



## Community Council Parliamentary Rules for Regular and Special Community Council Meetings

### Introduction

The San Francisco Tlingit and Haida Community Constitution in Article II Section 3 authorizes the Community Council to hold regular or special meetings to transact any business or take any action within the powers of the Community (see Article III Powers of the Community Council, Sections 1 & 2).

*“The Community Council shall hold such regular meetings, at such times and places, as it shall by resolution provide. Special meetings may be called by written notice signed by the President or by a majority of the members of the Community Council, and at such meetings the Community Council may transact any business and take any action within its powers...”*

The Constitution authorizes the Community Council to “transact any business or take any action” outside of Council meetings.

*“...Whether assembled or not, a majority of the members of the Community Council can transact any business or take any action within the powers of the Community Council; provided, that before the Community Council shall take action when not assembled, a reasonable effort shall be made to advise and consult each member and provision shall be made for evidencing the concurrence of the majority in writing or writings which shall be transmitted to the Secretary of the Community Council for preservation in its records...”*

The residency of SFTH Community members occurs throughout the State of California and beyond. Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska records in 2022 listed over 1,400 tribal citizens in California, with over 500 in southern California, over 550 in the greater Bay Area to Sacramento, and over 225 in northern California. This dispersion throughout California is reflected in the Community Council members. In order to promote the long-standing goal of the Community Council to encourage Community member participation in Community affairs and governance, and to enable participation of Council members wherever they reside, the Community Council adopts parliamentary rules to transact business at “electronic meetings,” in which some or all of the members communicate through electronic means such as the Internet or by telephone. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated this transition to electronic meetings.

The Community Council adopted Robert’s Rules of Order as parliamentary authority and procedure for the conduct of Community Council meetings. Herein the Community Council adopts parliamentary authorization of such electronic meetings, under the authority and

limitations of the SFTHC Constitution, from Robert’s Rules of Order’s *Electronic Meetings* [RONR (12<sup>th</sup> ed.), section 9:30-36], wherein the Community Council adopts additional rules to govern the conduct of that type of meeting.

These rules are designed for allowing the Community Council to make use of the following types of electronic communication to conduct meetings, respectively:

- A. Full-featured Internet, or combination Internet/telephone, meeting services that integrate audio (and optionally video), text, and voting capabilities.
- B. Telephone meetings, with Internet services for conducting secret votes and sharing documents.
- C. A speakerphone in the meeting room to allow members who are not physically present to participate by telephone.
- D. Telephone meetings without Internet support (and without any central meeting room).

The Community Council will make use of available Internet meeting services with integrated audio (and optionally video), text, and voting capabilities as the usual meeting method, with in- person meetings when ordered by the board or all of its members.

Each Council member, using his or her own computer or other device, can view the current list of all participants—with an indication of which member has the floor or which members are seeking recognition by the chair—and can seek recognition, submit motions in writing, view the text of pending motions, vote, and view the results of a vote. The sample rules given below require that anonymous voting be supported (in other words, that a member who is properly logged in to a meeting can cast an “electronic ballot” that does not identify that member’s vote as belonging to him or her), and they also assume that non-anonymous votes can be taken, as well.

Audio transmissions can be integrated directly via the Internet, so that participants listen and speak through microphones and speakers or headsets at their computers or other devices. Alternatively, there might be a conference call, with access codes for the participants, that is dialed into by ordinary telephone but is also linked to the Internet meeting interface, so that participants speak and listen by telephone, but use the Internet service (which remains aware of the identity of each caller) for all other features. If the participants have webcams for transmitting live video, a portion of the screen might show their faces, or else (perhaps depending on the total number of participants) just those of the chair and/or the person speaking in debate or presenting a report.

The meeting chair or secretary has access to a control panel, which enables them to perform their duties during the meeting, such as ensuring that the text of the pending question is properly displayed, assigning the floor to a member, opening and closing the polls for taking a vote, controlling the camera view, etc.

