

North and South Otter Lake Association

Constitution and Guidelines Committee Report 2026

Simon Smith, 19th July 2026

Background

At the last Annual General Meeting, some proposals were raised for changes to the NSOLA Constitution. We decided to form a dedicated committee to review the constitution, and members were invited to participate. Preparation of guidelines to aid the operation of future executives, was also part of the work which would aid transition of responsibilities and smooth operation of the association.

Activities

The committee met three times between February and April 2026, but comprised only three members, all of whom were part of the current Executive – Simon, Marie and Piper. The proposals arising were presented to the full Executive, and unanimous agreement was given to present them to the full association at the AGM. The minutes from the meetings held can be made available on request.

There was some basic drafting of guidelines, but finalization was deferred until after the AGM, as the content depends on the outcome of votes on constitution changes.

Proposals for change to the Constitution

These are as provided in the agenda and will be balloted. More explanation follows:

a. Payment of Annual Membership Dues (Point 4E in the Constitution)

Currently, the constitution sets the deadline at a fixed date of 1st August each year. We are now holding AGMs earlier than August, so change will align with current practice. Options for electronic payment also mean that members can easily pay at any time.

The proposal is to change the fixed date to payment “at or before the Annual General Meeting” each year, so that Point 4E reads:

Dues are payable at or before the Annual General Meeting for the current year and any members deemed in default shall automatically lose their membership. Membership may be reinstated on application to the executive with full payment of dues.

b. Quorum for AGM (Point 5C in the Constitution)

The constitution currently sets the quorum for the AGM at 12 members, a number set when the association was smaller. A quorum of 12 then would likely have represented about 25% of paid members, but the number of residences has increased since. It was noted that we have never had a problem achieving the current quorum at the AGM.

Proposal: to set the AGM quorum at 25% of paid members at the time of the Annual General Meeting, rather than a fixed number, so that Point 5C reads:

Twenty-five percent of voting members shall constitute a quorum for the holding of an annual general meeting duly called.

In respect of this change, the opportunity for allowing members to join the Annual General Meeting remotely was discussed. It was decided to operate a pilot scheme at the 2026 AGM if any members indicated interest in joining in this way ahead of the meeting.

Points considered, but for which no changes to the constitution are proposed

a. Setting a fixed weekend for the Annual General Meeting (Point 5A in the Constitution)

This currently reads: *An annual general meeting of the Association shall be held on a date to be fixed by the executive of the Association anytime during the months of July and August in each year for the purpose of receiving reports and of electing the executive for the ensuing term, and if there is opportunity, for the transaction of any other business...*

The point had been raised that setting a fixed weekend would make advance planning for visits to the lake easier and also aid coordination with the Park for our venue.

In discussion, it was decided that the present constitution allows some flexibility which may be necessary in case a key executive member could not attend on the designated date due to unavoidable issues, or the meeting venue was unavailable due to Park needs. However, the guidance document would be written to designate a preferred time.

With respect to assisting visit planning: point 5B in the constitution sets a minimum of two weeks advance notice for the AGM. While changing this was not proposed, the guidance to be developed will note that members are to be sent a "save the date" notice as soon as possible, even if the agenda has not been finalized, as was undertaken this year in February.

b. Executive Meeting Quorum (Point 6C in the Constitution)

This currently reads: *Three (3) members of the executive shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business of the executive. Motions in the meetings of the executive shall be determined by simple majority of the votes cast.*

Changes of wording to 51% or "50%+1" had suggested. Examination of the constitution shows that the executive actually comprises seven people, as the Immediate Past President is a voting member. So, using 51% rounded up would mean four out of seven, and using "50%+1" rounded up would mean five out of seven as the quorum.

It was decided that as the executive only makes recommendations to the AGM or acts on decisions resulting from it, the current number is considered still to be appropriate.

Future Activities

NSOLA members are invited to join the Constitution and Guidelines Committee. The next steps are to develop guidelines for the assistance of future executives in the operation of the association, based on the constitution and applicable general practices, and this will also include description of each of the roles on the executive.

Thanks again to those assisting in this work.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Simon Smith". The script is cursive and fluid.

Chair, Constitution and Guidelines Committee