



POLICY CATEGORY: ADMINISTRATION

POLICY TITLE: BOARD CONSULTATION

Policy Number: 1.15

Date Approved: March 9th, 2018

Purpose: To ensure that proper input is received from the member clubs.

Definitions:

The Board shall use the following definition of consultation with Member Clubs:

1. Consultation is a two-way process, in which all parties listen and contribute views, information and ideas, communicate back about what happened and, where appropriate, follow-up after initial participation.
2. Consultation leads to action. The opportunity for genuine and respectful listening is in concert with a commitment to making governance policies based on the views heard. This does not mean that every suggestion made in a consultation or that the majority viewpoint is always implemented but that input will always be taken into account.
3. Consultation is part of an ongoing relationship between the Board and the Member Clubs in which mutual trust and understanding is built up over time, through a continuing process of discussion, decisions, and follow-through.
4. Formal consultation is planned in advance, includes clearly defined timelines and expected outcomes.
5. Informal consultation is a process in which informed response is sought from groups or individuals without a defined structure or timeline.

Policy Statement:

The Board is committed to consultation with Member Clubs in the development of governance policies as an integral part of their work. The first priority is to seek constituency input. It requires that the Board consider the diversity of values and ideas that are held by the Member Clubs, competitors, sponsors and stakeholders and arrive at a consensus that it believes reflects those values and ideas in the development of governance policy that is the best choice for NSCA as a whole.

Meaningful consultation is planned, purposeful and equitable and contributes to enhanced decision-making. Accordingly,

A. PURPOSES OF MEMBER CLUB CONSULTATION

1. The Board shall initiate consultation with Member Clubs:
 - a) To ensure club needs and perspectives are understood as the Board develops its vision for NSCA.
 - b) To seek input on governance policies under development.
 - c) To help define issues and questions or to understand their impact on the sport of curling in Nova Scotia.
 - d) To develop strategies on questions or issues of mutual concern to NSCA and the Member Clubs.
 - e) To explore emerging issues.
 - f) To ensure by-law amendments are considered in a timely manner.
 - i. Under 'normal' circumstances, by-law amendments will be referred with required notice to an Annual Meeting or a Special Meeting of the members.
 - ii. Under 'urgent' circumstances, by-law amendments may be made by the Board of Directors as permitted by the by-laws.
 - iii. An amendment would be deemed 'urgent', if the normal notice period for discussion at a Special Meeting or at the Annual Meeting is too long and that a negative impact upon NSCA and/or Member Clubs is a likely consequence of not making the amendment.
 - iv. The by-laws permit the Board of Directors to propose an amendment to bylaws, giving the Member Clubs a fourteen (14) days period to consider the proposal. If, within the fourteen (14) day period a minimum of three (3) Member Clubs request a meeting on the topic, it will not go forward until such meeting is held. If no such meeting is requested, the proposed amendment will be effective as of the 15th day.
 - g) To evaluate the effectiveness of governance policies.
 - h) Prior to fundamentally changing the round robin format or equitable opportunity to access NSCA-operated Championships.
 - i) Prior to introducing any new NSCA-operated Championship or the removal of any of the below listed NSCA championships:

- i. Senior Men's and Women's Provincial Championships
- ii. Mixed Provincial Championship
- iii. Junior (U21) Men's, Women's and Mixed Provincial Championships
- iv. Junior Doubles
- v. Provincial Men's Championship
- vi. Provincial Women's Championship
- vii. Provincial Wheelchair Championship
- viii. Provincial Mixed Doubles Championship
- ix. Under 18 Men's and Women's Provincial Championships
- x. Club Curler Men's and Women's Championships
- xi. Club Mixed Championship
- xii. Stick Championship
- xiii. Travelers Men's and Women's Provincial Championships
- xiv. Under 15 Greenspiel
- xv. Under 15 / Under 19 Junior Mixed
- xvi. Under 13 Jamboree....
- xvii. Under 11 Light Rocks Jamboree
- xviii. Provincial Masters Men's and Women's Championships

2. The Board shall be accountable to, and act on behalf of, the Member Clubs as a whole rather than as an advocate for specific geographic areas or particular stakeholder groups.

3. When making governance decisions, Directors shall maintain a distinction between their own personal interests as Club Members or customers of NSCA services and their obligations to speak for and represent all Member Clubs.

4. The Board shall acknowledge diversity among the Member Clubs and shall use a variety of methods to meet with, gather data about, gather input from, and otherwise interact with Member Clubs in a way that reflects this diversity.

C. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Board shall consult with Member Clubs according to the following guiding principles:

1. Transparency

Prior to beginning any consultation, the Board shall:

- .. Communicate the objectives of the consultation.
- .. Define the consultation's parameters.
- .. Set out the steps in the consultation process
- .. Explain how the consultation fits in the overall decision-making process on the subject under consideration.

