

# ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER FOR MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS

## SIX LESSONS

- each lesson completed in approximately 45 minutes
- includes flashcard quizzes and role play for small groups
- homework reading from *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, In Brief*



The ONLY CURRENT AUTHORIZED EDITION of the  
CLASSIC WORK on PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

# ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

NEWLY REVISED



12TH EDITION

Henry M. Robert III,  
Daniel H. Honemann, Thomas J. Balch,  
Daniel E. Seabold, and Shmuel Gerber

# RESOURCES

Any individual who wants a simple overview and introduction to meeting or convention rules should purchase **Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, In Brief, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition** (Robert's In Brief or IB). Not only is it a short read to learn the basics, but it also teaches how to use the complete Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, 12<sup>th</sup> Edition (RONR) as a reference manual and quickly to locate rules that govern particular situations.

Robert's In Brief was used as the primary source for information in this training. Lesson homework involves reading portions of this book.

THE RULES YOU NEED IN A MEETING  
MADE SIMPLE AND EASY

## ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

— NEWLY REVISED —

*IN BRIEF*



The Only  
Authorized  
Concise  
Guide

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FULLY UPDATED 3<sup>RD</sup> EDITION

# LESSON PLAN OVERVIEW

## **Lesson 1: What Happens At a Meeting?**

- Common Groups & Meeting Types
  - Roles of Officers
  - Quorum
- Standard Order of Business
  - Agenda
- Break, Pause or End

## **Lesson 2: How Do I Get To Speak At a Meeting?**

- Introduce Business By Making a Motion
  - Handle a Motion
  - Rules For Debate
- Limit, Extend Limit or Close Debate

## **Lesson 3: How Can I Improve a Motion Being Discussed?**

- Amend
- Postpone
- Commit or Refer
  - Revisit

# LESSON PLAN OVERVIEW (CONTINUED)

## **Lesson 4: Voting & Elections**

- What Vote Is Required
  - Right To Vote
- Methods of Voting
  - Nominations
  - Elections

## **Lesson 5: Bylaws & Other Rules**

- Ranking Order of Rules
- Enforcement of Rules
- Suspension of Rules
- Parliamentary Inquiry

## **Lesson 6: Classes of Motions**

- Motion Classes
  - Privileged Motions
  - Subsidiary Motions
  - Incidental Motions
- Motions That Bring the Question Again Before the Assembly

# LESSON 1:

## What Happens At a Meeting?

Robert's In Brief, Chapter 2

- Common Groups and Meeting Types
- Roles of Officers
- Quorum
- Standard Order of Business
- Agenda
- Break, Pause or End



**ACTIVITY:** Read Aloud Lesson 1 Terms and Definitions.



**HOMEWORK:** Study Lesson 1 Terms and Definitions and Chapters 1 & 2 in *Robert's In Brief*. Read Chapters 3 & 4 to prepare for Lesson 2.

# COMMON GROUPS AND MEETING TYPES

## **Unorganized Group**

When an unorganized group without a structure or body of rules gathers because of a shared interest, it is called a **mass meeting**.

## **Organized Group**

A **meeting** is a single official gathering of members of an organized society. When the proceedings of a meeting are secret, it is called an **executive session**.

## **Convention**

A **delegate** is a representative of a constituent unit of a larger group. A **convention** is an assembly of delegates and begins with a series of steps by which it “organizes” itself before it considers substantive business.

# COMMON GROUPS AND MEETING TYPES (CONTINUED)

## Board

The administrative body of an organization is the **board**. An independent board is the highest governing body in the organization, while a subordinate board takes instructions from an assembly of voting members in the organization. An **executive committee** is composed of members of a board that are empowered to act in the board's place between board meetings and are subject to the board's instructions – a “board within a board”. A board conducts periodic business at a **regular meeting** but may also hold a **special meeting** for special (usually time sensitive) business.

## Committee

A board often forms committees with responsibilities over particular subject matter. A **standing committee** is constituted to perform a continuing function, while a **special committee** is created for a particular task. Because these are smaller groups, they do not follow several of the procedural formalities applicable to a larger group.

# ROLES OF OFFICERS

## **Chair**

The person who conducts a meeting or presides over an assembly is generally called the **Chair**.

## **Secretary**

The **Secretary** is the recording officer of an assembly and keeps the **minutes** – a written record of the proceedings.

## **Treasurer**

The **Treasurer** is the officer entrusted with custody of the organization's funds and is responsible for presenting a "Treasurer's Report" at regular meetings.

## **Parliamentarian**

The **Parliamentarian** is a consultant in parliamentary rules who plays the role of advisor to the Chair when the Chair is responding to points of order and parliamentary inquiries, and who generally provides advice on conducting the meeting according to the rules.

NOTE: Under parliamentary law, the Chair alone has the power to rule on questions of order or to answer parliamentary inquiries. **IB 95**

### **Parliamentarian's Role**

## **Sergeant-At-Arms**

The **Sergeant-at-arms** assists in preserving order on the floor of the meeting hall as the Chair may direct.

## **Tellers**

The Chair may appoint **tellers** to count votes.



# QUORUM

A **quorum** is the minimum number of members required to transact business. Organizations will typically establish the quorum required for their meetings in their bylaws, but if not, the quorum is a majority of the members or, for conventions, of the number of delegates who have registered as attending, irrespective of whether some may have departed. The presiding officer determines whether there is a quorum present before calling the meeting to order. (For what to do in the absence of a quorum, see RONR 40:6 – 40:9.)

# STANDARD ORDER OF BUSINESS

A meeting begins when it is **called to order** by the Chair: **“The meeting will come to order.”** Most meetings follow a standard order of business.

If there is an order of business in the bylaws or rules of the group, the **agenda** follows it, adding specific details. To be binding on the meeting, the group must adopt the agenda by a majority vote after having opportunity to amend it. A two-thirds vote is needed if the agenda contains specific times for considering any of the items or if it conflicts with the established order of business.

If there is no order of business in the bylaws or rules, the group may follow a standard order of business or adopt an agenda. Adopting an agenda by a majority vote makes it binding on the meeting.

Changing an approved agenda during the meeting takes a two-thirds vote, a majority of the entire membership, or unanimous consent.

Chair [after calling the meeting to order and any opening ceremonies]: **“The floor is open for a motion to approve the proposed agenda.”**

After a motion to approve the agenda is disposed of, or if there is no motion, the Chair moves on to the next item of business.

# STANDARD ORDER OF BUSINESS (CONTINUED)

## **Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from a previous meeting are approved as presented or as corrected. Minutes may be distributed prior to the meeting or read aloud.

Chair: “**The Secretary will read the minutes,**” and after Secretary reads them: “**Are there any corrections to the minutes?**” **OR** “**The minutes of the previous meeting have been distributed. Are there any corrections to the minutes?**”

Chair [after opportunity for corrections]: “**If there are no [further] corrections, the minutes are approved as presented [as corrected].**”

# STANDARD ORDER OF BUSINESS (CONTINUED)

## Reports

The assembly hears reports from various officers, boards and committees of the organization.

Chair: **“May we have the Treasurer’s report?”**

OR

**“The Chair recognizes the chairman of the Committee on Standing Rules for a report.”**

OR

**“Does the Policy Committee have a report?”**

Chair [after report is presented]: **“If there are any questions, please address them through the Chair.”**

# STANDARD ORDER OF BUSINESS (CONTINUED)

## Unfinished Business

For organizations that have meetings at regular intervals, the group considers items of business, if any, carried over from the previous meeting in the order they were due to come up at that meeting and any motions that were being considered at the time of adjournment but not disposed of (decided or redirected). (If two meetings are separated by more than a quarterly interval, see RONR 9:8.)

Chair: “**Under unfinished business, the first item of business is the motion relating to \_\_\_\_\_. The question is on the adoption of the motion \_\_\_\_\_ [state the motion]. Is there any [further] discussion?**”

Chair [after item has been disposed of]: “**The next item of unfinished business is...**”

## New Business

Chair: “**Is there any new business?**”

[Any member can introduce new business by making a motion (discussed in next lesson).]

