

## NOTES

**Compact Steering Team Subgroup: Decision-making  
Tuesday, December 3, 2019  
8:00-9:30 a.m. @ Clean Lakes Alliance (150 E. Gilman St.)**

**Members:** Anne Baranski, Dave Merritt, Mike Rupiper, James Tye, Tricia Gorby

**Convener/Recorder:** Paul Dearlove

**Subgroup Charge:** Recommend where and how Compact-related decisions are made. Share proposal at the 12/6 Steering Team meeting.

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**Attendance:** Anne Baranski (subgroup spokesperson), Dave Merritt, Mike Rupiper, James Tye, Paul Dearlove, Issis Macias, Alison Lebwohl

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Lebwohl presented a strawman decision-making proposal for consideration. The proposal, which is included in its final form at the end of this document, was prefaced with the following:

#### Questions to Answer

1. How are decisions made between the steering team and the executive team?
2. What mechanism is used to make decisions at the steering team and executive committee levels?

#### Understandings & Assumptions

1. Budget, consultant approvals, and final plan recommendations are identified as the responsibility of the executive committee. Most decisions will involve or impact these things.
2. Full discussion and consensus-based decision-making cannot be effectively accomplished in the larger steering team in only 90 minutes per month. If the steering team were to become a decision-making body, members would need to make a substantially greater time commitment.
3. The language in the original Compact and the interest in following the Yahara WINS model imply that the steering team is deliberating and making recommendations and the executive committee is deciding.
4. At this point in time, it's not helpful to try to cover all possibilities or find a perfect way to make decisions. If you have a recommendation that everyone believes is 60-80% of the way there, go for it. And then build in formal and informal check-ins to tweak the process as you go.

### Possible criteria for a good decision-making

1. *Voice* – Each member group has a chance to weigh in on decisions that are of interest to them.
2. *Expediency* – Most decisions are made in one meeting; decisions are not revisited without the discovery of substantial new information.
3. *Synergy* – We make richer decisions when all member groups are at the table and a diversity of (potentially conflicting) perspectives is shared.
4. *Sustainability* – Decisions do not jeopardize a member group’s support for the overall effort.

### **Where and how decisions are made:**

- The proposal (presented below) consists of a “gradient of agreement” straw-polling method for getting a sense of the steering team, and allows for the recording of a range of opinions regarding the question at hand. Actual decision-making, when applicable, would then occur later at the executive committee level. The executive committee designees would have been present during the steering team deliberation, and therefore prepared to take action based on its recommendations. Voting process at the executive level is described in the proposal below.
- It is recommended that the executive committee meet immediately following the steering team meeting to take needed actions.
- Much of the actual work is done at the subgroup level. Subgroups perform analysis, reach out to topic experts, and develop recommendations to propose to the steering team. Those who have expertise or strong opinions should volunteer to serve on relevant subgroups to maximize decision-making efficiencies. Once a subgroup decides to advance a recommendation or proposal, subgroup members are urged to speak with one voice when presenting to the steering team.

### **Other recommendations:**

- Attendance: All steering team organizations commit to send a representative to at least 3 of every 4 steering team meetings. All executive committee organizations commit to send a representative to at least 5 of every 6 executive committee meetings.
- Compact update: A summary of decision-making frameworks should be incorporated into the Compact as an update prior to signing. This does not prevent the group from being able to revisit the methodology in three to six months to make sure it is working as expected.
- Facilitation: This is extremely important to maintaining the integrity of the overall process. There was agreement that steering team meetings, at a minimum, would greatly benefit from being professionally facilitated, and that the service constituted a necessary and worthwhile expense.

# Decision-making proposal

For 12.6.19

## Steering Team

- Steering team is the deliberative body that reflects, considers and recommends.
- Gradient of agreement is used as outlined in the table below.
- Steering team uses “sense of group” straw polls that can be recorded.
- Organizations that are opposed (red/blue) or neutral (white) are asked what it would take to move them to support (yellow/green). If time allows, organizations that can live with it (yellow) could be asked what it would take to strengthen their support (green).
- The steering team is asked how it is feeling about these processes every 3-6 months. If they can be improved for one member in the group without making it worse for someone else, the process can be tweaked.

