

MEMBER SUBMISSION: VOTING ON HYBRID GMS

April 22, 2025



April 22, 2025

By CJ Glackin and Morgan Vö

We submitted the following article on March 31 to re-introduce our proposal to make General Meetings hybrid ahead of an April 29 vote, to be held at City Tech College's theater space. But on April 11, we were unexpectedly notified that City Tech had cancelled the rental. The GM then moved back to the regular venue of the Picnic House, and the vote was removed from the agenda.

This proposal has been in limbo since it was submitted in December 2023, but we remain committed to seeing it through, and urge the General Coordinators to facilitate

bringing it to the membership for a vote. Members want to vote on this proposal—the GCs need to find a way to let their voices be heard.

Below is our original article, written before the cancellation. We believe that it is important to publish it for the historical record:

As Coop members committed to the PSFC’s mission to “maximize participation at every level,” we’re excited to present our proposal to allow in-person and online participation in the Coop’s General Meetings (GMs) at the upcoming April 29 meeting.

Currently, GMs are held in-person at the Prospect Park Picnic House on the last Tuesday night of each month. This presents barriers for many: immunocompromised folks who avoid large, multi-hour gatherings; parents/caregivers who can’t leave loved ones for a night; people living far from the area; people for whom mobility issues make evening travel a burden. Accessibility issues may be ongoing or temporary. If you’re home with a cold, you should still get to participate in the Coop’s policymaking.

Members who contribute labor deserve accessible ways to participate in the Coop’s governance. Online attendance is a commonsense step toward better facilitating access for all.

What’s in our proposal?

The text of our proposal is as follows:

“Proposal to make all General Meetings hybrid—both in-person and online—through amending the PSFC Bylaws, Article VI, Sections 2 and 4, by appending the following: ‘Presence and gathering at meetings shall be by physical presence and by virtual presence consistent with New York Business Corporation Law Section 708(c). Meetings may be entirely virtual if a physical gathering is not feasible.’ The Coop will begin holding hybrid General Meetings within three months of this proposal’s passing. The

proposal’s sponsors will finalize protocols for hybrid General Meetings, in cooperation with the Chair Committee, the GM squad, and PSFC staff. This proposal may require the GM squad to create additional work slots to facilitate hybrid meetings.”

During our September 2024 presentation, we heard questions and concerns that deserve to be thoughtfully addressed. We also heard plenty of enthusiasm, including from the Chair Committee and from fellow members, who offered different ideas around how hybrid could work, and how issues might be solved. To ensure the best experience possible for a hybrid model, our proposal now includes the three-month period defined above, in which we will work with the Chair Committee, the GM squad, and PSFC staff to optimize hybrid protocols for our Coop’s unique context.

Imagining a Hybrid GM

Here, you will find our full proposal, including recommendations for what we think a good hybrid GM looks like, developed in collaboration with a Chair Committee member and two members who approached us after our initial presentation, all of whom have professional expertise in producing hybrid events and meetings.

We stop short of including these recommendations in our proposal. We believe it is in the long term interest of the Coop that this proposal not prescribe how hybrid GMs work. New technologies and practices will arise, and it shouldn’t take another proposal to utilize them in our GMs. The “Guide to the General and Annual Meetings” is already set up this way: it doesn’t say that we need a projector or a PA system, but we use those technologies because they improve the effectiveness of our meetings.

We believe our recommendations demonstrate that hybrid GMs are achievable for our purposes here at the Coop. Hybrid GMs would provide a significant step towards maximizing participation in our collective decision making. We hope that you, too, want to see a more participatory PSFC, and we look forward to seeing you at the April 29th GM, at City Tech College.