# BREAK, PAUSE or END

## Recess

A group may take a short break by majority vote.  
Member [rise]: “**Mr. or Madam Chair**” [wait to be recognized]: “**I move to recess until...**” **OR** “**I move to recess until called to order by the Chair.**”

## Stand At Ease

The Chair may cause a brief pause in the proceedings, if no one objects, by directing the group to **stand at ease** and end the pause by calling the meeting to order.

Chair: “**If there is no objection, the members will stand at ease.**”

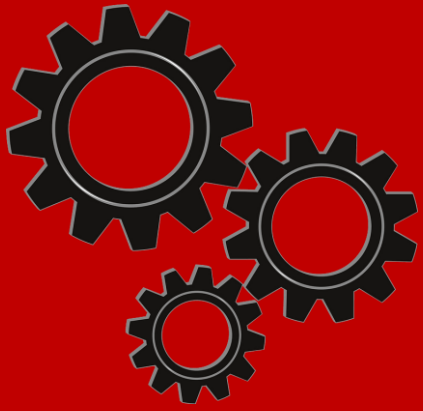
## Adjourn

To **adjourn** means to close the meeting. Adjournment may occur after all business is complete, or a majority of the group may vote to adjourn even if business is incomplete.

Chair: “**Is there any further business?**” [pause] “**Since there is no further business, the meeting is adjourned.**”  
**OR**

Member [rise]: “**Mr. or Madam Chair**” [wait to be recognized]: “**I move to adjourn the meeting.**”

Chair: [Asks for second, takes vote; majority in favor adjourns the meeting.]



# Read Aloud Lesson 1 Terms and Definitions

**Adjourn:** close meeting

**Agenda:** specific order of business for a meeting

**Board:** administrative body of an organization

**Call To Order:** begin meeting

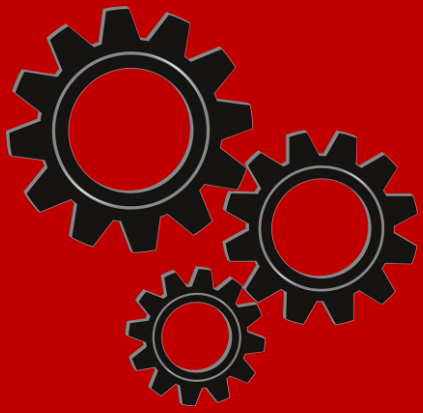
**Chair:** person presiding over assembly

**Convention:** assembly of delegates

**Delegate:** representative of a constituent unit of a larger group

**Executive Committee:** a board within a board

**Executive Session:** proceedings are secret



# Read Aloud Lesson 1 Terms and Definitions

(continued)

**Mass Meeting:** an unorganized group

**Meeting:** a single official gathering

**Minutes:** written record of proceedings

**Parliamentarian:** consultant in parliamentary rules

**Quorum:** minimum number of members required to transact business

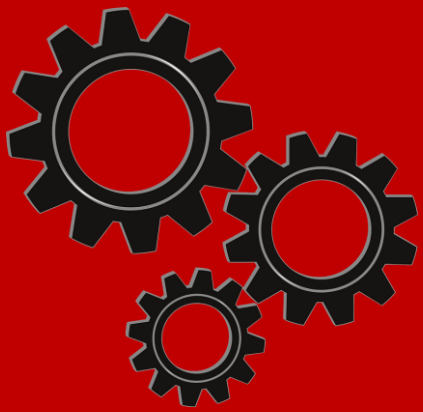
**Recess:** short intermission by majority vote

**Regular Meeting:** periodic business meeting

**Secretary:** recording officer of assembly

**Special Committee:** created for a particular task





# Read Aloud Lesson 1 Terms and Definitions

(continued)

**Special Meeting:** meeting called for specific business included in the call to the meeting

**Stand At Ease:** brief pause permitted by Chair

**Standing Committee:** constituted to perform a continuing function

**Tellers:** count votes

**Unfinished Business:** items of business carried over from previous meeting



## Homework:

Review Lesson 1 Terms and Definitions and Chapters 1 & 2 in *Robert's In Brief*. Read Chapters 3 & 4 to prepare for Lesson 2.

# LESSON 2:

## How Do I Get To Speak At a Meeting?

Robert's In Brief Chapters 3 & 4



**ACTIVITY:** Flashcard Quiz of Lesson 1 Terms and Definitions.

- Introduce Business
- Handle a Motion
- Rules For Debate
- Limit or Close Debate



**ACTIVITY:** Role Play Making Motions, Second, Debate and Voting on Sample Main Motions. Read Aloud Lesson 2 Terms and Definitions.



**HOMEWORK:** Review Lesson 2 Terms and Definitions and Chapters 3 & 4 in *Robert's In Brief*. Read Chapters 5 - 7 to prepare for Lesson 3.

# INTRODUCE BUSINESS

A formal proposal by a member, in a meeting, for the group to take certain action is called a **motion**.

## **Main Motion**

A **main motion** is used to introduce business to the assembly.

## **Speak At a Meeting**

To make a motion, stand up when there is no motion on the floor and call out “Mr. Chair” or “Madam Chair”.

To speak in debate, stand up immediately after the previous speaker and call out “Mr. Chair” or “Madam Chair”.

The Chair **recognizes** you (designates you as the next speaker) by calling out your name or title or nodding to you.

# HANDLE A MOTION

## 1. Make a Motion

After the Chair recognizes a member, the member says, **“I move that...”** and clearly describes the proposal, handing the Chair a written copy before sitting down.

It is very important to be clear with the words of a main motion. Include relevant facts: what, who, when, where so that the motion the group approves can be carried out.

## 2. Second a Motion

After a motion is made, it must receive a **second**. This means a second member, in addition to the mover, thinks the motion should be considered. To do this, another member calls, **“Second!”**

## 3. Chair States the Question

After the Chair determines the motion is in order (is consistent with the group's purpose in their bylaws and does not conflict with the group's rules or bylaws or the laws of the land), he places the motion before the assembly by saying, **“It is moved and seconded that...”** and repeats the exact words of the motion, so everyone knows what they are considering and voting on.

# HANDLE A MOTION (CONTINUED)

## 4. Debate the Motion

After stating the question, the Chair recognizes one member at a time to discuss the merits of the pending motion. During debate, secondary motions (see Lessons 3 & 6) may be made relating to, or in some cases interrupting, the main motion's consideration. As soon as a secondary motion has been handled, the group returns to debate of the main motion. The next slides describe rules for debate.

## 5. Chair Puts the Question

After the Chair has verified that no one else seeks recognition to debate, or a call for the previous question has been approved by a two-thirds majority, he puts the question to a vote: **“The question is on the adoption of the motion that...”**

## 6. Chair Announces Result of Vote

The Chair gives directions for the group to vote on the motion: **“All those in favor, say/vote ‘AYE’. All those opposed, say/vote ‘NO’.”** After voting is completed, the Chair announces the results:

- report which side “has it”
- whether the motion is adopted (approved and agreed to) or lost
- the effect of the vote

# RULES FOR DEBATE

## Speech Limits

A member may speak in debate twice on any debatable motion on the same day and may speak up to ten minutes each time. Allotted time to speak may not be transferred to another member. Many organizations will adopt special rules setting other limits.

## Preference In Recognition

The Chair recognizes the maker of a motion first if they wish to speak. Other members who wish to speak wait to seek recognition from the Chair until the current speaker finishes and sits down. As much as possible, the Chair alternates between speakers who favor and oppose the debated proposal. A member wishing to speak a second time on the same motion is not recognized until everyone wishing to speak has had a first opportunity.

## Stick To the Subject

All remarks in debate should be **germane** – this means they must have bearing on whether the pending motion should be adopted.

