

What happens if there is only an even number of members present - does the chairperson break the tie?

There is a general public misperception that the chairperson of a commission or board cannot vote unless there is a tie. This is not true. Although the chairperson may have more responsibilities than the rest of the commission, he or she has the same voting powers and need not refrain from voting in all matters. Some planning commissions and zoning review boards do adopt rules of procedure that limit the chairperson's voting to only tie breaking, but that is neither required by law nor is it necessarily recommended. Incorporated villages may have charter provisions that restrict the chairperson's voting rights as well.

For more information about the laws that govern the conduct of local planning commissions and zoning boards, please contact the VLCT Municipal Law Center, 1-800-649-7915, or e-mail, info@vlct.org.

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