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Article
For The Re-Inhabited Republic For Florida
First Time Meeting In Congress -
Electronic Heaven or Hell(p)?
By: Jim Costa   Date: Nov. 21, 2024

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The Problem:

How does one open an Electronic Congress to an assortment of first time
member volunteers average age of 60?

Facts & Assumptions:

A) <u>We Must Assume this About New Members:</u>

1) Most have never been in a Zoom or Electronic meeting before;
2) Some will be wearing hearing aids requiring electronic adjustments;
3) Some will have laptops and some phones for the meeting;
4) Most will have difficulties in signing into the meeting;
5) Some may not plan to attend at all.
6) Many may not know how to participate. Some will want to talk just to be heard;
    some will want quietness.
7) Most will not know Roberts Rules of Order.
8) Most may not know the meetings are recorded.
9) The members do not know anything about each other.
10) Some may not check their emails often.

B) Leaders would be wise to check to insure email and telephone communications
    are open with the members.

C) Leaders must anticipate first timers will delay their first formal meeting trying to get in.

D) Meetings should not be held up by the moderator by one late individual.

E) It would be best if the leadr lead and a coach is available for coaching.

f) **Quorum:** This House Vote needs to be approved by 51% of the members that vote.
        Therefore, voting timelines and methods must be understtod by all.

G   **Electronic Method of Voting:**

   Gmail Online Polls & Surveys, Easy and free online polls and surveys directly from
   your Gmail.   Download Most Email Platforms have add-ons for this. You can even have
   the results dropped in a spreadsheet automatically and sent to the voters as new votes

come in in real time.
Thus it can be posted and each other can certify their own vote.

This can be done before the meeting, in the meeting or after the meeting.

Absentees might vote before the meeting.

Remember some will be using their phones for the meeting so don't expect them to send an email vote out at the same time.

H) **Oral Voting In A Meeting:**

Traditional Roll Call;

Traditional "Eyes" and "Nays"

Backward Voting.   First inquire if anyone is apposed to the bill.
  This will flush out those that have not read the proposition.
  If no one is apposed then there is no need for discussion.
  Immediately call for all that approve it.
  This method prevents reading the proposition out loud.

Moods and Voting By Imoges.

I) Based on the Proposal Plan, Bills and Proposals are sent out a week ahead of meetings.
   This allows members to discuss and negotiate with the author prior to the meeting.
   The final draft goes out the day prior to the meeting with explanation of changes.

   Once the meeting opens, the Proposal is now owned by the membership, not the author.
   It can be changed only by the membership from this point forward.
     See: Proposal Method – PDF

The Plan:

1) Train members in the Proposal method so they know what to expect.

2)   Download mail merge Add-Onss on any (and many) computer systems.

   Downloading the Voting Add-On must be done on a Windows based systems only.
    Therefore, have it loaded on two systems, one owned by a back up person.

3) Get two trained volunteers (non-members) to sit in the session (one a back-up) to assist first
   timers trying to log in properly. Publish their phone numbers early to the members.
    Advise members that if they are using a phone to have someone be with them
    with a second phone if needed, until they are trained.

4) Start sending out electronic ballots as polls to members.
    Questions: Is phone number correct?
                     Laptop or phone to be used for meeting?
                     Has appropriate AP or software been loaded yet?
                     Do they intend to be at the upcoming meeting?
                     Did they receive the meeting notice?
    Do this a week prior to all meetings, training them to watch their emails
      during that time frame.

5) Send Youtubes to members on how to download and use the Electronic meeting software, along with a Email voting demonstration.

6) Have the two coachs host a meeting the day before the Congress meeting.
    The purpose of this meeting is for all members to get into the meeting once or twice in that session, as well as learn how to raise their hand and play with the buttons.

<u>Costs</u>   Zero

<u>Pros:</u>

Gets it done simply.

<u>Cons:</u>