# RULES FOR DEBATE (CONTINUED)

## **Debate Issues, Not Personalities**

Debate the merits of a motion and criticize reasoning, but do not criticize an opponent personally or question his/her motives.

## **Formalities To Avoid Personalities**

Always direct comments to the Chair and ask questions through the Chair. As much as possible avoid using the names of other members: instead, refer to officers by their titles and fellow members by terms such as “the previous speaker”.

## **Motions That Are Not Debatable**

Certain motions are not debatable, such as a Request for Information, a Point of Order or a Motion to Adjourn. For a partial list of non-debatable motions, see IB pages 210 and 211.

# LIMIT, EXTEND LIMIT OR CLOSE DEBATE

## Limit or Extend Limit On Debate

A motion can be made to change the limits of debate. It requires a two-thirds standing or raised hand vote to be adopted.

## Close Debate Immediately

To make a motion for debate to be closed immediately [rise]: **“Mr. or Madam Chair”** [wait to be recognized]: **“I move the previous question.”** This also requires a two-thirds standing or raised hand vote to be adopted.

## End Debate Naturally

If no one rises to speak, the Chair says, **“If there is no objection, debate is closed, and we will vote.”** If there is an objection, the Chair takes a vote. A two-thirds standing or raised hand vote in favor closes debate.





# Role Play Making Motions, Second, Debate and Vote on Sample Main Motions

## Recognition To Speak

Member A [rise]: **“Mr. or Madam Chair”** [wait to be recognized]

Chair: [nods at Member A]

## Make a Motion

Member A: **“I move that \_\_\_\_\_.”**

## Second the Motion

Chair [if second not offered yet]: **“Is there a second?”**

Member B: **“Second!”**

## Chair “States” the Question

Chair: **“It is moved and seconded that \_\_\_\_\_.”**

## Debate the Motion

Chair: **“Is there any discussion?”** [recognize Member A first if wishes to speak]

Member A [rise]: **“Mr. or Madam Chair”** [wait to be recognized, speak in support, be seated]

Chair: **“Is there any further discussion?”** [recognize members as they rise to speak; attempt to alternate between members who support and oppose]

Chair: [if Previous Question moved, vote; if 2/3 in favor, go to “OR” below]

Member [rise]: **“Mr. or Madam Chair”** [wait to be recognized, speak, be seated]



# Role Play Making Motions, Second, Debate and Vote on Sample Main Motions (continued)

## Chair “Puts” the Question

Chair [when no more rise to speak]: “**If there is no objection, debate is closed, and we will vote.**” [If there is an objection, vote on closing debate. Two thirds is needed.]

Chair [when debate is closed by no objection]: “**Hearing no objection, the question is on the motion ‘That \_\_\_\_\_.’ This motion requires a majority vote to pass.**” [For motions that require two-thirds vote to pass, see RONR † 48.]

**OR**

Chair [when debate is closed by vote]: “**Two thirds are in favor of closing debate and voting.**” **The question is on the motion ‘That \_\_\_\_\_.’ This motion requires a majority vote to pass.**”

## Vote

Chair: “**All those in favor say ‘AYE’.**” Members In Favor: “**“AYE!”**”

Chair: “**All those opposed say ‘NO’.**” Members Who Oppose: “**“NO!”**”

Chair [if the voice vote is unclear, repeat the vote, asking members to stand or raise their hands]

## Chair Announces Result of Vote

Chair [if the majority vote is clear]: “**The ‘AYEs’ have it and the motion is approved.**” **OR** “**The ‘NOs’ have it and motion is lost.**” [state the effect of the vote]



# Read Aloud Lesson 2 Terms and Definitions

**Adopt:** approve or agree to proposal

**Debate:** discussion of the merits of a pending motion

**Germane:** has bearing on the pending motion

**Main Motion:** introduces business to the assembly

**Motion:** formal proposal to take action

**Previous Question:** motion to close debate

**Recognize:** Chair designates next speaker

**Second:** agreement by another person that a motion be considered

**State the Question:** Chair repeats motion to assembly before debate begins



## **Homework:**

Review Lesson 2 Terms and Definitions and Chapters 3 & 4 in *Robert's In Brief*. Read Chapters 5 - 7 to prepare for Lesson 3.

# LESSON 3:

## How Can I Improve a Motion Being Discussed?

Robert's In Brief Chapters 5 - 7



**ACTIVITY:** Flashcard Quiz of Lesson 2 Terms and Definitions.

- Amend
- Postpone
- Commit or Refer
- Revisit



**ACTIVITY:** Role Play Amending Sample Main Motions During Debate. Read Aloud Lesson 3 Terms and Definitions.



**HOMEWORK:** Review Lesson 3 Terms and Definitions and Chapters 5 – 7 in *Robert's In Brief*. Read Chapters 8 & 9 to prepare for Lesson 4.

# AMEND

## (PURPOSE & CONSTRUCTION)

A motion to amend is made to improve a proposal. It should say *exactly* where in the main motion the change is to be made and what words to use. If a motion to **amend** is adopted, it modifies the wording and often the meaning of the main motion. An amended main motion can be further debated and amended. A final vote must be taken on the main motion *as amended*.

### Simple Word Changes

- Insert or Add Words: “**I move to insert the words \_\_\_\_\_ before the words \_\_\_\_\_.**”
- Strike Out Words: “**I move to strike out the words \_\_\_\_\_.**”
- Strike Out & Insert Words: “**I move to strike out the words \_\_\_\_\_ and insert the words \_\_\_\_\_.**”

### Amending Paragraphs

Amendments that apply to whole paragraphs parallel the forms of amendments to words.

- Insert or Add Paragraphs
- Strike Out Paragraphs
- **Substitute** (Strike Out & Insert) Paragraphs

# AMEND

## (RULES)

### **The “Germaneness” Rule**

Amendments, just like debate, must stick to the subject and in some way involve the same question raised by the motion it amends.

### **Amending Amendments**

To avoid confusion, amending a primary amendment is permissible, but amending a secondary amendment is not.

### **The “Settled” Rule**

It is a waste of time to vote repeatedly on the same thing. If a group has voted that certain words shall or shall not be part of a motion, it is not in order to offer another amendment that raises the same question of content and effect.

# POSTPONE

## Postpone Definitely

To postpone a motion to a later time or the next regular meeting within a quarterly time interval [rise]: “**Mr. or Madam Chair**” [wait to be recognized]: “**I move to postpone the motion until \_\_\_\_\_.**” This requires a majority vote to be adopted.

## Postpone Indefinitely

To dispose of a question without a direct vote [rise]: “**Mr. or Madam Chair**” [wait to be recognized]: “**I move to postpone the motion indefinitely.**” This requires a majority vote to be adopted.



# COMMIT OR REFER

When more time is required to redraft a main motion or have it studied further by a small group of people, a motion can be made to **commit or refer** (send to committee).

## Refer To Standing Committee

If the motion's content falls within the subject matter of a standing committee, it must be referred to that committee.

Example: “**I move that the motion be referred to the Policy Committee, and that the committee be instructed to \_\_\_\_\_ (assignment) and report back at the October meeting.**”

## Refer To Special Committee

If the motion's content does not fall within the subject matter of a standing committee, a special committee may be created for this particular task. When its final report is given, it ceases to exist.

Example: “**I move to refer the motion to a special committee of five, the chairman to be Mr. Jones, with four additional members to be appointed by the Chair, and to instruct the committee to \_\_\_\_\_ (assignment) and report back at the October meeting.**”

# REVISIT

Very rarely, after reflection or because new facts are learned, a group may decide it should not have done something or should have done something differently. There are special procedures for revisiting already-considered business and correcting mistakes.

## **Reconsider**

Only a member who voted on the prevailing side of a motion and changes their mind during the same meeting (or session) can make a motion to reconsider: **“I move to reconsider the vote on the motion relating to \_\_\_\_\_ . I voted on the prevailing side.”** IB pages 58-60

# REVISIT (CONTINUED)

## Rescind or Amend Something Previously Adopted

Any member can make a motion at a future meeting to rescind (take back) or amend something previously adopted. See RONR 35:6 a) - c) for exceptions.

