



Learning Phase Meeting Notes

Weekend 1- Sept 9 & 10 2006

In Attendance 103 Assembly members, including the Chair
12 Secretariat staff
11 small group facilitators
24 public observers

Evaluator: Lyn McDonell, Institute on Governance
Technical support: TV Ontario, Seneca College, Mediaco, and Osgoode Hall Law School
Simultaneous translation: International Conference Interpreters
American Sign Language: Canadian Hearing Society

Objectives for Session

- Achieve consensus on values and procedures for working together
- Learn how different electoral systems produce different results
- Get an introduction to the learning phase
- Begin to identify the desired principles and characteristics of electoral systems

Proceedings

1. The session began with a welcome, introductions and remarks from the Chair, George Thomson, and then opening statements and questions from Assembly members. The members also viewed videotaped greetings from dignitaries¹ and other citizens.
2. Following small group and plenary discussions, the Assembly agreed on shared values for working together (Attachment "A") and procedural rules (Attachment "B"). The Assembly may change or add to these items as it progresses.

¹ Honourable Marie Bountrogianni, Minister Responsible for Democratic Renewal; Patrick Monahan, Dean, Osgoode Hall Law School, York University; Lorna Marsden, President and Vice-Chancellor, York University; Honourable Roy McMurtry, Chief Justice of Ontario; John Hollins, Chief Election Officer, Lisa De Wilde, CEO, TV Ontario; Mariette Carrier-Fraser, Présidente de Assemblée de la francophonie de l'Ontario.

3. Academic Director, Jonathan Rose, introduced members to the learning phase and basic elements of electoral systems. Brief mock elections were held to show how different electoral systems produce different results.
4. In small groups and then in a plenary discussion, members began to identify ideas about what electoral systems should accomplish and how their ideas link to the principles and characteristics set out in the regulation.
5. Susan Pigott, Executive Lead, Citizen Engagement talked briefly about ideas for the public consultation process. Several members volunteered to read the draft consultation materials and provide comments at a conference call before the next meeting.
6. The Chair talked to members about plans to monitor and evaluate the Citizens' Assembly process.

Follow-up Items

Members

7. Before the next meeting, members are encouraged to:
 - Read the draft consultation plan, guide and schedule
 - Read the document "[Principles and Characteristics of Electoral Systems](#)"
 - Begin looking at the IDEA Handbook.
8. Members who have not yet completed the detailed survey sent out in August should complete the survey as soon as possible and mail it in the self-addressed, stamped envelope to the Institute on Governance.

Chair

9. The Chair will state objectives for each weekend meeting. He will also provide clarification of what is included in the Assembly's mandate.

