

On Writing Resolutions

DEFINITION

A resolution is a formal expression of opinion, will, or intent by an official body or assembled group; a declaration submitted to an assembly for adoption. (Webster's Third New International Dictionary)

STRUCTURE

A succinct title reflecting the content of the resolution should appear centered and in capital letters. A resolution is usually written in two parts: a preamble followed by a resolving clause (or clauses).

PREAMBLE

A preamble is a brief statement of background or rationale coming before the resolving clause(s). The purpose of a preamble is to provide information without which the point or the merits of a resolution are likely to be poorly understood or where unusual importance is attached to making certain reasons for an action a matter of record.

While not mandatory, the inclusion of such information usually strengthens the understanding and importance of the resolution. A preamble generally should contain no more clauses than necessary, as too many detract from the force of the resolution.

Each clause is written as a separate paragraph. It begins with the word "WHEREAS" followed by a comma, with the next word beginning with a capital letter. The preamble, regardless of how many paragraphs it is, should never contain a period. Each clause ends with a semicolon.

The last paragraph of the preamble should close with a semicolon, after which the connecting expression "now, therefore, be it" is added.

Structure

WHEREAS, The ... (text of first preamble clause);

WHEREAS, ... (text of the next to last preamble clause); and

WHEREAS, ... (text of the last preamble clause); now, therefore, be it

RESOLVING CLAUSES

A resolving clause indicates what action(s) is to be taken given the “WHEREAS” clause(s) in the preamble. Each resolving clause, written as a separate paragraph, begins with the word “RESOLVED” followed by a comma and the word “that” with a capital “T.” If there is more than one resolving clause, each of them should begin the same.

Structure

RESOLVED, That ... (stating action to be taken);

RESOLVED, That ... (stating further action to be taken);

RESOLVED, That ... (stating the last action to be taken).

SUBMISSION STATEMENT

At the end of the resolution, the following submission statement must be included:

Submitted by

[Unit/LCC Name]

[Name of Chair], Chair

[Date]

(from Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised, 2000 edition)x