mortal sin.

4.11 It is an anticipated protocol that anything controversial should be discussed and voted upon, where necessary.

5. Harmony via Voting

- 5.1 At RMC AOG, we aim for our leadership meetings to be harmonious. Harmony is a valuable asset and worth working for.
- 5.2 It is often wiser to meet a dissenter part way, if practical. Voting can create winners and losers, and it is important that every member feels respected and heard by all the other members.
- 5.3 Motions may be withdrawn before voting if the one who made the motion and the one who seconded the motion agree to withdraw.
- 5.4 Motions shall not be passed unanimously, as it is a bad move and creates an environment where people do not share their true opinions, but vote for motions out of peer pressure. This will create the 'betrayal / backstabbing syndrome' mentioned above.

6. Miscellaneous

- 6.1 All meetings shall open and close with prayer.
- 6.2 Starting the meeting with a word of prayer sets a positive note which can equally set the tone for the rest of the proceedings.
- 6.3 The leadership shall also spend time praying for those within their respective flock who are experiencing struggles.
- 6.4 It is also appropriate that the leadership shall take time to pray for the needs of members or pressing issues.

Thank you and God bless for serving our Lord Jesus and the family of believers.