Steering team	Executive team
Reflects, deliberates	Decides, selects
Gets a sense of the group	Votes

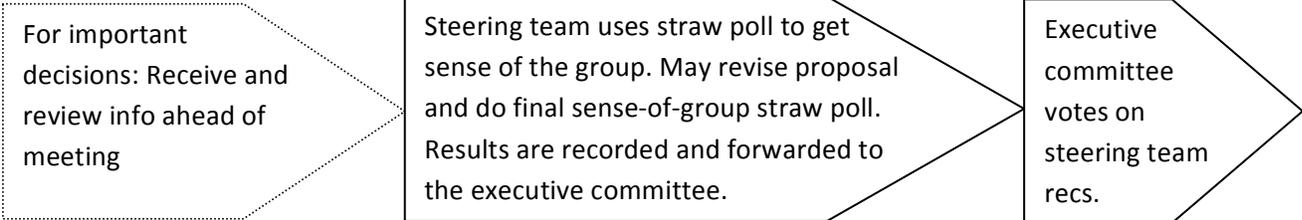
## Executive Committee

- Executive committee decides and votes to take action. Decisions are guided by input and recommendations from the steering team.
- Gradient of agreement is used.
- Executive committee makes decisions by having four of six (or five of seven) partners supporting (yellow/green) with no organizations blocking (red), OR by having five of six (or six of seven) partners supporting (yellow/green) with one organization blocking (red). May also use straw polls and ask how proposals can be strengthened.
- The executive committee is asked how it is feeling about these processes every 3-6 months. If they can be improved for one member in the group without making it worse for someone else, the process can be tweaked.

## Gradient of agreement

Voting cards	Fist to 10	Emojis	
Green	5		I love it
Yellow	4		I can live with it
White	3		Neutral; abstention
Blue	2		I oppose this decision (but it’s not a deal-breaker)
Red	Fist		Deal breaker (this could make us leave the compact)
Purple	Two hands up		I need more information

## Flowchart/example



Example: Inviting the Loch Ness Monster to join the Compact

1. Subgroup shares their analysis and recommendation to invite the Loch Ness Monster
2. Steering team starts the meeting by taking a straw poll. Seven members show green; seven show yellow; two show blue; and two show red. Two members who showed blue and one who showed red say that they would show yellow if Puff the Magic Dragon were also invited. Another straw poll is taken on the proposal that both Nessy and Puff be invited, and now eight members show green; nine show yellow; and one shows red. All results are recorded.
3. Executive team meets immediately afterwards. Two members vote green; two members vote yellow; two members vote white. Both Nessy and Puff are invited.

**Short menu of strategies supporting both voice and expediency**

<i>Before the meeting</i>	<i>During the meeting</i>	<i>After the meeting</i>
Group members can ask the subgroup to consider specific alternatives or to gather specific information when a decision is first outlined	Decisions to be made are highlighted in the agenda	Group members have the opportunity to provide feedback after the meeting
Decisions to be made are shared with the group in a standard format ahead of time for consideration	Discussion and decision-making follow a relatively standard format	If necessary, final decision-making can be deferred to allow for additional consideration and a vote by email.
Group members invited to provide feedback ahead of time	Decision-making uses a gradient of agreement that includes “deal-breaker”	
Group members who feel strongly about a topic join the related subgroup	Documentation reflects range of discussion as well as strength of support and opposition	
	“Deal-breakers” are made and taken seriously. An organization sharing or voting “deal-breaker” shares its reasons.	

**Responsibility matrix**

Here is how the proposed division of responsibilities would look in what is sometimes called a RACI model, where “*R*esponsible does the work; “*A*ccountable keeps the project on track, makes decisions, and signs off on the final effort; “*C*onsult provides guidance; and “*I*nformed is kept in the loop.

Consultants Subject experts	Subgroups	Steering team	Executive committee
<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Consult informed</i>	<i>Accountable</i>
-Research -Model -Identify alternatives -Identify pros/cons -Draft criteria	-Gather information -Identify alternatives -Draft criteria -Share proposals	-Share perspectives -Share experiences -Share questions -Share recommendations -Serve as subject experts	-Decide direction -Select consultants -Approve recommendations

### Example

Here's how this proposal might work for specific decisions

<i>Task</i>	<i>Subgroup</i>	<i>Steering team</i>	<i>Executive team</i>
Establishing water quality and lake use goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommends goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approves goals</li> </ul>
Consultant hiring & oversight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creates RFPs</li> <li>• Provides technical oversight to consultant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drafts criteria</li> <li>• Recommends budget, deliverables and selection</li> <li>• Reviews and approves RFPs and project work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approves criteria</li> <li>• Approves budget, deliverables and selection</li> <li>• Accepts final deliverables</li> </ul>
Plan strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides technical evaluation of plan strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drafts criteria</li> <li>• Reviews and recommends strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approves criteria</li> <li>• Approves strategies</li> </ul>