

This proposal passed at GA 11/30/11

OCCUPY EUGENE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

In order to make best use of our decision-making options, we hereby agree to the following refinements in our process.

A. When considering a decision, we first attempt to reach a full consensus. Full consensus means that the entire group stands in unity with the decision.

Consensus is a cooperative process in which group members develop and agree to support a decision in the best interest of the whole. The consensus method relies on people being willing to truly honor each other's ideas, feelings, needs, and concerns, so that the greater group wisdom may emerge. By choosing to use consensus as our primary decision-making method, we recognize that we are pledging to do the hard, patient work of bringing our best selves forward and listening from the heart.

After discussion takes place and the facilitator calls for a test for consensus, participants have the following options:

- 1. Agreement:** "I support this proposal." (Hand sign = twinkling)
- 2. Consent with Reservations:** "I basically support this proposal, and i have some reservations about it." (Proposed hand sign = arms up high with palms parallel to the ground facing down.)
- 3. Blocking:** "I deeply believe this proposal would be deeply detrimental to Occupy Eugene, either because it goes against our fundamental principles or because I'm convinced it would lead to a disastrous outcome for our movement." (Hand sign = arms crossed) In order to protect against inappropriate use of blocking, the group has the option to evaluate blocks: if 75% of the group believes that a block is being applied inappropriately, then the block is invalidated. This power must be used carefully in order to avoid simply overruling those we disagree with.
- 4. Stand Aside:** "I have major concerns with the proposal, and agree to stand aside and let the group proceed with it." (Hand sign = thumbs sideways)
- 5. Abstain:** "I choose not to participate in the making of this decision." (No hand signabstention is signified by nonparticipation.)

If there is a test for consensus and no one blocks, stands aside, or has reservations, the group is clearly in unity. If there is a test for consensus and anyone blocks, stands aside, or consents with reservations, the group will pause and listen carefully to the concerns expressed, in order to consider the possibility of modifying the proposal. At any point thereafter in that discussion, there may be a second test for consensus. At the *second test*, proposals may pass by consensus as long as there is no more than one block and no more than two

stand asides. So if two people block, or if three people stand aside, then we are not yet in unity. In that case, we will attempt to work with the concerns in an effort to either resolve them and/or modify the proposal in order to arrive at an outcome that all present believe serves well. Facilitators at that point are encouraged to employ means such as small group breakout discussions, direct reflective listening to those holding concerns, and other respectful process tools.

B. If a proposal addressing a particular issue has been brought to three GA's and unity has not been reached, then following the test for consensus at the third GA a fallback vote may be invoked. Exceptions to this rule, to invoke the fallback vote at the first or second GA, may be made in cases of urgent need, as determined by 75% of the group agreeing that is necessary (most likely when needed to address external events and deadlines).

C. If the voting fallback is invoked, participants have the following options:

- 1. Yes:** "I support this proposal." (Hand sign = twinkling)
- 2. No:** "I do not support this proposal." (Hand sign = thumbs down)
- 3. Abstain:** "I choose not to participate in the making of this decision." (No hand sign/abstention is signified by nonparticipation)

In the event of a vote, 90% Yes is sufficient to pass the proposal. At the counting of a vote, Yes counts in favor, No counts against, and those who abstain are not included in the total.