

A Guide to WEFT Associates Meetings

WEFT's Associates meetings are the quarterly opportunities for the Associates (and anyone else who is interested) to meet to discuss current matters at WEFT, and to take care of necessary business. Robert's Rules govern the proceedings at these meetings, as modified by the Associates' own Standard Operating Procedures. Here's a step-by-step look at the items you will usually see on the agenda

THE AGENDA

1. **Call to order:** The Associates Chair gets things going by announcing that the meeting has begun.
2. **Introductions:** There are so many active WEFTies, this is often the only chance we have to put faces with names; please tell us who you are!
3. **Approval of agenda:** The agenda contains the items the Associates Executive Committee (AEC) has determined can fit into a two-hour meeting. Last-minute items can be added if two-thirds of the attending Associates approve the change.
4. **Approval of previous meeting's minutes:** We look over the minutes from three months before, to see that they're accurate. It takes a majority of the attending Associates to approve the old minutes.
5. **Elections:** This is the centerpiece of each Associates meeting. While the Associates as a group only meet eight hours a year, the people we elect spend a great deal more time doing the business of the station.
The Associates elect people to three bodies at WEFT: the Programming committee (five seats), the Board (six seats), and our own AEC (five seats). The elections occur in that order. For each body, the steps are:
 - a. The current head of the body describes the positions up for election;
 - b. Associates are nominated and seconded for the available seats (you can nominate yourself);
 - c. The nominated individuals make statements;
 - d. The nominated individuals are questioned by the audience;
 - e. One by one, the nominees leave the room. The remainder of the group discusses the nominee's candidacy;
 - f. Associates are given a separate ballot for each body—PC, Board, and/or AEC. The number of seats in the election and the names of the nominees for those seats are announced. Some guidelines:
 - Write either the name of an eligible candidate or "No Candidate" for each open seat. "No Candidate" means you are not in favor of any candidate winning that seat.
 - Don't vote more than once for the same person.
 - Don't write more names on your ballot than there are seats in the election.
 - Please write legibly.
 - g. The ballots are collected. The ballot collectors can only accept one ballot from each Associate; if you give them more than one, the votes on each ballot will be disregarded.
 - h. The votes are tallied and the results are announced.
6. **Reports from the Station Manager, Board of Directors, and Committees:** Another vital part of each Associates meeting, this is the time for the various groups at the station to bring the Associates up to speed on what's happening at WEFT. Just as important, this is our opportunity to ask questions.
7. **Old Business:** Ideally, we take care of everything on each meeting's agenda. Sometimes, we run out of time before we get to all agenda items. At the next meeting, these are dealt with after elections and reports, but before any other business.
8. **New Business:** These are the new items that have been brought to the Associates attention. If you have anything for consideration as an item at a future Associates meeting, you can email the AEC at weftx@weft.org. Better yet, bring your idea to an AEC meeting—the dates and times are posted at WEFT and announced on wefta.
9. **Announce date and time of next meeting:** Associates meetings are announced as part of meeting agendas, are posted on wefta and at the station, and are announced on the air. This second-to-last item on the agenda is one more way to get the word out.
10. **Adjournment:** And we're through.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

As we work our way through each Associates meeting, we use various means to keep things moving while allowing for adequate deliberation. The agenda itself is one means; the time allotted for each agenda item is listed on the agenda, and when that time is up, theoretically we leave that item and move on to the next. Several other means of directing the flow of the meeting are part of parliamentary procedure and are taken from Robert's Rules of Order. Here's a brief overview of the procedures you'll see most often during Associates meetings:

- 1) **Main Motion:** This is what we spend most of our time working through. When we begin talking about any item on the agenda, those who wish to speak raise their hand and are added to the speaker's list. At some point, an Associate forms all of the discussion into a main motion. This motion then becomes the focal point of subsequent discussion. This motion needs to be seconded, is amendable and debatable, and passes with a majority vote.
- 2) **Amendments:** As the discussion of a motion progresses, Associates may propose a change to the current motion. This change needs to be seconded, is amendable and debatable, and passes with a majority vote.
- 3) **Extend Discussion:** When the time for an item runs out, an Associate can move that we extend the time for discussion by a certain number of minutes. This motion needs to be seconded, is amendable but not debatable, and requires a 2/3 vote to pass.
- 4) **Call the Question:** When discussion of an item winds down and an Associate feels that we're ready to vote on it, they can make this motion. If it passes, discussion is over and we move on to vote on the item that we've been discussing. (Yes, that means that this is a vote on whether or not we want to vote.) This motion needs to be seconded, is not amendable or debatable, and requires a 2/3 vote to pass.

Three things to remember:

- 1) Only Associates may make and second motions and vote at Associates meetings.
- 2) Each of these procedures requires that the chair recognize the person making the motion before they speak.
- 3) If you don't know what the proper procedure is for something you'd like to contribute, raise your hand and we'll help you work through it. We don't want to lose anyone's contribution just because they haven't mastered parliamentary procedure.

The cast of characters at tonight's meeting:

- 1) **Associate:** The majority of attendees of this meeting are Associates, because they've met the three requirements for Associate status—they're current members of WEFT, they have a volunteer commitment at the station, and they've attended at least two Associates meetings in the last twelve months. They can vote and make and second motions this evening.
- 2) **Non-voting Associate:** These people meet the requirements for Associate status but are members of WEFT's Board of Directors or are paid staff at WEFT. They can't make or second motions, or vote during this meeting. Other than that, they're free to contribute.
- 3) **Guest:** These attendees are not Associates, and might not even be members of WEFT. They can still participate in our discussions tonight, just the same.