Adoption of the motion requires either a two-thirds vote, or a majority if previous notice is given (see below), or a majority of the entire membership of the voting body.

**IB pages 60 - 62**

Give previous notice:

- by announcing intent to make the motion to rescind or amend something previously adopted at the meeting immediately preceding the meeting at which the motion will be made
- by having the Secretary include notice of that intent in the call of the meeting at which the motion is to be made – this is written notice of the time and place of meeting sent to all members in advance of the meeting.

## Renewal

A defeated motion can be made again at a following meeting by any member. **IB page 62**



# Role Play Amending Sample Main Motions During Debate

## Chair “States” the Question On the Main Motion

Chair: “**It is moved and seconded that \_\_\_\_\_.**”

## Debate the Main Motion

Chair: “**Is there any discussion?**” [recognize Member A (mover) first if wishes to speak]

Member A [rise]: “**Mr. or Madam Chair**” [wait to be recognized, speak in support, be seated]

Chair: “**Is there any further discussion?**” [recognize members as they rise to speak; attempt to alternate between members who support and oppose]

## Motion To Amend

Member B [rise]: “**Mr. or Madam Chair**” [wait to be recognized]: “**I move to insert the words \_\_\_\_\_ before the words \_\_\_\_\_.**”

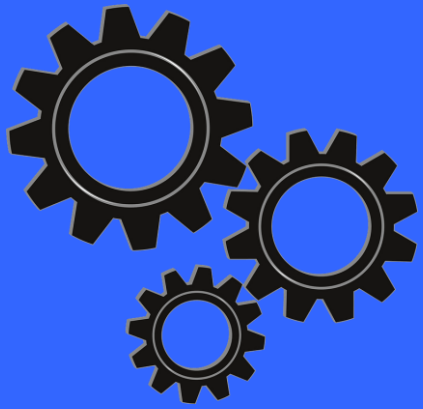
## Second the Motion To Amend

Chair [if second not offered yet]: “**Is there a second?**”

Member C: “**Second!**”

## Chair “States” the Question On the Motion To Amend

Chair: “**It is moved and seconded to insert the words \_\_\_\_\_ before the words \_\_\_\_\_.** **If the amendment is adopted, the main motion will read, “That \_\_\_\_\_.”**”



# Role Play Amending Sample Main Motions

## During Debate (continued)

### Debate the Motion To Amend

Chair: **"Is there any discussion?"** [recognize Member B first if wishes to speak]

Member B [rise]: **"Mr. or Madam Chair"** [wait to be recognized, speak in support, be seated]

Chair: **"Is there any further discussion?"** [recognize members as they rise to speak; attempt to alternate between members who support and oppose]

Chair: [if Previous Question moved, vote; if 2/3 in favor, go to "OR" below]

Other Members [rise]: **"Mr. or Madam Chair"** [wait to be recognized, speak, be seated]

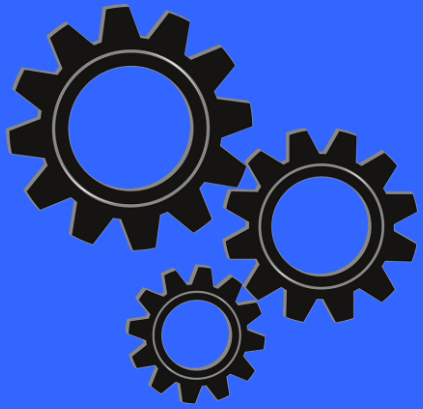
### Chair "Puts" the Question For the Motion To Amend

Chair [when no more rise to speak]: **"If there is no objection, debate is closed, and we will vote."** [If there is an objection, vote on closing debate. Two thirds is needed.]

Chair [when debate is closed by no objection]: **"Hearing no objection, the question is on inserting the words \_\_\_\_\_ before the words \_\_\_\_\_. If the amendment is adopted, the main motion will read, 'That \_\_\_\_\_.' The amendment requires a majority vote to pass."**

**OR**

Chair [when debate is closed by vote]: **"Two thirds are in favor of closing debate and voting." The question is on inserting the words \_\_\_\_\_ before the words \_\_\_\_\_. If the amendment is adopted, the main motion will read, 'That \_\_\_\_\_.' The amendment requires a majority vote to pass."**



# Role Play Amending Sample Main Motions During Debate (continued)

## Vote On the Amendment

Chair: **“All those in favor say ‘AYE’.”** Members In Favor: **“‘AYE!’”**

Chair: **“All those opposed say ‘NO’.”** Members Who Oppose: **“‘NO!’”**

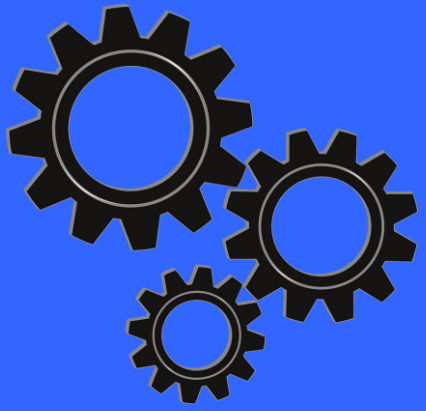
Chair [if the voice vote is unclear]: [repeat the vote and ask for show of hands instead:]  
**“The Chair is in doubt. The vote will be repeated using a show of hands. All those in favor of the amendment, raise your hand. Lower them. All those opposed, raise your hand. Lower them.”**

## Chair Announces Result of Vote

Chair [when the majority vote is clear]: **“The ‘AYEs’ have it and the amendment is approved.”** OR **“The ‘NOs’ have it and the amendment is lost.”** [state the effect of the vote]

## Return To Debate the Main Motion

Chair: **“Is there any further discussion of the main motion as presented?”** OR **as amended?”**



# Read Aloud Lesson 3 Terms and Definitions

**Amend:** modify meaning or wording of a motion

**Commit or Refer:** send a motion to committee

**Postpone Definitely:** a motion to postpone to a certain time

**Postpone Indefinitely:** dispose of the question without a direct vote

**Rescind:** repeal

**Substitute:** strike out and insert paragraph(s)



## Homework:

Review Lesson 3 Terms and Definitions and Chapters 5 - 7 in *Robert's In Brief*. Read Chapters 8 & 9 to prepare for Lesson 4.

# LESSON 4:

## Voting, Nominations and Elections

Robert's In Brief Chapters 8 & 9



**ACTIVITY:** Flashcard Quiz of Lesson 3 Terms and Definitions.

- What Vote Is Required
- Right To Vote
- Methods of Voting
- Nominations
- Elections



**ACTIVITY:** Nominations From the Floor and Election By Roll Call Vote. Read Aloud Lesson 4 Terms and Definitions.



**HOMEWORK:** Review Lesson 4 Terms and Definitions and Chapters 8 & 9 in *Robert's In Brief*. Read Chapters 10 & 11 to prepare for Lesson 5.



# WHAT VOTE IS REQUIRED

## **Majority**

A **majority** vote is normally required to adopt a main motion or to elect to office. It is more than half of the votes cast by members entitled to vote, excluding blanks and abstentions, at a regular or properly called meeting. An **abstention** occurs when a present voting member chooses not to vote – only a majority of those *actually voting* is required.

Example: 10 members present, 4 vote in favor, 3 oppose and 3 abstain. 7 votes are cast, and the 4 votes in favor have the majority - the motion is adopted.

## **Two-Thirds**

A two-thirds vote is required when members' rights would be taken away, most notably to suspend rules, rescind or amend something previously adopted or limit debate. It is at least two-thirds of the votes cast by persons entitled to vote, excluding blanks or abstentions, at a regular or properly called meeting using a standing or raised hand vote.

