

Resolutions Committee

The Resolutions Committee has not functioned for at least 20 years. The genius of the Resolutions Committee, however, is that it prevents anything coming to debate on the floor of the Association business meeting that has not previously been referred.

So, in fact, the Resolutions Committee is not so much a committee as a procedure: that is, that any resolution coming before the annual business meeting that does not come from Council must be referred to some committee for review.

The procedure is simple: the Executive Officer receives the resolution (whether in advance or on the floor) and notifies the President. The President then appoints a committee of at least three members to consider the resolution(s). This can, of course, be an existing committee or may be an ad hoc committee that s/he creates. This committee would then report to Council, and Council would report to the annual meeting its decision about the resolution.

The effect is, of course, to give Council authority to determine the resolutions on which the annual membership meeting may or may not take action. Some will see this as the quintessence of the iron law of oligarchy. On the other hand, inasmuch as normally less than 5 percent of the membership actually attends the annual membership meeting, that such a meeting should enter into a resolution on behalf of the membership is equally strange. The reality is that the principle of checks-and-balances gets put into operation.