

SSA Virtual Meeting Policy

“Allowing Virtual Meetings as an Alternative to Indoor In-Person Meetings”

Motion Presented and Approved at 1/4/2021 Executive Committee Meeting

Whereas the NJ Governor’s 2020 Executive Orders issued in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, currently prohibit in-person indoor meetings such as SSA Membership meetings, and because outdoor meetings are not practical due to weather and pandemic restrictions, and since the SSA Bylaws do not have a provision for virtual meetings, and because the Bylaws cannot be amended to allow for virtual meetings without in person membership meetings, the Executive Committee is allowing virtual meetings as an alternative to indoor in-person meetings until current indoor in-person meeting prohibitions are lifted.

Beginning in January 2021 and until the NJ COVID-19 legal restrictions are relaxed to allow indoor in-person meetings, specific Executive Committee Meetings and Monthly Membership Meetings may be conducted through use of Internet meeting services instead of in-person meetings as decided by the Executive Committee. Where possible, these meeting services should support anonymous voting and support visible displays identifying those participating, identifying those seeking recognition to speak, showing (or permitting the retrieval of) the text of pending motions, and showing the results of votes.

Currently SSA has a paid Zoom account that should be used by members who need to host (not just attend) a virtual meeting. Please contact the SSA President for authorization to use the account and for log on and password information.

Rules for Electronic Meetings

- 1. Login information.** An e-mail to every voting member will be sent at least one week before each meeting, listing the time of the meeting, the URL and codes necessary to connect to the Internet meeting service, and, as an alternative and backup to the audio connection included within the Internet service, the phone number and access code(s) the member needs to participate aurally by telephone.
- 2. Login time.** The Internet meeting will be scheduled to be available to begin at least 15 minutes before the start of the meeting.
- 3. Signing in and out.** Members shall identify themselves as required to sign in to the Internet meeting service, and shall maintain Internet and audio access throughout the meeting whenever present, but shall sign out upon any departure before adjournment.
- 4. Quorum calls.** The continued presence of a quorum shall be determined by the online list of participating members, unless any member demands a quorum count by audible roll call. Such a demand may be made following any vote for which the announced totals add to less than a quorum.
- 5. Technical requirements and malfunctions.** Each member is responsible for his or her audio and Internet connections; no action shall be invalidated on the grounds that the loss of, or poor quality of, a member’s individual connection prevented participation in the meeting.

6. Forced disconnections. The chair may cause or direct the disconnection or muting of a member's connection if it is causing undue interference with the meeting.

7. Assignment of the floor. To seek recognition by the chair, a member shall use the facility provided by the Internet meeting service (raise hand, add comment, etc.)

8. Interrupting a member. A member who intends to make a motion or request that under the rules may interrupt a speaker shall use the facility provided by the Internet meeting service (raise hand, add comment, etc.) for so indicating, and shall thereafter wait a reasonable time for the chair's instructions before attempting to interrupt the speaker by voice.

9. Motions submitted in writing. A member intending to make a main motion, to offer an amendment, or to propose instructions to a committee, shall, before or after being recognized, post the motion in writing to the online area designated by the Chair for this purpose.

10. Display of motions. The Chair shall designate an online area for the display of the immediately pending question and other relevant pending questions (such as the main motion, or the pertinent part of the main motion, when an amendment to it is immediately pending); and, to the extent feasible, the Chair, or any assistants appointed by him or her for this purpose, shall cause such questions, or any other documents that are currently before the meeting for action or information, to be displayed therein until disposed of.

11. Voting. Votes shall be taken by the anonymous voting feature of the Internet meeting service, unless a different method is ordered by the Board or required by the rules. When required or ordered, other permissible methods of voting are by electronic roll call or by audible roll call. The chair's announcement of the voting result shall include the number of members voting on each side of the question and the number, if any, who explicitly respond to acknowledge their presence without casting a vote. Business may also be conducted by unanimous consent.

12. Video display. For Internet meetings where the number of participants is too large for all to be displayed simultaneously, the chair, or their assistants shall cause a video of the chair to be displayed throughout the meeting, and shall where possible, also cause display of the video of the member currently recognized to speak or report.