# WHAT VOTE IS REQUIRED (CONTINUED)

## **Previous Notice & Majority Vote**

Previous notice means the intent to introduce a particular motion is given at a preceding meeting or sent in the call to the meeting at which it is to be brought up. In RONR, previous notice and majority vote are alternatives to a two-thirds vote for a number of motions that take away rights from members. **RONR 16 – 133**

## **Majority of Entire Membership**

A group may also state in its rules that a majority of the entire membership is an allowable alternative to previous notice. This means a vote equal to the majority of the current total number of members in the voting body, whether present at the meeting or not, is needed to approve.

## **Unanimous Consent**

On questions where there seems to be no opposition or on questions of little importance, the Chair may ask if there is any objection to taking a desired action, and if no member objects, the Chair declares the action has been agreed to.

# RIGHT TO VOTE

## **Members**

Any member who's right to vote has not been suspended as the result of a formal disciplinary process has the right to vote, even if his or her dues have not been paid, unless the bylaws specifically state otherwise.

Though a member should not vote on personal or monetary questions involving a conflict of interest, he/she cannot be compelled to abstain from voting for any reason other than formal discipline.

## **Chair's Participation**

The Chair maintains impartiality by not participating in debate, and only votes when (a) the vote is by ballot or (b) the chair's vote will change the vote result – either breaking or creating a tie. This rule applies to both a majority vote and a two-thirds vote.

# METHODS OF VOTING: UNCOUNTED

Each of these voting methods relies on the Chair's judgment without an actual count.

## Voice Vote

This is the most common method of voting.

Chair: **"All those in favor say 'AYE'."**

Members In Favor: **"AYE!"**

Chair: **"All those opposed say 'NO'."**

Members Who Oppose: **"NO!"**

## Standing Vote

This is used (a) whenever a two-thirds vote is required to pass a motion – instead of a voice vote (b) whenever the Chair is unsure of the result of a voice vote and orders a standing vote and (c) whenever a member is unsure of a voice vote and calls **"Division!"** to demand the vote be retaken as a standing vote.

Chair: **"All those in favor please rise."**

Members In Favor rise. Chair: **"Be seated."**

Chair: **"All those opposed please rise."**

Members Who Oppose rise. Chair: **"Be seated."**

## Show of Hands

In smaller groups, the Chair may ask members to raise their hands, rather than a voice vote or standing vote.

# METHODS OF VOTING: COUNTED

## Standing Counted Vote

This may be used (a) when the Chair anticipates close vote results or is unsure of uncounted vote results or (b) when a member makes a motion for a counted vote either while the motion on which that vote is sought is before the group, or immediately after an uncounted vote has been taken before any debate or business has intervened – a majority is required to order the taking of a counted vote.

The count may be done by the Chair, with or without a verification count by the Secretary, or by the tellers appointed by the Chair. The Chair announces the result.

Chair: “**All those in favor please rise and remain standing until counted.**”

Members In Favor rise. Chair: “**Be seated.**”

Chair: “**All those opposed please rise and remain standing until counted.**”

Members Who Oppose rise. Chair: “**Be seated.**”

Chair: [Announce result.]

# METHODS OF VOTING: COUNTED (CONTINUED)

## **Ballot Vote**

A ballot vote is typically used in elections and for other important decisions when there is a desire to keep secret how each member votes. A ballot vote can only be used when expressly ordered by a majority of the assembly or provided for by its rules.

The Chair announces the procedure for the ballot vote, including instructions on how to mark and fold the ballots. The Chair appoints tellers and a chairman to hand out, collect and count the ballots. The tellers, their chairman and the meeting Chair may all vote.

Rules for counting ballots are described in detail in RONR 45:31-36. After counting, the tellers prepare a written report. The chairman of tellers, after receiving recognition from the Chair, reads the report. The Chair repeats the report and officially announces the results.

RONR 45:41 describes rules for the custody and preservation of ballots and tally sheets, as well as the time within which a recount may be ordered.

# METHODS OF VOTING: COUNTED (CONTINUED)

## **Roll Call Vote**

A roll call vote places on record how each member voted – the exact opposite effect of a ballot vote. It is used only when expressly ordered by a majority of the assembly or by a minority whose size has been established by a special rule or bylaw. This voting method is usually confined to representative bodies, in which each member is responsible to a constituency.

The Chair announces the procedure for the roll call vote, and the Secretary calls the roll by reading the name of each voting member aloud. Each member responds with “AYE” or “NO”. A member who does not wish to vote responds with “Present” or “Abstain”. The Secretary records and counts the votes and provides the final numbers to the Chair. The Chair announces the result.

All tally sheets for roll call votes must be preserved by the Secretary until after the next regular meeting. The record of how each member voted, as well as the result of the vote, is entered in full in the minutes. **RONR 45:54 & 45:41**

# NOMINATIONS

A nomination is a formal proposal to the voting body to fill an elected office or position, suggesting a particular person as the one who should be elected. Having nominations narrows voting down to qualified and willing candidates. The most common nominating methods are nominations from the floor or by a nominating committee.

## From the Floor

Any member may make a nomination from the floor.

Chair: “**Nominations are now in order for the office of \_\_\_\_\_.**”

Any member [calls out]: “**I nominate Member A.**”

[no second necessary]

Member A: “**I decline.**”

Chair: “**Are there any further nominations?**”

Any member [calls out]: “**I nominate Member B.**”

Chair: “**Member B is nominated.**”

Chair: “**Are there any further nominations?**”

[Pause.] “**If not, nominations are closed.**”



# NOMINATIONS

## (CONTINUED)

### By a Nominating Committee

A Nominating Committee of an organized society (or one appointed by the Chair at a convention) may nominate a candidate. Before doing so, the committee should secure a nominee's consent to serve. After the Nominating Committee reports and before any voting takes place, the Chair calls for further nominations from the floor.

Chair: **"The Chair recognizes the chairman of the Nominating Committee for a report."**

Nominating Committee Chair: **"Mr. or Madam Chair, the Nominating Committee submits the following nominations: \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_, etc."**

Chair: **"Are there any further nominations for \_\_\_\_\_?"**

Any member [calls out]: **"I nominate Member A."**  
[no second necessary]

Member A: **"I decline."**

Chair: **"Are there any further nominations?"**

Any member [calls out]: **"I nominate Member B."**

Chair: **"Member B is nominated."**

Chair: **"Are there any further nominations?"**

[Pause.] **"If not, nominations are closed."**

# ELECTIONS

A candidate must receive a majority to be elected.

## **Ballot Vote**

Elections are commonly conducted by secret ballot.

If only one candidate is nominated for an office, the Chair simply declares the nominee elected, unless bylaws require a ballot vote.

“Write-in votes” may be cast for any eligible person, even if they were not nominated.

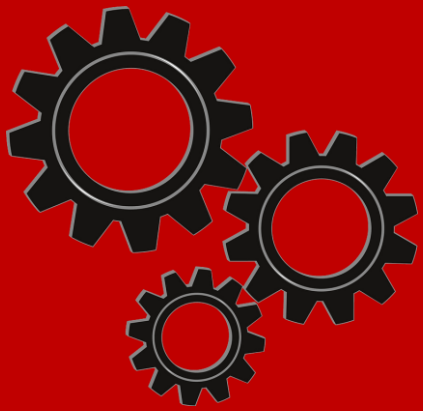
## **Voice Vote**

This method is most often used in mass meetings or when bylaws do not require election by ballot.

Candidates are voted on in the order in which they were nominated. As soon as a nominee receives a majority vote, the Chair declares the election and no votes are taken on remaining nominees for that office.

## **Roll Call Vote**

This method places on record how each member votes. The Secretary records the votes and repeats them to be sure they are accurately recorded.



