

Rotary



COUNCIL ON LEGISLATION



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What is the Council on Legislation?

It is Rotary's "parliamentary" meeting where clubs have their say in the governance of Rotary.

It is unique to Rotary – no other service organization provides this opportunity to its' members.

Now, over 500 district representatives come together every third year to deliberate and vote on legislation submitted

How did it come to be?

- First convened as part of the 1934 Rotary International Convention as an advisory body
- Met annually at the convention until 1954 when it became biannual – still as part of convention
- In 1970, it was determined that it should no longer be strictly advisory, but instead became Rotary's official legislative body
- In 1974 it changed to triennial, and in 1977 began meeting independently of the convention

Important milestones in COL history

- **1950: Adopted “Service Above Self” and “He Profits Most Who Serves the Best”**
- **1986: PolioPlus was born**
- **1989: Admission of women into Rotary**
- **2001: Over 1000 proposals submitted – over 600 published and considered**
- **2016: Creation of Council on Resolutions**



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Most recent history -

2016 Council on Legislation

Considered by many as one of the most progressive and evolutionary of any councils, but was it?

- What number and type of issues were deliberated?**
- What were some of the most pivotal decisions?**



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2016 COL Statistics

- **Total of 181 pieces of legislation transmitted to the council for consideration –**
 - **117 Enactments (proposals to amend the constitutional documents of RI)**
 - **64 Resolutions (proposals which do not seek to amend the constitutional documents)**
- **61 Pieces of legislation adopted**
 - **47 Enactments**
 - **14 Resolutions**



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COL Decisions

Membership Qualification

Rotarians must be adults who have demonstrated **good character**, integrity and leadership; have a **good reputation** in their business, profession and community; and are **willing to serve** in their community and around the world.

Membership

- **Clubs may determine their own rules or requirements for transferring members, dual membership and honorary members.**
- **Also free to continue traditional provisions.**



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Membership

New membership types

While all new types of membership are considered “active” by RI for invoicing, clubs may now offer –

- Associate
- Corporate
- Family
- Other

Membership

Dual Membership

Rotaractors can simultaneously hold separate membership in a Rotaract club and a Rotary club.

Meeting schedule flexibility

- **Provided ability to change meeting days, times and cancelation as long as they meet at least twice a month**
- **Provided for in person and online meeting participation – Either or both**
- **Eliminated distinction between traditional clubs and e-clubs**



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Attendance

- **Clubs may relax or tighten attendance requirements and termination policies for non-attendance.**
- **No requirement to change anything if club so prefers.**
- **Rule of 85 modified to include requirement of at least 20 years of membership.**

Club Board Considerations

- **Treasurer – Permanent member of club board**
- **Board Meeting Minutes – Written minutes to be made available to entire club within 60 days**



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Club Finances

- Admission fees – Not required for new members, but allowable if club so determines
- RI annual dues – 2016-17 (at time of COL): \$56(us) plus COL assessment, magazine subscription and insurance charges
- RI dues increase from 2016-17 amount: \$4 (us) in each of next three years
 - 2017-18: \$60 (us) annual +++
 - 2018-19: \$64 (us) annual +++
 - 2019-20: \$68 (us) annual +++

“Progressive and Evolutionary”

Omissions?

- **Many proposals on how to make it easier to be a member of Rotary, but no specific proposal on how to become a Rotarian**
- **Considerable flexibility for clubs to do less – no incentives to do more**
- **Not one adopted proposal includes the word “Engagement”**

Perhaps COL is not the right forum for fostering engagement, but if not here, then where, how and when?

Omissions?

One Resolution (16-160) proposes hiring an outside consultant to consider revising the corporate governance structure, to include:

- the length of the terms for the RI Board of Directors and Trustees of The Rotary Foundation
- the executive and administrative functions of the RI president and general secretary
- whether the RI president should be a paid position
- qualifications to serve on the RI Board or Board of Trustees of The Rotary Foundation.

The COL is recognized as an integral part of Rotary's governance. Why is that not addressed in this Resolution?

Where are we going? The near term future.

The 2016 COL was the last council to consider Resolutions. Decision 16-113 established a new Council on Resolutions to meet electronically on an annual basis to deliberate and make recommendations on Resolutions only. Voting took place electronically Oct. 15 - Nov. 15 2017 in each District - Results Nov. 20

This change alone should reduce the COL by at least one day and reduce the COL cost by \$300,000-500,000.

(clubs are charged a levy to cover COL)

The Long Term Future of the COL

- The 2016 COL cost approx. \$4,000,000 (us) – this will only increase over time.
- The COR will reduce this cost by substituting a much less costly approach of deliberating Resolutions electronically, not in person at COL
- As we are well into the electronic age of the 21st century, is it not time to bring our procedures into this age?

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Any Questions?

Proposed Annual Council on Legislation

Need to address \$4+M cost and the 1½ to 4½ year delay in introducing worthwhile new legislation.

Concept is for an electronic COL conducted on a continuous scheduled basis which reduces implementation to less than 12 months.

Model first proposed to the 2011-2012 BOD, but considered at that time to be too aggressive and potentially problematic for developing nations with limited Internet access.

History to Date

As a result of the proposal presented to the 2011-2012 BOD, 2012-2103 RI President Ron Burton established a COL Review Committee.

Committee agreed with BOD that entire plan was too aggressive to accomplish all at once, but focused on removing Resolutions from the COL, resulting in the Enactment to that end passed at the 2016 COL.

Further Proposed Concept (COL Only)

- Every district has a representative as currently.
- New legislation proposed in first 4 months following COL vote – April through July.
- Proposed enactments go directly to Constitution and Bylaws Committee for consideration of Regularity. Considerations completed within 4 month August through November.
- Enactments deemed regular posted to secure website first week in December. Only duly elected district representatives have access to this secure site.

Proposed Concept (Cont.)

- During December and January, district representative posts positions to a district blog and solicits opinions and reactions from all Rotarians.
- On February 1st, representative post district position to the secure website, and during February and March, all district representatives can view and comment prior to a vote.
- During the last three days of March, every district representative casts a vote for or against, equivalent to the voting on the floor in the past.
- Enactments that pass are implemented 1 July of that year.

Other Comments and Considerations

- Amendments handled by simple procedure in February and March
- To be “Fair to All Concerned”, consideration should be given to changing voting to proportional for all representatives
- This process eliminates dominance of one representative speaking too often or too long
- To develop and ensure continuity, consideration should be given to three person representative team – most senior is primary rep and rolls off after COL vote, replaced with new third member.



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Implementation

- As current structure of COL is contained within our Constitution, COL must vote to implement.
- Practical concern is opposition by international representatives who see their role as a visa to the US.
- This simple plan would save Rotary at least \$2,500,000 or more while making our organization considerably more responsive and efficient.

