

# Agenda for the NPDA Business Meeting in Portland

*Notes on the agenda from the president:*

*As at our New Orleans meeting, in order to serve the interests of as many members as possible, I have divided the agenda items into two groups – items dealing with organizational matters, and items dealing with tournament procedures. So that we can spend a significant part of our 90 meeting minutes on each kind of item, I will propose that we allot equal time blocks to each – for example, 40 minutes to Group One, then switch to Group Two for the next 40 minutes. I will further propose that we limit debate on each agenda item to 5 minutes, unless the time is extended by majority vote. These plans, of course, are subject to the will of the members, and so my first request for a vote at the meeting will be to approve this procedure.*

*To further streamline the meeting, I am proposing the following:*

*We will make every effort to start on time. That means gathering and preparing to start as soon as possible after the banquet activities. There is a long list of reports, so time given to them, while important, must be brief. I am asking all who should bring reports to prepare them in writing, to submit them to the membership in advance of the meeting on the parli-l list if at all possible, and to have copies available on-site prior to the meeting. With luck, the only meeting time we will need to give reports will be for brief questions. Anyone with a “friendly amendment” type of suggestion to clarify or improve one of the agenda items should try to consult with the item’s proposer in advance of the meeting. Such changes, if agreeable, can then be presented immediately by the proposer when the item comes to the floor.*

## Order of Business

Call to order

Approval of minutes from fall 2002 in New Orleans, online at <http://www.bethel.edu/Majors/Communication/npda/busin ess.html>

Approval of agenda and procedures

Reports (distributed in advance – questions will be entertained)

1. President – Tom Kuster
2. Executive Secretary – Renea Gernant
3. Treasurer – Brent Northup
4. Webweaver – Michael Dreher
5. Journal Editor – Ed Inch
6. Student Representative – Rebekah Caruthers

7. Tournament Host – Jil Freeman
8. Tournament Director – Robert Trapp
9. Publications Committee – Renea Gernant
10. Committee on Discrimination and Sexual Harassment – Lisa Ashby
11. Site Committee – Sharon Porter
12. Finance Committee – Brent Northup
13. Elections Committee – Sharon Porter
14. Ad Hoc Committee on Gender Diversity – Susan Arnsdorf
15. Ad Hoc Committee on Ethics – Tricia Goodnow and Michael Dreher
16. Ad Hoc Committee to begin planning Developmental Conference – Sharon Porter

## Unfinished business

*These are items specifically postponed from the fall 2002 business meeting in New Orleans. Notes on discussion there are included, to refresh memories and perhaps save time.*

*Items named “Proposal” were brought by the presidentially appointed Blue Ribbon Committee to study decision-making procedures in NPDA. As charged, they reported several proposals to the 2002 NCA meeting of NPDA in New Orleans, and action was taken on a number of them there. These are the remaining proposals from their report that were either specifically postponed to this meeting, or not acted on due to lack of time.*

*Note: Several of the proposals call for substantial changes to the Constitution and/or ByLaws. These proposals are written in a way to encourage quick understanding and to prompt discussion. However, they do not supply the specific language, or specify the places in the Constitution/ByLaws where changes would be made. In these cases, let us consider passage of these items, if it should occur, to mean that the NPDA favors the ideas expressed, and directs the leadership to prepare appropriate Constitutional language embodying those ideas for action at a subsequent business meeting.*

## Postponed Proposal #1: to require mail ballots for ByLaws changes

*[This proposal requires Constitutional changes – see “note” above]*

Voting should be restructured so that votes for both Constitutional and ByLaws changes may be cast EITHER at a Business Meeting OR in a mail ballot sent out after the Business Meeting to all voters who did not attend. Absentee voters would have 1 month to return votes to the Executive Secretary. The Executive Secretary would report on the web site the identities of all representatives not voting. Proxy votes would be abolished in favor of absentee voting.