# Role Play Nominations From the Floor and Election By Roll Call Vote

## Chair Seeks Nominations From the Floor

Chair: “**Nominations are now in order for the office of Treasurer.**”

Any member [calls out]: “**I nominate Member C.**” [no second necessary]

Member C: “**I decline.**”

Chair: “**Are there any further nominations?**”

Any member [calls out]: “**I nominate Member D.**” Chair: “**Member D is nominated.**”

Any member [calls out]: “**I nominate Member E.**” Chair: “**Member E is nominated.**”

Chair: “**Are there any further nominations?**” [Pause.] “**If not, nominations are closed.**” [If there is only one nominee, voting is not necessary (unless the bylaws require a ballot vote). The Chair declares the nominee elected by acclamation (a form of unanimous consent).]

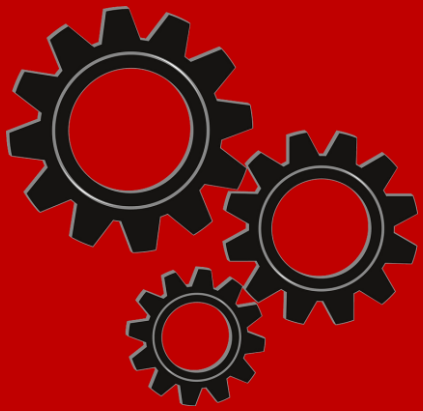
## Roll Call Vote

Chair [If there was at least a minority vote (size of minority determined by a bylaw or special rule of order) to use the roll call method or it is required by state law]: “**We will elect the Treasurer using the roll call method. The Secretary will read the names of each voting member. When your name is read, please rise and state your choice for Treasurer. The Secretary will repeat each choice and record each vote. The person receiving the votes of the majority of the members shall be the Treasurer.**”

Secretary [read members’ names one by one]: “**Member A**”

Member A [rises and states his or her choice for Treasurer]: **Member D**” Secretary: “**Member D**”

Secretary: “**Member B**” Member B [rises and states his or her choice for Treasurer]: etc.



# Role Play Nomination From the Floor and Election By Roll Call Vote (continued)

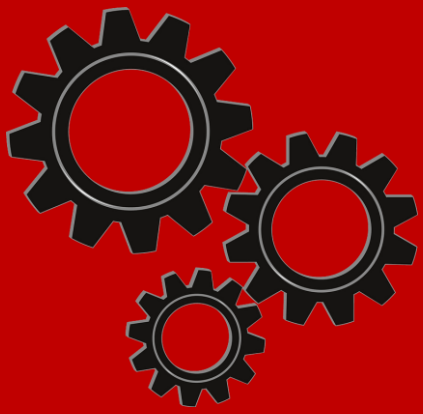
## Secretary's Report

Chair: "Secretary, would you please make your report?"

Secretary: "The Secretary's report for the election of Treasurer: #\_\_\_\_\_ total votes were cast. #\_\_\_\_\_ votes are necessary to elect. \_\_\_\_\_ [name of first nominee] received #\_\_\_\_\_ votes. \_\_\_\_\_ [name of second nominee] received #\_\_\_\_\_ votes."

## Chair Announces Election Results

Chair: "The Secretary's report for the election of Treasurer: #\_\_\_\_\_ total votes were cast. #\_\_\_\_\_ votes are necessary to elect. \_\_\_\_\_ [name of first nominee] received #\_\_\_\_\_ votes. \_\_\_\_\_ [name of second nominee] received #\_\_\_\_\_ votes. We have an election. \_\_\_\_\_ is the Treasurer."



# Read Aloud Lesson 4 Terms and Definitions

**Abstention:** a present voting member chooses not to vote

**Aye:** affirmative voice vote

**Counted Vote:** vote by rising and remain standing until counted; ordered by majority or by chair in doubt of vote

**Division of the Assembly:** demand by an individual member for a standing vote (uncounted)

**Majority Vote:** more than half the votes cast

**Nomination:** formal proposal of an individual as one to be elected

**Unanimous Consent:** no objection

**Voice Vote:** vote with "aye" or "no"



## **Homework:**

Review Lesson 4 Terms and Definitions and Chapters 8 & 9 in *Robert's In Brief*. Read Chapters 10 & 11 to prepare for Lesson 5.

# LESSON 5:

## Bylaws and Other Rules

Robert's In Brief Chapters 10 & 11



**ACTIVITY:** Flashcard Quiz of Lesson 4 Terms and Definitions.

- Ranking Order of Rules
- Enforcement of Rules
- Suspension of Rules
- Parliamentary Inquiry



**ACTIVITY:** Role Play Point of Order and Appeal Process. Read Aloud Lesson 5 Terms and Definitions.



**HOMEWORK:** Review Lesson 5 Terms and Definitions and Chapters 10 & 11 in *Robert's In Brief*. Read Chapter 14 to prepare for Lesson 6.

# RANKING OF RULES

## **Law**

Any federal, state or local law governing the procedure of an organization takes precedence over any conflicting provision in organizational rules.

## **Corporate Charter**

If an organization is incorporated, state law generally requires a corporate charter. The required contents of the charter varies from state to state. The corporate charter supersedes all other rules of the organization.

## **Bylaws or Constitution**

The next highest level of rules in the majority of groups is a document called the **bylaws**, sometimes called a constitution. These are the society's basic rules relating to itself.

Bylaws (a) describe the group's purpose, (b) spell out the qualifications and method of selection of members, (c) provide for officers, committees and meetings (including the quorum), (d) may set up an executive board or board of directors and (e) designate the parliamentary authority.

Bylaws include provisions for their own amendment that require previous notice of proposed amendments and at least a two-thirds vote for them to be adopted. When adopting or amending bylaws, and to view sample bylaws, consult RONR 56:1-68, 57:1-19.



# RANKING OF RULES (CONTINUED)

## Rules of Order

The regulation of the conduct of business in meetings is the function of **rules of order**, which are found in the parliamentary authority designated in the bylaws and in any special rules of order adopted by the organization.

## Special Rules of Order

These rules supersede any conflicting rules in the parliamentary authority. **RONR 2:16** Adopting or amending special rules of order requires previous notice and a two-thirds vote or else a majority vote of the entire membership.

## Standing Rules

These are administrative rules that do not relate to the conduct of business at meetings (rules of order) or to the organizational structure (bylaws). Example: Guests must sit in a particular part of a meeting room. Regular meetings will begin at 7:00pm.

## Custom

A group habit or traditional way of doing things is considered custom and is permissible so long as it doesn't conflict with a written rule.

# ENFORCEMENT OF RULES

## Point of Order

When a member calls for an enforcement of rules, they call the attention of the Chair to a violation by standing up, interrupting a speaker if necessary, and calling out, “**Point of Order!**”

Chair: “**State your point.**”

Member A: [states point and sits down]

Chair [stands and makes ruling]: “**The Point of Order is well taken.**” OR “**The Point of Order is not well taken because \_\_\_\_\_.**” [give reasons]

## Appeal

Any member may question the Chair’s ruling on a Point of Order by immediately making an **appeal** to the group (no need to wait for recognition): “**I appeal from the decision of the Chair.**”

Just as with a main motion, there must be a second and time for debate. The Chair speaks first and last; each member may speak once. A majority or tie vote sustains the ruling of the Chair. **RONR 24:3,7**

# SUSPEND THE RULES

When the group desires to take an action that violates the rules, they may vote to **suspend the rules** for that particular action. A motion requesting suspension of parliamentary rules or an order of business requires a second and a two-thirds vote to pass. Suspension of a standing rule takes a second and a majority vote. Bylaws may not be suspended except for clauses that provide for their own suspension.

Example: [During New Business, before the guest speaker is scheduled]: **“I move to suspend the rules to allow our guest speaker to speak to us now.”**

# PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

A member may make a **parliamentary inquiry** of the Chair to ask a question about the rules and how they apply to what is going on or to something he or she wants to do. A parliamentary inquiry does not require recognition first and may interrupt another who has the floor: “**A parliamentary inquiry please.**” The Chair will ask what the inquiry is and provide an answer.

