



# **Guidelines for Writing Bylaws and Resolutions**

## **2022**

## Overview

One of the real benefits of participating in the democratic process is the opportunity to have a voice regarding the public policy issues that affect our lives. Since Sons of Norway formalizes its business policies and decisions using the resolution process, it is important that members and lodge, district and international committees and boards follow a consistent format in preparing, presenting and adopting resolutions.

## What is a resolution?

- A resolution is a main motion, phrased formally. It addresses a specific topic or issue, using concise language, and presenting an identifiable action.
- Resolutions consist of two essential elements:
  1. The “**whereas**” clauses, which contain the rationale for the resolution and any additional pertinent information.
  2. The “**resolves**” or the action thus recommended.
- Each resolution addresses a single issue.
- A resolution must be implementable.
- If a resolution calls for a program with a timetable, the timetable shall be clear and achievable.
- The intent, objective or goal of the resolution should be clear and purposeful so that upon passage it will accurately represent the will of the assembly.
- If you are proposing to change our written charter, bylaws, or policies and procedures, use **Form A**. If your resolution addresses just a single concern for a limited time period (*no change needed to the bylaws*), then use **Form B**.

## How to write a “whereas” clause

The **whereas** clause is the first half of the resolution that sets up the problem to be solved. It explains why the action in the **resolved** clause should be taken. Every issue brought up in a **whereas** clause should be dealt with in a **resolved** clause.

*Example:*

**WHEREAS** we have only been serving cake, jellied and glazed donuts at our lodge meetings; and  
**WHEREAS** some members also like chocolate donuts; and  
**WHEREAS** the price for chocolate donuts is the same price as cake, jellied and glazed donuts;  
**THEREFORE, be it resolved** that chocolate donuts shall be added to the list of acceptable donuts to be served at lodge meetings.

## Think before you submit

Some issues may be resolved without sending resolutions to district lodge meetings. Attempt a first route of resolution – ask someone at Headquarters, inquire about the history or status of a program, ask your International Director, District President, District or International Secretary, etc., before submitting a resolution.

## Know the financial impact

If a resolution involves a financial impact, either by reduced revenue or by additional or new expenses, include such information in a *whereas* clause if it furthers your rationale for the resolution, i.e., the implementation of the proposed resolution would have minimal costs. Be accurate in your assessment of cost. Many proposals

have been rejected due to unrealistic cost projections. If such financial impacts do not fit within a *whereas* clause, add a separate explanatory note. Try to help your finance committee by providing specific data projecting future financial impact.

FORM A – to change written bylaws (page 1)

<p><b>Title of Resolution:</b></p>	
<p><b>Submitted by:</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Lodge ( _____ )</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> District Number ( _____ )</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> International Board</p>
<p><b>Date approved by the above entity:</b> <i>(If from a lodge, need 2 lodge officer signatures – Pres, VP, Secretary, and/or Treasurer)</i></p>	<p>Date: _____</p> <p>Lodge Officer Signatures:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p><b>Resolution falls into this category</b> (<i>document you wish to change</i>):</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> International Charter &amp; Bylaws (advisory only)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> International Policies &amp; Procedures (advisory only)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> District Bylaws</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> District Policies &amp; Procedures</p>
<p><b>CURRENT STATE:</b> State specific chapter, sub-chapter and paragraph numbers as applicable. Write out current language of the law or policy.  <i>Example:</i> <b>1.2.3. DONUT POLICY</b> <b>1.2.3.1.</b> The only donuts to be served at lodge meetings shall be cake, glazed, or jellied.</p>	

<p><b>State reasons for making a change</b> from present policies and written directives, or for creating a new policy or procedure, in one or more “WHEREAS” statements.</p> <p><i>Example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WHEREAS chocolate donuts are also delicious; and</li> <li>• WHEREAS chocolate donuts are the same price as the other donuts; and</li> <li>• WHEREAS younger members prefer chocolate donuts;</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Follow the request for change as a “THEREFORE” statement.</b> This is a statement of the action you wish to happen.</p> <p><i>Example:</i></p> <p>THEREFORE, be it resolved that chocolate donuts shall be added to the list of acceptable donuts at lodge meetings.</p>	
<p><b>DESIRED STATE:</b> Follow with the actual proposed change:</p> <p><i>Example:</i></p> <p><b>1.2.3. DONUT POLICY</b></p> <p><b>1.2.3.1.</b> The only donuts to be served at lodge meetings shall be cake, glazed, <del>or</del> <u>jellied, or chocolate.</u></p> <p>Use a <del>strikeout</del> font to indicate suggested deletions, and <u>underline</u> proposed new additions.</p>	
<p>If there is a known, quantifiable <b>financial impact</b>, state it here:</p>	

**FORM B – to make a one-time policy implementation**

<p><b>Title of Resolution:</b></p>	
<p><b>Submitted by:</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Lodge (name _____)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> District (number _____)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> International Board</p>
<p><b>Date approved by the above entity:</b> <i>(If from a lodge, need 2 lodge officer signatures – Pres, VP, Secretary, and/or Treasurer)</i></p>	<p>Date: _____</p> <p>Lodge Officer Signatures:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p><b>State reasons for making a change</b> from present policies and written directives, or for creating a new policy or procedure, in one or more <b>“WHEREAS”</b> statements.</p>	
<p><b>Follow the request for change as a “THEREFORE” statement.</b> This is a statement of the action you wish to happen.</p>	
<p>If there is a known, quantifiable <b>financial impact</b>, state here:</p>	