Justification: At present, only changes to the Constitution itself must be ratified by a mail ballot. Changes to the

ByLaws (including tournament procedures) can be made on the spot at any business meeting. On many important matters, then, business meetings are the exclusive forum for NPDA voters, yet many cannot access these meetings. NCA meetings are only accessible to those voters who have institutional funding to attend or who have the ability to expend personal money to purchase their own way. NPDA tournament meetings are only slightly more accessible due to the fact that attendees must still find the resources to attend the tournament every year. Not every NPDA school can attend every NPDA national tournament. The current system serves to privilege those programs with well-established institutional support and undermine those who have budget problems.

Discussion: Would allow members who can't come to NCA to vote. There are concerns about exit polling and other biases in the system that would happen there. Others didn't want people substituting voting for discussion.

Postponed Item A – An amendment to provide additional information regarding tournament success.

Submitted by John Meany, Claremont Colleges

An amendment to Bylaw XII: Tournament Operating Procedures. Section I. Awards. Subsection (6) Season Sweepstakes.

Add an additional subsection (d) with the following language: The NPDA will certify sweepstakes results, based on the criteria outlined in the NPDA Constitution, Article VII, in each of the following categories: Overall, Varsity, Junior Varsity, and Novice. The NPDA will publish a sweepstakes ranking of the top twenty-five (25) schools and the top ten (10) two-year colleges on the NPDA website.

Justification: This sweepstakes certification increases the information with which programs are able to provide promotional information, both within a college or university and to outside individuals and groups. It provides recognition for students in their competitive divisions. It increases the number of recognized schools, an important consideration as the organization continues to expand. It will not increase costs, as there is no formal award other than official sanction by the NPDA of annual rankings.

Discussion: Discussion of workload. Discussion of need to define novice, et al.

Postponed Item B --An amendment to create a judge training session.

Submitted by John Meany, Claremont Colleges

Amendment to Bylaw XII: Tournament Operating Procedures. Section (A) Tournament Staff.

Proposed addition: It is the responsibility of the tournament director to establish a time and location for judge training during the administration of the national tournament. The tournament director will select one or more representatives to conduct training sessions regarding tournament rules. Participating judges must attend the training session to judge at the tournament. If a judge has previously participated in a training session at the national tournament, the judge may receive a waiver for future training sessions, with the exception of a training seminar for any rules changes from the previous training session. Schools are responsible for hiring judges to replace any of their judges failing to attend the training session.

Justification: This procedure will familiarize judges with the rules for the national tournament and permit questions and exploration of the scope of established rules.

Discussion: Meany suggested that there were those who should know more about debate before the tournament. Hack suggested that it has to be everyone or no one but he really liked the idea that everyone be on the same plate. Parker asked about the logistics. Freeman and Shipley raised a concern about burdens on the host. A minimum round requirement was suggested as an alternative. Inch suggested a sign-off option. Rutledge suggested that it be a supplemental. Diers asked if it had to be a session or if it could be a sign-off?

**New business**

*Proposals 1-3 and Items A-B are in "Group One – Organizational Matters"*

Proposal #1: to increase the number of elected district representatives

*[This proposal requires Constitutional changes – see "note" above]*

Each district should elect three representatives -- two faculty representatives and one student representative. Voting for faculty representatives and student representatives for the next year would be done at NPDA nationals (i.e. representatives for 2003-2004 would be elected at 2003 NPDA Nationals).

Nominations for faculty representatives should be sent to the Executive Secretary no later than 30 days prior to the tournament. Ballots would be distributed to institutional members at registration. Absentee ballots would be mailed to all individual members and all institutional members not present at the tournament. Ballots would be due to the Executive Secretary no later than 30 days after the

tournament. Voters would indicate their preference for no more than two candidates within their district. The two candidates from each district receiving the most votes would be elected. In case of a tie, the NPDA President would break the tie.

Student district representatives would be elected by simple majority vote of students present at a meeting for each district held at nationals. The national student representative would continue to be elected at the national student meeting. A room would be allocated and publicized for each district to hold its meeting.

Justification: Members should have a say in the organizations of which they are members. A district representative system provides an avenue for that communication.