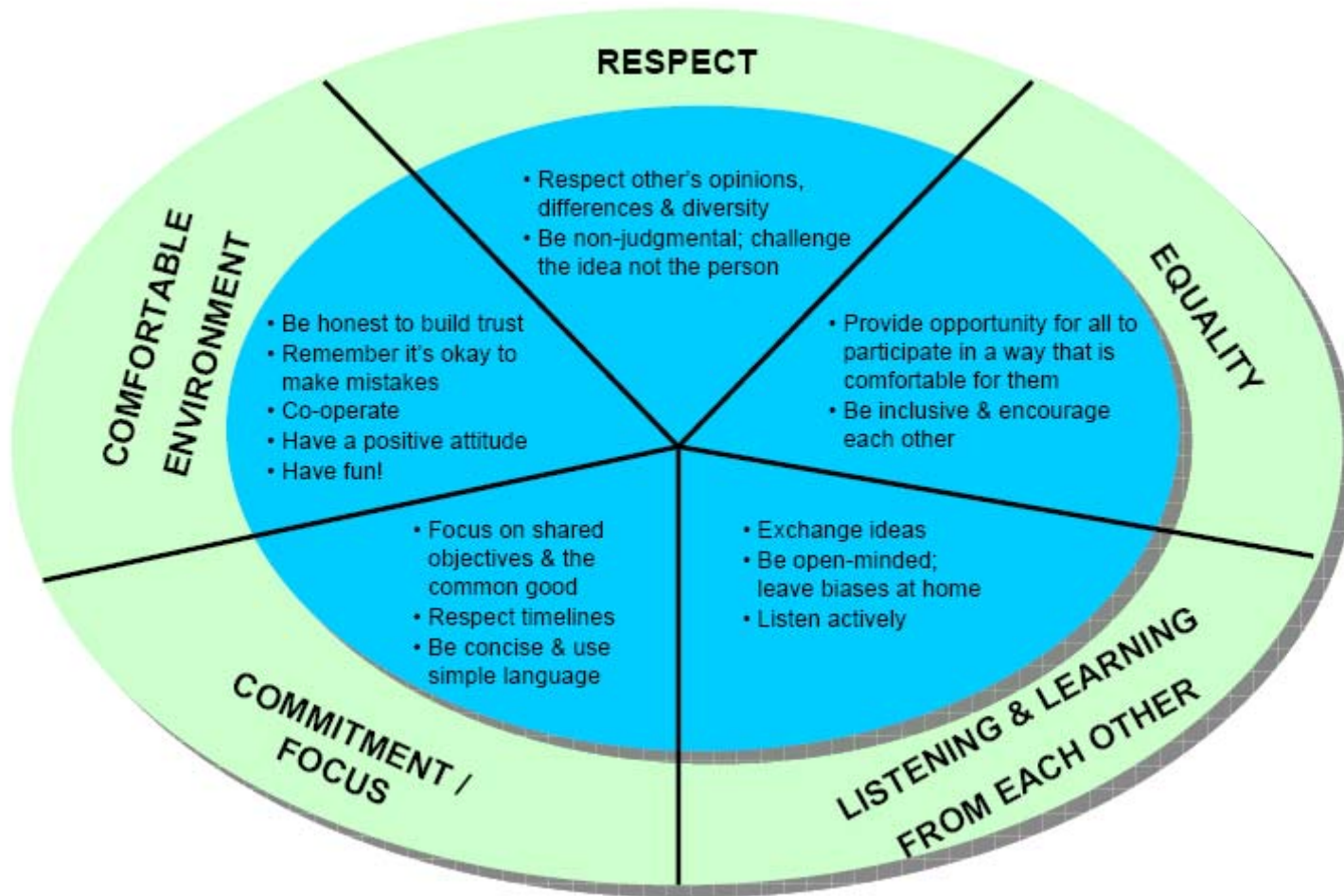
Secretariat

10. At the Assembly's request, the Secretariat will:
 - Give members a copy of the regulation establishing the Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform
 - Include members' ridings on name tags and place cards
 - Give members a map of Ontario ridings that shows who is from each riding
 - Provide population numbers for each riding

- Clarify who does what at the Secretariat
- Provide Assembly member business cards

--Prepared by Karen Cohl, Executive Director and Recording Secretary

Attachment A: Shared Values for Working Together



Attachment B: Procedural Rules for Assembly Meetings

Overall Approach

1. Common sense and reasonableness will be the primary guides in determining how we conduct our meetings.
2. We will conduct ourselves in an organized but informal manner that reflects our values for working together and avoids formal “rules of order.” The Chair may decide on more formal procedures, if necessary, after hearing the views of the Assembly.
3. Members will signal their wish to speak in plenary sessions by raising their hands. The Chair will indicate to speakers if he feels they have gone over a reasonable limit, given the need to focus on objectives within timelines.
4. The Chair will ensure there are regular open forums or question periods to consider any matters of interest to Assembly members. There will be at least one such session every weekend for at least 15 minutes.

Decision-making

5. A quorum will be 60% of the membership. A quorum is the number of members required to be in attendance before the Assembly can function or make decisions. The final decision or decisions of the Assembly regarding what to recommend will require a majority of the Assembly—50% +1.
6. Where possible, decisions will be reached by consensus. Consensus means that, in the opinion of the Chair, a very clear majority of the members support or ‘can live with’ the decision. When the Chair summarizes a consensus position, that is the equivalent of a vote unless a vote is requested by several Assembly members. Members have the right to question the Chair on whether consensus exists and whether his summary of consensus is accurate.
7. Voting will be by a show of hands or by electronic voting. The Chair may consult with the Assembly and decide that a particular vote shall be by secret ballot.
8. The Chair can only exercise his right to vote if the Assembly members produce a tie.
9. The Chair will consult the Assembly before determining when a vote is intended to be a final decision on an issue before the Assembly.
10. The Chair will ensure that all decisions of the Assembly are recorded and provided to the Assembly in the form of meeting notes for approval. Once approved, the meeting notes will be posted on the Citizens’ Assembly website.

Sub-groups

11. Smaller discussion groups will be formed each weekend with facilitators. These groups will be roughly equal in size, with adjustments to ensure the needs for French and English-speaking Assembly members are met. Discussion group membership will be changed every weekend.
12. In addition, the Chair may propose the creation of working groups to consider one or more topics and report back to the Assembly. Membership in a working group will be voluntary.

Openness

13. Meetings of the whole Assembly will be open to the public and the media.
14. Members of the public and media are observers and shall not disrupt the proceedings. Observers are not to engage in discussions with Assembly members while the Assembly is in session.
15. One discussion group at each Assembly meeting will be open to public observers and its discussions may be videotaped as a representative small group. Assembly members assigned to this group may choose to join another discussion group. Members may also decide that this group should not be open to the public if they feel they require privacy for a particular discussion.
16. The Assembly may decide by majority vote to meet privately in one or more large discussion groups to consider any particular matter.

Revisions

17. The Chair or several Assembly members may ask the Assembly to review and, if necessary, reconfirm these rules of procedure during the life of the Assembly.