The Chair's answer is not a ruling and is not subject to an appeal. If a member disagrees with the Chair's answer, he or she will need to act contrary to the Chair's opinion, and upon being ruled out of order, appeal the Chair's ruling.



# Role Play Point of Order and Appeal Process

## Point of Order

Member A [calls out]: “**Point of Order!**”

Chair: “**State your point.**”

Member A: [states point and sits down] Example: “**Mr. Chair, the discussion is not germane.**”

## Chair Rules On Point of Order

Chair [stands and makes ruling]: “**The Point of Order is well taken.**” OR “**The Point of Order is not well taken because \_\_\_\_\_.**” [give reason(s)]

## Appeal

Member B [who does not agree with the Chair’s ruling, without waiting for recognition]: “**I appeal from the decision of the Chair.**”

Member C: “**Second!**”

## Chair States Appeal

Chair: “**It is moved and seconded to appeal from the decision of the Chair. The question before the assembly is, “Shall the decision of the Chair be sustained?”**”



# Role Play Point of Order and Appeal Process (continued)

## Debate the Appeal

Chair speaks first in debate in defense of his or her ruling.

Chair: **"Is there any further discussion?"** [recognize members as they rise to speak beginning with member who made the appeal; attempt to alternate between members who support and oppose; each member who wishes to may speak once]

Each member [rise]: **"Mr. or Madam Chair"** [wait to be recognized, speak, be seated]

Chair speaks last in closing debate after all members who want to have spoken.

## Chair "Puts" the Question On the Appeal

Chair: **"Shall the decision of the Chair be sustained? A tie or a majority vote in the affirmative upholds the ruling of the Chair and the appeal is lost. A majority vote in the negative overturns the Chair's ruling."**

## Vote

Chair: **"All those in favor say 'AYE'."** Members In Favor of Chair's Ruling: **"AYE!"**

Chair: **"All those opposed say 'NO'."** Members Who Oppose Chair's Ruling: **"NO!"**

Chair [if the voice vote is unclear]: [repeat the vote and ask members to stand or raise hands instead]

## Chair Announces Result of Vote

Chair [when the majority vote is clear]: **"The 'AYEs' have it and the Chair's ruling is sustained."**  
**OR "The 'NOs' have it and the Chair's ruling is overturned."**



# Read Aloud Lesson 5 Terms and Definitions

**Appeal:** a member questions the Chair's ruling

**Bylaws:** basic organizational rules of a society

**Rules of Order:** procedures for conducting business meetings

**Parliamentary Inquiry:** a member asks the Chair a question about the rules

**Point of Order:** a member calls for enforcement of a rule

**Suspend the Rules:** set aside a rule of the assembly (except corporate charter, bylaws, basic principles of parliamentary law, or rules that protect basic rights of members) in order for the members to do something contrary to the rule



## Homework:

Review Lesson 5 Terms and Definitions and Chapters 10 & 11 in *Robert's In Brief*. Read Chapter 14 to prepare for Lesson 6.

# LESSON 6:

## Classes of Motions

Robert's In Brief Chapter 14



**ACTIVITY:** Flashcard Quiz of Lesson 5 Terms and Definitions.

- Main Motions
- Privileged Motions
- Subsidiary Motions
- Incidental Motions
- Motions That Bring the Question Again Before the Assembly



**ACTIVITY:** Read Aloud Lesson 6 Terms and Definitions.



**HOMEWORK:** Review all 60 Terms and Definitions from Lessons 1 – 6 and Chapter 14 in *Robert's In Brief*.



# MAIN MOTIONS AND OTHER MOTIONS

**Main** motions introduce business before the assembly. Other (secondary) motions are classified as follows:

**Privileged** motions do not relate to pending business but have to do with special matters of immediate and overriding importance which, without debate, should be allowed to interrupt the consideration of anything else.

**Subsidiary** motions assist the assembly in treating or disposing of a main motion (and sometimes other motions).

**Incidental** motions relate, in different ways, to the pending business or to business otherwise at hand.

**Motions That Bring a Question Again Before the Assembly** enable the assembly to reopen a completed question during the same session, or to take up one that has been temporarily disposed of, or to change something previously adopted and still in force.

# PRIVILEGED MOTIONS

\* This class of motions is ranked, like different types of rules, in order of precedence. As each motion is made, any below it are no longer in order. Subsidiary motions rank beneath privileged motions.

## Fix the Time To Which To Adjourn

Set the time, and sometimes the place, for another meeting – or in an established society, for another meeting before the next regular meeting – to continue the business of the current meeting or session. *Receive Chair recognition; be seconded; date/time/place amendable, not debatable; majority vote.*

**“I move that when this meeting adjourns, it stand adjourned to meet at \_\_\_\_\_ [time] on \_\_\_\_\_ [day] at \_\_\_\_\_ [location].”**

## Adjourn

Close the meeting. *Receive Chair recognition; be seconded; not debatable or amendable; majority vote.*

**“I move to adjourn the meeting.”**

## Recess

Obtain a short intermission for a specified period of time. *Receive Chair recognition; be seconded; time amendable, not debatable; majority vote.*

**“I move to recess until \_\_\_\_\_.” OR “I move to recess until called to order by the Chair.”**

# PRIVILEGED MOTIONS (CONTINUED)

## **Raise a Question of Privilege**

State an urgent request or a motion which would protect a right or privilege of the assembly or an individual member. The Chair rules on the request. *Can interrupt a speaker; no Chair recognition; no second; no debate; Chair ruling.*

**“I rise to a question of privilege.”**

Chair: **“Please state your question.”**

Member: **“I can’t hear the speaker.”**

Chair: **“Would the speaker please use the microphone?”**

## **Call For the Orders of the Day**

Require the enforcement of the adopted program (agenda) or order of business. *Can interrupt a speaker; no Chair recognition; no second; no debate; no vote. Must happen unless order of business is set aside by a two-thirds majority. (IB 128:1)*

**“I call for the orders of the day!”**

# SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS

\* This class of motions is ranked, like different types of rules, in order of precedence. As each motion is made, any below it are no longer in order. Main motions rank below all subsidiary motions.

## Lay on the Table

In an emergency, postpone consideration of the pending motion until a majority decides to take it up again. *Receive Chair recognition; be seconded; not debatable or amendable; majority vote.* **“I move to lay the question on the table.”**

## Previous Question

Close debate and bring the motion to an immediate vote. *Receive Chair recognition; be seconded; not amendable or debatable; two-thirds vote.* **“I move the previous question.”**

## Limit or Extend Limits of Debate

Modify the normal limits of debate (2 times/speaker, 10 minutes/time) on a pending motion. *Receive Chair recognition; be seconded; amendable, not debatable; two-thirds vote.* **“I move to [extend, limit] debate by...”**

## Postpone To a Certain Time

Consider the motion later in the same meeting or at another meeting. *Receive Chair recognition; be seconded; debatable, amendable; majority vote.* **“I move to postpone the motion until \_\_\_\_\_.”**

# SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS (CONTINUED)

## Commit or Refer

Send the motion to committee for further study or redrafting. *Receive Chair recognition; be seconded; debatable, amendable; majority vote.*

**“I move that the motion be referred to the \_\_\_\_\_ Committee, and that the committee be instructed to \_\_\_\_\_ (assignment) and report back at the \_\_\_\_\_ meeting.”**

## Amend

Modify the wording of a motion – by words or paragraphs. *Receive Chair recognition; be seconded; amendable to one degree and debatable; majority vote.*

- Insert or Add Words: **“I move to insert the words \_\_\_\_\_ before the words \_\_\_\_\_.”**
- Strike Out Words: **“I move to strike out the words \_\_\_\_\_.”**
- Strike Out & Insert Words: **“I move to strike out the words \_\_\_\_\_ and insert the words \_\_\_\_\_.”**  
**“If amended, the motion would read \_\_\_\_\_.”**

## Postpone Indefinitely

Dispose of a main motion that cannot be adopted or expressly rejected without possibly undesirable consequences. *Receive Chair recognition; be seconded; debatable, not amendable; majority vote.*

**“I move that this motion be postponed indefinitely.”**

# MAIN MOTIONS

\* Main motions rank below all privileged and subsidiary motions.