#### Proposal #2: to identify voting representatives at business meetings

Attendees at Business Meetings should register upon entry to the meeting as either voting or non-voting attendees. A visible designator (i.e. button, sticker, stamp) should be issued to eligible voters to differentiate them from ineligible participants. Eligible voters would include the following: a voting representative of each member school, faculty district representatives, student district representatives, NPDA President, NPDA Vice President, NPDA Executive Secretary, NPDA Treasurer, and national student representative.

Justification: Currently, there is no check on who actually votes in the Business Meeting and no way to check that proxies are fairly and accurately voted. Misrepresented proxies and outright ineligible voting are extremely easy to accomplish under the current system.

#### Proposal #3: to structure business meetings

Business Meetings should be structured as follows (all times may be extended or contracted by majority vote of the meeting):

- Registration: 10 minutes
- Friendly Amendment Period: 15 minutes. During this period, anyone who seeks to craft a "friendly amendment" may consult with the initiator of the proposal (or his/her designate) to craft a friendly amendment.
- For each proposal:
  - 1) The Chair will report the proposal.
  - 2) The initiator (or designate) will report any friendly amendments.
  - 3) The initiator will control 5 minutes of time to be allocated for speakers in support of the proposal.
  - 4) The Chair will control 5 minutes of time to be allocated

for speakers in opposition of the proposal.

- 5) The Chair will call the motion, pending a motion to extend debate (which may be extended by majority vote). All extensions of debate must allow for equal time for and against the proposal. If there is no successful motion to extend debate, the motion will be deemed to have been constructively seconded and members present may vote.
- 6) The Executive Secretary will record the vote. However, designation of approval or rejection of the motion will be deferred pending absentee ballots (see Postponed Proposal #1).
- 7) Upon approval, measures will be immediately put into effect

Justification: Business meetings are not as productive as they might be. The time devoted to reports should be shortened and distribution of the important information should be provided in written form to attendees. A more structured method for dealing with proposals is needed for efficiency.

#### Item A: to change voting representation at business meetings

Submitted by John Meany, Claremont McKenna College

Amend Article VII: Business Meetings of the Association as follows:

#### Current Language

Section 3. Each member institution may be represented by one voting representative at a Business Meeting. No member institution represented at a Business Meeting may vote more than 10 proxies in addition to the member's own vote. At least 5% of member institutions must be personally represented (proxies do not suffice for this purpose) for the meeting to conduct any business other than hearing reports and discussing them.

#### Proposed Language

Section 3. Each member institution may be represented by two voting representatives at a Business Meeting. One of the voting representatives must be an enrolled student in good standing. No member institution represented at a Business Meeting may vote more than one proxy in addition to the member's own vote. At least 5% of member institutions must be personally represented (proxies do not suffice for this purpose) for the meeting to conduct any business other than hearing reports and discussing them.

**Justification:** The current rules do not permit sufficient representation by the overwhelming number of stakeholders in parliamentary debating, namely, students. The proposed change is designed to increase student voice in the business decisions of their organization.

Student voting is already approved by the organization, albeit in a limited form. Student-administered programs have a direct voice. Article VII, Section 4, authorizes some student votes: "The National Student Representative and District Student Representatives will each be given a vote at the fall and spring NPDA business meetings." In addition, student leaders effectively administer hundreds of campus and national organizations. The NPDA, an organization committed to opinionated student voice on critical issues of regional, national, and international public policy, should foster student participation in organizational business decisions.

This change would reduce the number of proxy votes, encouraging more direct and responsive participation in organizational affairs.

Item B: to establish a fund to help teams attend the national tournament

Submitted by Tom Kuster, Bethany Lutheran College

Proposal: The Finance Committee should oversee the preparation of a plan to create a special fund, the purpose of which would be to help schools with student-run teams attend the National Championship Tournament by subsidizing their fees. Money would be gathered by voluntary tax-deductible donations from member schools and others. Money would be disbursed only to programs that 1) are student-run, that is, they have no coaching or administration paid for by their school, 2) would be attending the tournament for the first time, and 3) meet other criteria to be established as necessary for the fair and efficient administration of the fund.

