

Does a majority vote mean a majority of those present or a majority of those on council?

The General Law Village Act specifically states that “[i]n all votes for which not less than a majority vote of council is required, the calculation shall be based on the maximum number that constitutes council.” So, a majority vote means a majority of those on council.

Does the president of a general law village vote?

Yes. The president of a general law village is a voting member of the council.

How is a tie vote broken?

There is no way to “break” a tie vote. A tie vote means that the motion or resolution failed to pass.

What is a quorum?

A quorum refers to the minimum number of members who must be present in order that business can be legally transacted. It refers to the number of members present, not to the number actually voting on a particular question.

What can a council do if a quorum is not present?

The only action that can be taken is to

- 1) fix the time to which to adjourn,
- 2) adjourn,
- 3) recess, or
- 4) recess to take steps to obtain a quorum.

If a motion is made but not seconded, can it be voted on?

No, unless it is a specific parliamentary motion that does not require a second. However, after debate has begun, or if there is no debate after any member has voted, the lack of a second is immaterial. If a motion is considered and adopted without having been seconded, the absence of a second does not affect the validity of the motion’s adoption.

What are the rules for abstaining from a vote?

Unless council rules have been adopted defining abstention, a member can abstain at any time. Although it is the duty of every member who has an opinion on a question to express it by vote, a member can abstain since a vote cannot be compelled. No member should vote on a question in which he or she has a direct personal or pecuniary interest not common to other members of the organization. The rule on abstention, however, does not mean that a member is prevented from voting for himself or herself for an office or other position to which members generally are eligible, nor from voting when other members are included with him or her in a motion.

Must the person who makes a motion vote for the motion?

Unless council rules state otherwise, the maker of a motion may vote against his or her motion but may not speak against the motion. The maker does not need to speak at all but if he or she does, he or she is obliged to take a favorable position.