**Main** motions introduce business before the assembly. Receive Chair recognition; be seconded; debatable; amendable; usually require majority vote to pass; may be other voting requirements for different types of main motions (bylaw amendments, financial decisions) in the bylaws.

# INCIDENTAL MOTIONS

\* This class of motions is not ranked.

## Point of Order

Call for enforcement of the rules. *Can interrupt a speaker; no Chair recognition; no second; no debate; chair ruling.*

**“Point of Order!”** [state the violation]

## Appeal

Question the Chair's ruling on a point of order. *Can interrupt a speaker; no Chair recognition; be seconded; debatable, not amendable; majority or tie vote sustains Chair's ruling.*

**“I appeal from the decision of the Chair.”**

## Suspend the Rules

Set aside the rules in order to take a particular action contrary to them. (For exceptions, see “Suspend the Rules” in Lesson 5 Terms and Definitions.) *Receive Chair recognition; be seconded; not debatable or amendable; two-thirds vote.*

**“I move to suspend the rules to \_\_\_\_\_ [describe action].”**

## Parliamentary Inquiry

Request the Chair's opinion on a matter of parliamentary procedure. *Can interrupt a speaker; no Chair recognition; no second; no debate; Chair opinion.*

**“A parliamentary inquiry please.”** [state the inquiry]

# INCIDENTAL MOTIONS (CONTINUED)

## Point of Information

Make inquiry as to facts relating to business at hand. *Can interrupt a speaker; no Chair recognition; no second; no debate; Chair opinion.*

**“A point of information, please”** [state the inquiry]

## Objection to Consideration of a Question

Prevent a harmful main motion from being discussed. *No Chair recognition, must be raised before debate on the main motion begins; no second; not debatable or amendable; two-thirds vote against consideration sustains the objection.*

**“I object to the consideration of the question!”**

## Division of a Question

When a main motion contains several parts, each capable of standing alone and being acted upon, a member may request separate consideration and voting on each part. *Receive Chair recognition; be seconded; amendable, not debatable; majority vote.*

**“I move for a division of the question.”** [clearly describe how the question is to be divided]

## Consideration By Paragraph or Seriatim

Allow members to debate and amend a lengthy report or long motion by paragraphs, articles, etc. one after the other. *Receive Chair recognition; be seconded; amendable, not debatable; majority vote.*

**“I move that the resolution be considered seriatim.”**



# INCIDENTAL MOTIONS (CONTINUED)

## Division of the Assembly

Demand a standing vote (uncounted) immediately after an unclear voice vote. *Can interrupt a speaker; no Chair recognition; no second; no debate; must happen.*  
**“Division!”**

## Motions Relating To Methods of Voting

This group of motions includes moving that a vote be taken (a) by counted standing vote, (b) by roll call vote or (c) by ballot. *Receive Chair recognition; be seconded; amendable, not debatable; majority vote. A roll call vote may also be approved by a minority if the size has been fixed by a special rule of order or bylaw.*

**“I move that we take a [counted standing, roll call, ballot] vote.”**

## Motions Relating To Nominations

This includes motions (a) to specify a nomination method – when it is not defined by the bylaws or rules. It also includes motions (b) to close nominations or (c) to reopen nominations. *Receive Chair recognition; be seconded; amendable, not debatable; majority vote.*

**“I move that nominations be made [from the floor, by a nominating committee].” OR “I move that nominations be [closed, reopened].”**

# MOTIONS THAT BRING A QUESTION AGAIN BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY

\* This class of motions is not ranked.

## **Rescind/Amend Something Previously Adopted**

Rescind (take back) or amend something adopted previously. *Receive Chair recognition; be seconded; debatable and amendable; two-thirds vote, or a majority if previous notice is given, or a majority of the entire membership of the voting body.*

**“I move to [rescind, amend] the motion \_\_\_\_\_.”**

## **Reconsider** (RONR 12<sup>th</sup> edition, Ch. IX, Sec. 37)

A member who voted on the prevailing side of a motion changes their mind during the same meeting (or session). *Receive Chair recognition; be seconded; debatable, not amendable; majority vote.*

**“I move to reconsider the vote on the resolution relating to \_\_\_\_\_. I voted on the prevailing side.”**

# MOTIONS THAT BRING A QUESTION AGAIN BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY (CONTINUED)

## **Take From the Table**

Resume consideration of a main motion that was previously laid on the table. This must be done by the end of the next meeting. *Receive Chair recognition; be seconded; not debatable or amendable; majority vote.*

**“I move to take from the table the motion relating to \_\_\_\_\_.”**

## **Discharge a Committee** RONR ¶15

Take back a question that has been referred to a committee before the committee gives its final report, so the body can take the matter back for consideration and action. *Receive Chair recognition; be seconded; debatable, amendable; two-thirds vote, or a majority if previous notice is given, or a majority of the entire membership of the voting body.*

**“I move that the \_\_\_\_\_ Committee be discharged from further consideration of the question relating to \_\_\_\_\_.”**



# Read Aloud Lesson 6 Terms and Definitions

**Division of a Question:** divide motion into parts for separate consideration

**Incidental Motions:** relate, in different ways, to the pending business or to business otherwise at hand

**Lay on the Table:** set motion aside temporarily to consider something urgent

**Question of Privilege:** urgent request affecting assembly or member rights

**Point of Information:** an inquiry as to facts relating to business at hand

**Privileged Motions:** deal with special matters unrelated to pending business

**Seriatim:** consider one paragraph or article after another

**Subsidiary Motions:** assist in treating or disposing of main motion

**Take From the Table:** resume consideration of a motion laid on the table



# So, You've Been Elected (or Appointed)...

## **President or Vice President, Chair or Vice Chair of Board (or Executive Committee)**

- Read Chapter 15: Memorize frequently used procedures, make sure all know what's being debated and voted on, draft the order of business (agenda) for meetings with the assistance of the Secretary, learn how to conduct voting, know the steps in a meeting, learn to handle points of order and appeals, know more about parliamentary procedure than other members, and have the proper materials at meetings (bylaws, rules, parliamentary authority, list of committees and members, call to meeting, agenda, etc.). Many who chair meetings make up scripts ahead of time based on the agenda or order of business. They include all the parliamentary language that the chair anticipates needing to handle each item of business (see Role Plays for examples).

## **Secretary**

- Read Chapter 16: Learn how to send the "call" or notice of meetings, assist presiding officer in drafting the order of business (agenda), have the proper materials at meetings (official membership role, list of existing committees and members, bylaws, rules, call to meeting and recent minutes), perform duties at meetings, prepare draft minutes, keep official records of the group and handle correspondence.

## **Treasurer**

- Read Chapter 17: Learn how to provide a Treasurer's Report for the organization's meetings; develop a full annual financial report for auditing purposes; prepare information for taxes; collect, deposit and disburse funds under the direction of the Board or membership.



# So, You've Been Elected (or Appointed)...

(continued)

## **Board (or Executive Committee) Member**

- Review the material in this Robert's Rules Training Course until it becomes second nature.

## **Chairman or Member of Committee (Standing or Special)**

- Review the material in this Robert's Rules Training Course until it becomes second nature.
- Read Chapter 19 in Robert's Rules of Order, In Brief to learn the variations in committee vs. board (or executive committee) procedures.

## **Convention Delegate or Alternate**

- Review the material in this Robert's Rules Training Course until it becomes second nature.
- Read Chapter 20 in Robert's Rules of Order, In Brief.
- Consider taking the following courses available for Michigan Precinct Delegates on [moveitchristian.com](http://moveitchristian.com): County Conventions, District Conventions, State Conventions, Prepare for Convention