The Community Council herein authorizes the Council to meet by use of an electronic meeting through internet and/or telephonic service with features like those described above by adding the following sections the Robert’s Rules of Order parliamentary authority and procedure previously adopted as rules for electronic meetings.

### **Clarification of SFTHC Constitution Article II Section 3 Regular and Special Meetings Article I – Regular and Special Meetings**

**Section 1. Electronic Services.** In accordance with the San Francisco Tlingit and Haida Community Constitution Article II Section 3, regular and special meetings of the Community Council shall be held with the assistance of internet services and/or telephonic services for conference calls, or in-person meetings with internet services and/or telephonic services. The Community Council meetings held with the assistance of electronic services shall be subject to all rules of the Constitution or adopted by the Board, to govern them, which may include any reasonable limitations on, and requirements for, Community Council members' participation. Any such rules adopted by the Board shall supersede any conflicting rules in the parliamentary authority, but may not otherwise conflict with or alter any provision of the Constitution.

**Section 2. Rules for Internet Services in Regular of Special Council Meetings.**

1. **Login information.** The Corresponding Secretary shall send by e-mail, text, or facsimile, to every member of the Community Council, at least seven days before each regular or special Community Council meeting, the time of the meeting, the URL and codes necessary to connect to the Internet meeting service, and, as an alternative and backup to the audio connection included within the Internet service, the phone number and access code(s) the member needs to participate aurally by telephone, and documentation of any business item to be discussed. The Corresponding Secretary shall also include a copy of, or a link to, these rules.
2. **Login time.** The Recording Secretary shall schedule Internet meeting service availability to begin at least 15 minutes before the start of each meeting.
3. **Signing in and out.** Members shall identify themselves as required to sign in to the Internet meeting service, and shall maintain Internet and audio access throughout the meeting whenever present, but shall sign out upon any departure before adjournment.
4. **Quorum calls.** The presence of a quorum shall be established by audible roll call at the beginning of the meeting. Thereafter, the continued presence of a quorum shall be determined by the online list of participating members, unless any member demands a quorum count by audible roll call. Such a demand may be made following any vote for which the announced totals add to less than a quorum.
5. **Technical requirements and malfunctions.** Each member is responsible for his or her audio and Internet connections; no action shall be invalidated on the grounds that the loss of, or poor quality of, a member's individual connection prevented participation in the meeting.
6. **Forced disconnections.** The chair may cause or direct the disconnection or muting of a member's connection if it is causing undue interference with the meeting. The chair's decision to do so, which is subject to an undebatable appeal that can be made by any member, shall be announced during the meeting and recorded in the minutes.
7. **Assignment of the floor.** To seek recognition by the chair, a member shall use the appropriate icon or other method to signal to the chair a request for recognition. Upon assigning the floor to a member, the chair shall clear the online queue of members who had been seeking recognition. To claim preference in recognition, another member who had been seeking recognition may promptly seek recognition again, and the chair shall recognize the member for the limited purpose of determining whether that member is entitled to preference in recognition.
8. **Interrupting a member.** A member who intends to make a motion or request that under

the rules may interrupt a speaker shall use the designated feature for so indicating, and shall thereafter wait a reasonable time for the chair's instructions before attempting to interrupt the speaker by voice.

