

Tie Votes

Quite often the question arises on the matter of a **tie vote on a motion** and the Chair's role in that situation. Robert's Rules of Order are very clear on this matter. Keep in mind that in most cases the Chair maintains an impartial position and is there to preserve an objective and impersonal approach, especially when serious divisions of opinion arise. However, it seems that there are exceptions to almost every rule.

Tie Votes and Cases in Which the Chair's Vote Affects the Result

"If the presiding officer is a member of the assembly, he can vote as any other member when the vote is by ballot. In all other cases the presiding officer, if a member of the assembly, can (but is not obliged to) vote whenever his vote will affect the result – that is, he can vote either to break or to cause a tie; or in a case where a two-thirds vote is required, he can vote either to cause or to block the attainment of the necessary two-thirds, In particular;

- **On a tie vote, a motion requiring a majority vote for adoption is lost**, since a tie is not a majority. Thus if there is a tie without the chair's vote, the presiding officer can, if he is a member, vote in the affirmative, thereby causing the motion to be adopted; or if there is more in the affirmative than the negative without the chair's vote (for example, if there are 72 votes in favour and 71 opposed), he can vote in the negative to create a tie, thus causing the motion to be rejected.
- **Similarly, in the case of a motion requiring a two-thirds vote**, if, without the chair's vote, the number in the affirmative is one less than twice the number in the negative (for example, if there are 59 in the affirmative and 30 in the negative), the chair, if a member, can vote in the affirmative and thus cause the motion to be adopted; or, if there are two-thirds in the affirmative without his vote (for example, if there are 60 in the affirmative and 30 in the negative), the chair can vote in the negative, with the result that the motion is rejected.

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Simply put, the Chair, if a member of the organization/assembly, can influence the outcome of a vote by affecting a tie, which means the motion is lost, or by creating a majority for or against the motion.