Reasons for the proposal:

- The NPDA National Championship Tournament is enriched by the entry of teams who have never been there before, and this plan would encourage them.
- Student-run teams face an array of difficulties, many of them financial, not encountered by school-supported programs, and this would be a way for NPDA to show its appreciation and support.
- The fund would operate outside the regular NPDA budget, and would not impact ordinary fees or dues.
- This is a way to start using NPDA's new tax-exempt status. If it works on this limited basis, the fund could be expanded to new sources of income and new projects to support.
- If school-funded programs entering the tournament would contribute only an average of \$10 each year to the fund, it could supply a \$100 encouragement for as many as nine new tournament entries.

*Items C-F are in "Group Two – Tournament Procedures"*

Item C -- An amendment to prevent inappropriate judge identification

Submitted by John Meany, Claremont Colleges

Amendment to Bylaw XII: Tournament Operating Procedures. Section (G) Judge Assignment.

Proposed addition: All adults ineligible to compete at the national tournament are eligible to judge the event. The tournament may not make any notation on a judge or strike list indicating a special status for judges, including first year judging.

Justification: This will allow qualified individuals to judge at the national tournament, without discriminatory status references (e.g., "first year out" or "Irish").

Item D -- An amendment to increase tournament disclosure.

Submitted by John Meany, Claremont Colleges

An amendment to Bylaw XIII: Tournament Rules. Rules of Debating and Judging. Section 5. After the Debate.

Proposed addition: After the completion of tabulation for each preliminary round of debate and the announcement of the subsequent preliminary round of debate, for round 1-7, the tournament director or designated representative will post the win/loss and individual speaker results of the preceding debates, in a conveniently located room or public space.

Justification: This addition will provide tabulation transparency for the event, increasing accountability, improving communication about practice, and providing a secondary check on results accuracy.

Item E -- An amendment to require judge decision disclosure.

Submitted by John Meany, Claremont Colleges

An amendment to Bylaw XIII: Tournament Rules. Rules of Debating and Judging. Section 5. After the Debate.

Proposed change: Delete sections 5a, 5b, and 5c.

Current text: 5A. After the final rebuttal, the Speaker of the House will dismiss the teams, complete the ballot and return

it to the tournament director. The judges should not give oral comments before the ballot is completed and returned to the tournament director.

5B. After returning the ballot, the judge may, at his or her discretion, give brief constructive comments to the debaters. Judges should refrain from announcing the decision. After these comments, debaters and coaches will refrain from seeking further information about the debate from the judge.

5C. Debaters or coaches will refrain from requesting that judges reveal decisions. Debaters or coaches who harass judges for information may be withdrawn from the tournament on a two-thirds vote of the Tournament Committee.

Amended wording: At the completion of each preliminary and elimination round of debate, judges are required to verbally announce their decision. The judge will be given a three minute period of time to explain the decision of the debate. Immediately following the announcement of the timed three minute period, judges must return ballots to the tabulation staff. Judges may engage debaters regarding decisions after ballots are delivered to the tournament staff. Judges must announce decisions but debaters are under no obligation to listen to decisions. Debaters may be excused from the competition room at their request prior to the announcement of the decision. Students and Coaches should avoid harassing critics regarding decisions.

Justification: Decision disclosure is a tool for judge education and consistent decision-making; a guide for improved practice for participants; a move to open communication in a critical community; a legitimate check on unaccountable decision making; a needed secondary check on tournament tabulations; and a means to promote fairness in disclosure (a method to eliminate problematic 'selective' disclosure).

#### Item F – an amendment to tournament sanctioning standards

Submitted by John Meany, Claremont McKenna College

#### **An amendment to ByLaw VII. Criteria for Sanctioning NPDA Tournaments**

##### **Proposed Language**

Section I. The tournament must meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

**Justification:** The NPDA should make every reasonable effort to eliminate eligibility standards that might interfere with equal opportunities for participation in tournament competition. The extant sanctioning guidelines permit host sites to sponsor NPDA approved events at non-accessible locations. The organization should sanction only those events that comply with ADA rules to promote accessible educational services, programs, and activities.