9. **Motions submitted in writing.** A member intending to make a main motion, to offer an amendment, or to propose instructions to a committee, shall, before or after being recognized, post the motion in writing to the online area designated by the Recording Secretary for this purpose, preceded by the member's name and a number corresponding to how many written motions the member has so far posted during the meeting (e.g., "SMITH 3:"; "FRANCES JONES 2:"). Use of the online area designated by the Recording Secretary for this purpose shall be restricted to posting the text of intended motions.
10. **Display of motions.** The Recording Secretary shall designate an online area exclusively for the display of the immediately pending question and other relevant pending questions (such as the main motion, or the pertinent part of the main motion, when an amendment to it is immediately pending); and, to the extent feasible, the Recording Secretary, or any assistants appointed by him or her for this purpose, shall cause such questions, or any other documents that are currently before the meeting for action or information, to be displayed therein until disposed of.
11. **Voting.** Votes shall be taken by the available and appropriate voting feature of the internet meeting service, e.g. chat feature. When required or ordered, other permissible methods of voting are by electronic roll call or by audible roll call. The chair's announcement of the voting result shall include the number of members voting on each side of the question and the number, if any, who explicitly respond to acknowledge their presence without casting a vote. Business may also be conducted by unanimous consent.
12. **Video display.** The chair may cause or order the Recording Secretary, or their assistants may cause a video of the chair to be displayed throughout the meeting, and may also cause display of the video of the member currently recognized to speak or report, although bandwidth limitations may cause any participant to disable the video display.
13. **Forced disconnections.** The chair may cause or order the Recording Secretary to disconnect or mute a connection if a connection or a Council member, Community member, or guest, is causing undue interference with the internet videoconference call. The chair's decision to do so, which is subject to an undebatable appeal that can be made by any member, shall be announced during the meeting and recorded in the minutes.

**Section 3. Rules for Telephonic (i.e., teleconference) Services in Regular or Special Council Meetings.**

1. **Login information.** The Corresponding Secretary shall send by e-mail, text, or facsimile, to every member of the Community Council, at least seven days before each regular or special Community Council meeting, the time of the meeting, the phone number and unique access code that that member needs to connect to the telephone conference call, and documentation of any business action to be discussed. The Corresponding Secretary shall also include a copy of, or a link to, these rules.

2. **Call-in time.** The Recording Secretary shall schedule a telephone conference call, using a free service that provides each user a unique access code, to begin 15 minutes before the start of each meeting.
3. **Technical requirements.** For the purposes of electronic ballot voting and file sharing, members shall maintain Internet access during the meeting.
4. **Arrival announcements.** Members shall announce themselves at the first opportunity after joining the telephone conference call, but may not interrupt a speaker to do so.
5. **Departure announcements.** Members who leave the telephone conference call before adjournment shall announce their departure, but may not interrupt a speaker to do so.
6. **Quorum calls.** The presence of a quorum shall be established by roll call at the beginning of the meeting and on the demand of any member. Such a demand may be made following the departure of any member, or following the taking of any vote for which the announced totals add to less than a quorum.
7. **Obtaining the floor.** To seek recognition by the chair, a member shall address the chair and state his or her own name.
8. **Motions submitted in writing.** Members may submit motions to the chair in writing by uploading them to the file-hosting service and notifying the chair of the URL or download link needed to access the file.
9. **Voting.** All votes shall be taken by roll call, unless required under the rules or ordered by the Board to be taken by ballot. When a vote is taken by roll call, only the number of votes on each side and the number of members present but not voting shall be entered in the minutes, unless the Board orders a fully recorded roll-call vote. Ballot votes shall be taken electronically, as follows: The Recording Secretary shall post the question using the online survey tool, and the chair shall then alert the members that the polls are open, providing any additional information that members need to cast their votes online. The polls shall be closed not less than two minutes after they have been opened by the chair. Business may also be conducted by unanimous consent.
10. **Technical malfunctions.** Each member is responsible for his or her connection to the telephone conference call and to the Internet; no action shall be invalidated on the grounds that the loss of, or poor quality of, a member's individual connection prevented participation in the meeting.
11. **Forced disconnections.** The chair may cause or order the Recording Secretary to disconnect or mute a connection if a connection, a Council member, a Community member, or a guest, is causing undue interference with the telephone conference call. The chair's decision to do so, which is subject to an undebatable appeal that can be made by any member, shall be announced during the meeting and recorded in the minutes.

