

2024 AFN Annual Convention Resolutions Policy

Introduction

AFN's mission is to enhance and promote the cultural, economic and political voice of the entire Alaska Native community. Resolutions will be used to help guide AFN toward the following goals:

- Advocate for Alaska Native people, their governments and organizations, with respect to federal, state and local laws;
- Foster and encourage preservation of Alaska Native cultures;
- Promote understanding of the economic needs of Alaska Natives and encourage development consistent with those needs;
- Protect, retain and enhance all lands owned by Alaska Natives and their organizations; and
- Promote and advocate for programs and systems, which instill pride and confidence in all Alaska Natives.

Committee Organization

A. The AFN Board of Directors adopted these guidelines to assist the AFN Resolutions Committee in meeting their responsibility for accepting, evaluating and making recommendations in the consideration of resolutions.

B. AFN Resolutions Committee is a standing committee comprised of members appointed by the Co-Chairs of the AFN Board of Directors.

C. The Chairman of the Committee and/or AFN's staff assigned to the Committee shall give members appointed to the Resolutions Committee an orientation to the resolutions process. Included in the orientation packet shall be:

1. A copy of the AFN Bylaws;
2. A copy of Resolutions Policy & Procedures;
3. A copy of the Annual Notification for submission of resolutions; and
4. A copy of the resolutions passed by the previous Annual Convention.

D. The Elders/Youth Conference, hosted by the First Alaskans Institute, shall form a resolutions committee. The Elders/Youth Conference shall establish guidelines for their resolutions committee along the same lines as the AFN Resolutions Committee. The Elder/Youth Resolutions Committee may request a member of the AFN Resolutions Committee to serve on the Elders/Youth Resolutions Committee.

Criteria for Submitting Resolutions

A. The Resolutions Committee will entertain resolutions submitted by any recognized Alaska Native delegate to the Annual Convention, Alaska Native Group, or AFN member organizations.

B. The Resolutions Committee will consider only resolutions that address issues of statewide or broader significance.

C. Resolutions submitted must address only one issue and must be accompanied by a **one paragraph problem statement** that clearly explains the problem/issue which you are wanting AFN to solve.

D. Resolutions requesting funding may be referred to the AFN Board of Directors or an appropriate regional or local organization.

E. The Resolutions Committee may refer to the AFN Board of Directors or an appropriate member organization for resolutions that request legal action.

F. The Resolutions Committee will refer to the AFN Board of Directors all resolutions that are determined to be a divisive issue between member organizations.

G. The Resolutions Committee shall refer all resolutions of endorsements, commendations, or recognition to the AFN Board of Directors.

Resolution Procedures and Follow-Up

A. When a resolution does not follow the established format, it will be referred back to the sponsor or be rewritten/revised.

B. Duplicate resolutions may be consolidated. All sponsors of duplicates will be noted on final resolutions.

C. The Resolutions Committee will only consider resolutions that are received by the deadline of September 20, 2024.

D. Resolutions should be one issue per resolution.

E. Resolutions making misstatements on issues will be returned to their sponsor(s).

F. The AFN President or designee, which may include the Chair of the Resolutions Committee, shall make a summary report of actions that occurred on the resolutions adopted at the prior Annual Convention.

G. An authorized member delegate may present a resolution(s) to the Annual Convention by "Suspension of Rules" procedure set out in Roberts Rules of Order provided that copies were handed out the day before the resolutions are to be acted on and comply with this policy.

H. The Resolutions Committee shall categorize all resolutions received into the following categories: AFN Board Resolutions; Special Recognition; Subsistence; Health, Safety &

Welfare; Cultural; Land & Natural Resources; Education; Economics; ANCSA/Tribal; Elder/Youth; and Other.

I. Resolutions presented to the Annual Convention and passed by the delegation shall be processed by the Resolutions Committee into a final set of resolutions for presentation to the AFN Board of Directors.

Presentation of Resolutions at the Annual Convention

A. The Chair of the Resolutions Committee, or designee, shall preside over the presentation of resolutions to the membership at each Annual Convention. The Chair will explain the resolution policy and process, the notice and instructions for submitting resolutions, the criteria for submitting resolutions, and the technical management of the resolutions.

B. The Committee Member will read the number, title of resolution, and the recommendation of the Committee, and that he/she will make the motion to accept the recommendation of the Committee. A Committee Member will second the motion.

1. Amendments of three words or less and grammatical amendments may be accepted by unanimous consent by the Annual Convention
2. Amendments of greater length must be in writing and brought to the Committee and may be tabled to the end of the session;
3. Suspension of rules to consider resolutions other than those in the convention resolutions packet requires a two-thirds vote of the members. Newly submitted resolutions must be in writing and brought to the Committee.

CHANGES TO AFN RESOLUTION PROCESS

In 2023, the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) implemented significant changes to its resolution process to ensure a more inclusive and comprehensive consideration of resolutions. These changes now require all resolutions, including those from the First Alaskans Institute, to go through the same process. Additionally, the AFN board passed a new bylaw, which allows for holding resolutions deemed divisive by at least two regions, ensuring fairness in the decision-making process. The bylaw language for this resolution is copied below.

Section 5. Action. In addition to the power vested in the membership by law, the members may adopt resolutions that do not infringe on the right of the Board to manage the Corporation and may adopt resolutions directed to other corporations, governments, and persons.

All such resolutions shall be submitted to AFN prior to each year's Convention at a date and time established by AFN annually, such that sufficient time be allotted for a board meeting prior to Convention to review the resolutions before transmission to the members at the Convention. Before transmission to the members, the Board shall confirm that each resolution is:

Statewide in nature, rather than pertaining to less than all of the twelve (12) geographic regions of the state of Alaska that correspond to the geographic boundaries of the twelve (12) regional corporations organized pursuant to ANCSA.

Non-divisive. For the purposes of this criteria, any two of the twelve (12) geographic regions of the state of Alaska that correspond to the geographic boundaries of the twelve (12) regional corporations organized pursuant to ANCSA may vote to deem a resolution divisive, and if two regions vote this way, the resolution may not be transmitted to the members at any Convention. A resolution withheld from the Convention may still be acted upon by the Board. In order to confirm a region's vote for these purposes, the individuals chosen to serve as Directors on the Board for a given region must all vote in the affirmative to deem a resolution divisive.

Any resolution deemed to be divisive may be brought before the membership after a successful suspension of the rules for a given Convention only if 11/12th of the members in attendance and in good standing vote in the affirmative.

Key Changes

All resolutions, irrespective of their origin, must now go through a standardized process. This includes resolutions from the First Alaskans Institute, ensuring they are subject to the same scrutiny and requirements as other resolutions. Additionally, resolutions will only be considered by AFN members in good standing or through recommendations from an AFN committee or board.

The new bylaw allows a resolution to be held if two or more regions consider the resolution to be divisive. The resolution will be held indefinitely until board consideration. This bylaw aims to prevent conflict and ensure that potentially contentious issues are sent to the convention floor.

Resolutions held under this bylaw will not be dismissed but will instead undergo a detailed review by the AFN board. This review will include discussions with the concerned regions to address the divisive aspects and seek a consensus or compromise. By holding divisive resolutions for further board consideration, AFN aims to mitigate conflicts and ensure that all perspectives are considered before a decision is made.

Conclusion

The changes to the AFN resolution process, including all resolutions under the same process and the new bylaw for divisive resolutions, represent a significant step towards greater inclusivity, efficiency, and conflict resolution within AFN. These measures ensure that all resolutions are treated equally, promote transparency, and provide a mechanism for addressing potentially contentious issues in a deliberate manner.