



The Committee Room

Commonsense Governance for NFPs



Subscribers to THE COMMITTEE ROOM are permitted to use this checklist for their own non-commercial use only. It must not be used to train, fine-tune or improve AI models without permission.

Episode 17 When Members Call the Meeting - Special General Meeting Checklist

A Special General Meeting (SGM) requisitioned by members is uncomfortable, but it is not the end of the world — how the Committee responds in the days that follow determines whether it stays manageable or becomes something much worse. Use this checklist from the moment a valid requisition lands on the Secretary's desk through to the meeting itself.

Key requirements — check your Constitution and your Act.

If a requisition meets your Constitution's requirements — enough eligible signatures, a clear purpose, proper motions, lodged the right way — the Committee's role is administrative. It cannot reject a valid requisition because it disagrees with the concerns raised. The Committee is legally obliged to call the SGM within the timeframe your Constitution sets, generally 14–28 days. Miss that deadline and the members who signed the requisition can call the meeting themselves.

STAGE	ACTION	DONE
On receipt	Check the requisition against your Constitution: is it signed by enough eligible members, does it state a clear purpose and any proposed motions, and was it lodged the way your Constitution requires? Check your Constitution for the exact notice period, quorum and voting rules that will apply.	☐
Within 48 hours	Acknowledge the requisition in writing. Confirm it is valid and advise the members that the SGM will be called in accordance with the Constitution. This removes the members' ability to call the meeting themselves and signals the Committee is not avoiding the conversation.	☐
Within the required timeframe (check your Constitution — generally 14–28 days)	Call the SGM. This is not optional and not a matter of Committee discretion — a valid requisition must be actioned within the timeframe your Constitution sets.	☐
Building the agenda	Put exactly what was in the requisition on the agenda — the business and any motions the members asked for. No more, no less. The Committee does not get to reframe the agenda to suit itself.	☐
During the notice period	Use the time constructively. Prepare a considered, documented response to the concerns raised. Consider meeting informally with some of the members who signed the requisition to understand what is really driving their concerns.	☐
Choosing the chair	If a Committee member — particularly the President — is the subject of a motion, they should not chair the meeting. Bring in another Committee member or appoint an independent chair if the situation is contentious.	☐
At the meeting	The chair's job is to manage the process, not dominate the content — calm, impartial, and strictly limited to the business on the notice. Confirm quorum before proceeding.	☐
After the meeting	Engage with the outcome in good faith, whichever way it goes. A Committee that answers honestly and takes feedback on board can come through an SGM with its mandate intact — sometimes stronger.	☐
Throughout — if things get complex	Get legal advice sooner rather than later. Most SGMs don't need it, but if the situation is high-stakes or contested, don't wait until it has escalated.	☐