**Section 4. Rules for Combined Electronic and In-Person Regular or Special Council Meetings.** Pursuant to the SFTHC Constitution Article II Section 3, the Community Council holds regular meetings by adoption of a resolution, or special meetings called by the President or a majority of the Community Council members by a written notice. In-person regular or special meetings shall be approved by a majority of the Community Council members, and subject to these rules for electronic regular or special meetings held by the Community Council. In-person

meetings permit a majority of Community Council members to be physically present while any other Council members not physically present participate by internet services and/or telephonic services.

1. **In-Person Meetings.** In-person regular or special Community Council meetings may be held by a majority of Community Council members at a central location, and any Council members who are not present in-person shall have the right to participate by internet service or telephonic service, subject to the rules in sections 1 to 3 above and this section 4.
2. **Login information.** The Corresponding Secretary shall send by e-mail, text, or facsimile, to every member of the Community Council, at least fourteen days before each meeting, the time and location of the meeting and the applicable URL and logon information or phone number and any access code needed to connect to the internet service and/or telephonic service conference call. The Corresponding Secretary shall also include a copy of, or a link to, these rules.
3. **Call-in time.** The Recording Secretary shall schedule an internet service and/ telephonic service conference call, using equipment provided by the Society or a free service, to begin 15 minutes before the start of each meeting.
4. **Meeting-room equipment.** The society shall provide a speakerphone at each meeting, which the Recording Secretary shall connect to the internet service and/ or telephonic service conference call at least 5 minutes before the start of the meeting.
5. **Arrival announcements.** Council members who participate in the meeting electronically shall announce themselves at the first opportunity after joining the conference call, but may not interrupt a speaker to do so.
6. **Departure announcements.** Council members who leave the conference call or the meeting room before adjournment shall announce their departure, but may not interrupt a speaker to do so.
7. **Quorum calls.** The presence of a quorum shall be established by roll call at the beginning of the meeting and on the demand of any member. Such a demand may be made following the departure of any member or following the taking of any vote for which the announced totals add to less than a quorum.
8. **Obtaining the floor.** To seek recognition by the chair, a member shall address the chair and state his or her own name.
9. **Motions submitted in writing.** Council members who participate in the meeting electronically may not submit motions in writing during the meeting, but are entitled to make motions orally. Council members may, however, submit motions in writing by sending them at least one day before the meeting to the Corresponding Secretary, who shall send any such pre-submitted motions by e-mail to all members in advance of the meeting and shall provide copies to the members present in person at the meeting.
10. **Voting methods.** All votes shall be taken by roll call. Unless the Community Council orders a fully recorded roll-call vote, only the number of votes on each side and the number of members present but not voting (including members participating by phone) shall be entered in the minutes. Business may also be conducted by unanimous consent.

11. **Loss of meeting-room connection.** Any business transacted while the meeting-room speakerphone is disconnected from the telephone conference call is null and void, except that the members present in the meeting room at such a time may take those actions that are in order in the absence of a quorum.
12. **Other technical malfunctions and requirements.** Each Council member is responsible for his or her connection to the telephone conference call; no action shall be invalidated on the grounds that the loss of, or poor quality of, a member's individual connection prevented participation in the meeting.
13. **Forced disconnections.** The chair may cause or order the Recording Secretary to disconnect or mute a connection if a connection, a Council member, a Community member, or a guest, is causing undue interference with the telephone conference call. The chair's decision to do so, which is subject to an undebatable appeal that can be made by any member, shall be announced during the meeting and recorded in the minutes.

**Section 5. Rules for Council Meetings.** The Constitution in Article II Section 3 authorizes the Community Council to "transact any business or take any action" outside of Council meetings. The Community Council will transact business or take action concerning urgent matters that require the consideration of the Community Council between regular or special meetings by request of the President. Such consideration will be conducted in communications via email, text, facsimile, or telephone, shall be considered under Robert's Rules of Order, and shall be open for Council member motions and/or voting for a minimum of four calendar days. Business transacted or actions taken shall be recorded by the Secretary, and shall be considered for ratification by the Community Council at the next regular or special meeting under special orders.