# CEA Standards Meetings Quick Reference Guide for Chairs

A committee chair's primary responsibilities are to plan and run efficient and productive meetings, in compliance with CEA Legal Guides and EP-23, where all participants are treated fairly. This quick reference guide summarizes the components of such a meeting.

1. **Call to order**

   It is the chair's responsibility to call the meeting to order.

2. **Legal notice**

   It is the CEA staff manager's responsibility to provide a brief overview of the CEA Legal Guides, and to point committee members to the complete document.

3. **Quorum determination**

   It is the CEA committee manager's responsibility to determine if there is a quorum, though the chair should know the quorum rule, which is a simple majority (>50%) of group members with voting rights present. To have voting rights a group member must have attended 2 of the previous three meetings.

   a. What if no quorum is present?
      If a quorum is not present then the group cannot make any decisions. It can discuss the items on the agenda as long as it wants, but no final actions may be taken. Previous meeting minutes cannot be approved, new projects cannot be started, and standards, bulletins and other documents cannot be approved.

Meetings that don't achieve quorum still count as meetings. Minutes will be taken, and attendance at such meetings counts when it comes to voting rights.

Quorum can be gained and lost during a meeting. If a meeting starts without a quorum, but enough additional people later show up to achieve quorum, then the group can make decisions while the quorum is present. If quorum is achieved but later lost because people leave the meeting then no decisions may be made after quorum is lost, unless quorum is achieved again.

4. **Approval of previous meeting's minutes**

This is a standard item on every committee or subcommittee agenda. Because it is an item on the agenda there does not need to be a motion and second to approve the minutes.

a. Revisions to the minutes

If edits are proposed to the minutes then the group must consider them. Once consensus is reached on the minutes the chair declares them approved as modified.

When minutes are modified the committee manager will make the edits in the minutes document for the previous meeting and re-post that document in its final form. The minutes of the current meeting will simply say, "the minutes of the previous meeting were approved with modifications."

5. **Approval of documents and new projects**

a. Documents. CEA's procedures (EP-23) require that all votes to approve documents be on the meeting agenda ahead of the meeting.

When an item is on the agenda a motion is not needed to put it before the group. Therefore, votes to approve documents are conducted when the vote comes up on the agenda. Final approval of a document requires a quorum and at least 2/3 of those voting yes or no to vote yes.

b. Project initiations, cancellations and other actions. Approval of a project initiation, project cancellation, or other action that is not the final approval of a document requires a quorum and more than half of those voting yes or no to vote yes. New projects are often the result of working group recommendations. When this is the case the person reporting for the working group should make a motion for the committee/subcommittee to take the recommended action. Because the action is a recommendation from a working group the motion does not need to be seconded. After providing an opportunity for discussion the chair may conduct the vote.

Actions proposed by individual committee/subcommittee members that do not come from working group recommendations require a motion and a second, followed by an opportunity for discussion, before a vote can be conducted.

There are several ways to conduct a vote. Which one to use is at the discretion of the chair. However, if the vote is on the approval of a document that will be sent to ANSI for approval CEA is required to report how each voting member voted to ANSI. In this case the voting method selected must facilitate this reporting.

**Note: Do not ask for abstentions.** In the first three voting methods below the number of people who do not vote is meaningless. All that matters is whether there were enough "ayes" for approval. In the roll call voting method the correct way for a person to not vote is to answer "present" when called.

- Voice vote (those in favor say aye, those opposed say no). This is the most efficient way to vote, but it only works when the result of the vote is obvious.

- Show of hands vote (those in favor raise your right hand, those opposed raise your right hand). Equally as efficient as the voice vote and a little easier to discern the outcome when it is not unanimous.

- Counted show of hands vote (those in favor raise your right hand and keep it raised until counted, those opposed raise your right hand and keep it raised until counted). If the total number of members who raise their hands either for or against does not constitute a quorum then make sure the names of members present but not voting are noted for the minutes, so there is proof of quorum during the vote.

- Roll call vote (the CEA staff manager calls the roll of committee members with voting rights and asks for each member's vote). This is the most time-consuming voting method.

## 6. Reports

Reports typically come from subgroups or liaisons. If a report contains a proposal for committee action then the person giving the report should make a motion for the committee/subcommittee to take the recommended action. Because the action is a recommendation from a subgroup or a liaison the motion does not need to be seconded. After providing an opportunity for discussion the chair may conduct the vote.

7. **Adjournment**

If the agenda has been completed the chair may simply adjourn the meeting. No motion or action by the group is necessary.

TIP: "Call the Question"

Occasionally you will hear a committee member say, "call the question!" in an effort to initiate a vote on a matter before the group. Such demands are out of order. In order to force an end to debate a committee member must first be recognized to speak by the chair, then must "move the previous question," then have this motion seconded by another member, and then the motion must be adopted by at least a two-thirds vote.

**Sample Meeting Script**

**Agenda item 1 – Call to order/introductions**

CHAIR: *"This meeting of [group name] is called to order. Let's start with introductions."*

- In a face-to-face meeting pick a person and say, *"[Person's name], would you please start and we'll go around the room."*

- On a teleconference ask the CEA staff person who manages the group to do introductions like this, *"[Staff person's name], would you please tell us who is on the call?"*

**Agenda item 2 – Legal notice**

CHAIR: *"[Staff person's name], would please provide the legal notice?"*

CEA STAFF PERSON: *"This meeting will be conducted in compliance with CEA Legal Guides and CEA's Technology & Standards Procedures Manual, EP-23. Among other things these documents limit the items that may be discussed during CEA standards meetings. For example, there may be no discussion of restraint of trade agreements, prices and pricing policies, terms and conditions of purchase and sale, costs, future company plans, or boycotting of customers or products. For complete details please read the CEA Legal Guides and CEA-EP-23-N, both of which are available at* [http://standards.ce.org](http://standards.ce.org) *under the "rules" tab."*

**Agenda item 3 – Quorum determination**

CHAIR: *"[Staff person's name], would you please tell us if we have a quorum?"*

CEA STAFF PERSON: *"There are [number] voting members, [number] are needed for a quorum and [number] are present, therefore a quorum [is/is not] present."*

**Agenda item 4 – Approve minutes of previous meeting**

CHAIR: *"Are there any modifications to the minutes of the previous meeting?"*

If no, CHAIR: *"The minutes of the previous meeting are approved."*
If yes (and after consensus), CHAIR: *"The minutes of the previous meeting are approved as modified."*

**Agenda item 5 – Review of action items**

CHAIR: *"[Staff person's name] would you please review the action items?"*

CEA STAFF PERSON: *[reviews action items, asking action item assignees to report the status]*

**Agenda item 6 – Reports (working group, subcommittee, liaison, etc.)**

CHAIR: *"[Subgroup chair or liaison's name], may we have the [group/liaison's name] report?"*

**Agenda item 7 – Other business**

CHAIR: *"Is there any other business?"*

**Agenda item 8 – Review of action items**

CHAIR: *"[CEA staff person's name] would you please review the action items?"*

CEA STAFF PERSON: *[reviews ongoing action items from previous meetings and new action items created at this meeting]*

**Agenda item 9 – Next meeting date**

CHAIR: *"The next meeting is scheduled for [date/time/location]."*

**Agenda item 10 – Adjourn**

CHAIR: *"We have completed the agenda, this meeting is now adjourned."*