

Flood Authority Consensus Decision-making July 2013 – June 2014

Consensus-Why Use It? (From The Policy Consensus Institute-Practical Guide to Consensus)

- An issue is not getting addressed; the costs of indecision/uncertainty are mounting for everyone
- Decision makers in other forums may not address the real issues
- An agency could make an unpopular decision and no one would follow it
- The parties may need each other's continued cooperation
- Consensus agreements can result in better solutions
- Consensus processes can shorten the lists of disagreements or clarify issues for decision makers
- Consensus processes can enhance the sense of fairness/equity in decision making processes

Consensus-Definition

One definition used by groups like the Ruckelshaus Center:

The group will reach full or partial consensus when each member can say:

1. I believe that others understand my point of view
2. I believe I understand others' point of view
3. Whether or not I prefer this decision, I support it because it was arrived at openly and fairly and is the best solution for us at this time

Process for Consensus Decisions by the Flood Authority

Facilitator introduces the issue and highlights the question/s for discussion and decision by the Flood Authority.

All members give a chance to express their perspective, ask questions and clarify concerns and suggest ways to address the issue.

When it is clear to facilitator that all members have had an opportunity to talk, facilitator will summarize the discussion and articulate a potential decision for the consideration of the members. The members will provide an initial indication of their support using the protocol below.

Thumbs Up -Good to go-full consensus

Thumb sideways - Partial consensus-can live with the decision for the good of the group/process

Thumb down -Not in consensus

If any members indicate they are not in consensus by showing a thumb down, than the facilitator will ask the member/members to describe their concerns and if there are any changes to the action that could gain their support. The Authority members will then discuss potential changes

to action and see if a consensus is created amongst all members. If there is no consensus after the continued discussion that the issue will not advance or the members can call for a vote consistent with the operating rules.

Background Information

Flood Authority Operating Rules: V. Decision-Making from the By-laws Agreed to in the Interlocal Agreement approved by all member governments.

Except as modified by these Rules of Procedure, all meetings of the Flood Authority shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order. As adopted by the Flood Authority, decisions shall be made by verbal, informal consensus of those Flood Authority members who are present. No business can be conducted without a quorum present. Members may elect to approve a motion; approve a motion with concerns; disagree with a motion, but vote in favor in order to arrive at consensus; or disagree and vote against a motion, in which case there is not consensus. In the event a decision cannot be reached by consensus the Flood Authority can:

- A. Leave the issue unresolved.
- B. Table the decision for future consideration.
- C. Call for a formal vote of the Flood Authority membership present. A formal vote will be taken by motion and second. Consistent with the Interlocal Agreement establishing the Flood Authority, each represented entity, regardless of the number of members from each entity, shall be entitled to cast one (1) vote. A super majority vote of sixty (60) percent of the voting members shall decide the issue