2. Accountability

- .. Communicate to Member Clubs a summary of advice received, how it fed into the decision-making process and rationale for the outcomes. Any summary shall distinguish the advice received from Member Clubs and advice received from other stakeholders.
 - .. Guard against being unduly influenced by the input of stakeholders.
- .. Ensure that where the Board's decision is to be publicly announced, Member Clubs are informed in advance.
 - .. Ask Member Clubs to evaluate the consultation exercise after its conclusion.

3. Mutual Respect

- .. Conduct consultations in a climate of mutual respect.
- .. Where possible, adapt the consultation to fit the decision-making processes of the Member Clubs, the purpose of the consultation and the available resources.
- .. Acknowledge that consultation will not always lead to consensus, but should lead to a better understanding of participants' positions.
- .. Respect the differences in the Board's role and that of the Member Clubs' Boards of Directors.

4. Accessibility

- .. Remove the following barriers to participation in consultation:
 - Offer alternative ways to participate in the consultations including, but not limited to, questionnaires, on-line surveys, written submissions, teleconferences.
 - Use plain language.
- .. Seek the views of all stakeholders relevant to the subject under consideration.
- .. Provide Member Clubs and stakeholders with any background information and data that has been considered prior to the consultation.

D. ANNUAL CONSULTATION PLAN

- a. Each year at the Board of Directors' Fall Meeting, the Board shall establish and circulate to Member Clubs, an Annual Consultation Plan that identifies consultations anticipated during the year and alert Member Clubs to opportunities to make their

views known on identified issues. The plan will identify for each anticipated consultation:

Subject under consideration

- i. Objectives
 - ii. Timeframe
 - iii. Steps in the consultation process
 - iv. How the consultation fits in the decision-making process
 - v. Methods
- b. The plan will also identify any formal or informal consultation to be undertaken by the Board with other stakeholders including athletes, provincial representatives, event organizers, officials, coaches, ice technicians, staff and others, to further the Board's understanding of the issues and identify trends that affect NSCA and thereby improve the Board's ability to develop policies.

B. CONSTRAINTS

1. The Board shall establish methods that reasonably take into account the following constraints associated with consultation activities:

a) Cost

In choosing the appropriate method of consultation, the Board will weigh the cost of consultation, in the form of time, money or both for NSCA and its Member Clubs, against the intended purpose and outcome.

b) Time

- i. Member Clubs need time to adequately consider the issues, consult with their Boards, members and networks and prepare a response. NSCA may face tight timelines in preparing responses or making decisions. In choosing the appropriate method of consultation, the Board will consider any trade-offs required between time available to make a decision and time needed by participants to provide the best input.
- ii. Notwithstanding the Board's best efforts to develop a comprehensive annual consultation plan, there will be times when the need for consultation cannot be anticipated. In these cases, the Board shall notify Member Clubs of the need for additional consultations as soon as the need is identified by the Board.

c) Knowledge and information

The Board shall provide all Member Clubs common background information under the premise that unequal access to information, or inaccurate assumptions about the knowledge base of Member Clubs or their boards of directors or membership can seriously limit the effectiveness of consultation.

F. METHODS

1. The Board shall choose from five basic methods. A Member Club consultation may include one method or a combination of methods.

a) Face to face consultation

- i. The Board shall ensure that the agenda meets the needs of both NSCA and the Member Clubs.
- ii. The Board shall ensure the objectives of the session and the roles of NSCA, the Member Clubs and any other participants are clearly defined.
- iii. The Board shall provide for process design and facilitation to ensure that the consultation achieves its objectives and is conducted in an environment of mutual respect.
- iv. The Board shall ensure background information is provided at the consultation session.

b) Discussion paper with framework for response

- i. The Board shall ensure the development of a discussion paper and approve it prior to circulation.
- ii. The Board shall ask Member Clubs to provide a written response in the form of a letter or brief or, where NSCA provides a questionnaire, a completed response form. The Board shall ask the Member Clubs to determine their internal process of consultation.
- iii. The Board shall assume that the response provided is representative of the views of the Board of Directors of the Member Club.

c) Questionnaire or survey

- i. The Board shall ensure that the introduction to the survey adequately introduces the subject of the consultation.
- ii. The Board shall test the survey before it is launched.
- iii. The Board shall ensure that the survey asks respondents to identify their role (e.g., Board member, staff, athlete, etc.) and club affiliation.
- iv. Survey reports shall distinguish the responses from Member Clubs from any other stakeholders, if included in the survey.

d) Web-based forum

- i. The Board shall use this method to discuss a specific question or issue.
- ii. The Board shall ensure the introduction to the forum adequately introduces the subject of the consultation.
- iii. The Board shall ensure that respondents are asked to identify their role (e.g., Board member, staff, athlete, etc.) and club affiliation.
- iv. Forum reports shall distinguish the responses from Member Clubs from any other stakeholders, if included in the forum.

Responses without an identified role or club affiliation will not be incorporated into a report.

e) Conference Call

i) In situations where the need for consultation is urgent and there is insufficient time for any other method the Board shall use a conference call.

Scope:

Related Procedure(s):

Revision History	
Date Approved	Comments

1. Administration

No: 15

Policy Title: