



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS

RUNNING LOCAL MEETINGS – THE BASICS OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

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WHO AM I?

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Topics

1. Introduction
2. Order of Business for a Meeting
3. Processing Motions Step by Step
4. Common Motions
5. Questions



INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE?

- Parliamentary Procedure is a set of rules that establishes-
 - Orderly transaction of business.
 - The duties of officers at meetings.
 - A firm basis to resolve disputes and procedural questions at meetings.
- Why Robert's Rules of Order?
 - Most commonly used for unions in United States.
 - One of two sets of parliamentary rules (Atwoods is the other) that is required to be used for local unions by Article XIII, Section 3 of the IAFF Constitution.



HISTORY OF ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

- Originally written by General Henry M. Robert in 1876
- Engineering Officer in US army
- 1st Ed. (1876) is 176 pages
- 4th Ed. (1915) was final edition solely written by Gen. Robert.
- 12th Ed. (2020) is 633 pages of text



WHAT ABOUT ATWOOD'S RULES?

- The other set of parliamentary rules allowed to be used for Local Unions by Article XIII of the IAFF Constitution.
- Very similar motions rules to Robert's Rules of Order.
- What is Atwood's Rules?
- Modernized version of Robert's when it was published in 1956.
- During 1950s there were numerous competing parliamentary rules published because there had not been a significant revision to RONR in decades.



HIERARCHY OF RULES

Federal Law

State Law

Constitutional and Bylaws

Special Rules of Order

Parliamentary Authority



PRESIDING OFFICER'S DUTIES

- Open and close the meeting
- Announce business
- Recognize members
- Process motions, take votes, and announce results
- Enforce rules and be impartial
- Expedite business if possible
- Should not participate in debate while presiding



PRESIDING OFFICER VOTING

The Presiding Officer should be impartial but has the right to vote (if the Presiding Officer is a member).

To preserve that impartiality, the Presiding Officer should only vote if it would make a difference in the outcome.

In majority voting situations, that means the Presiding Officer should only vote to break a tie or to create a tie.



WHO IS THE PRESIDING OFFICER

Set by your Constitution and Bylaws, typically the President.

If the President is not present, then the Vice-President or another officer will preside in the President's absence.

In special circumstances, a non-member can be invited to preside over the meeting by a majority vote of the assembly (and if the President and Vice-President do not object).



ORDER OF BUSINESS

Order of Business

Call to Order

Approval of the Minutes

Reports

Unfinished Business

New Business

Announcements and Adjournment



CALL TO ORDER

- Duty of the Chair to determine if there is a quorum.
- Chair does not have to announce there is a quorum (or the number of members present).
- Quorum is the minimum numbers of members that must be present to transact business.
- Quorum is typically set in the Constitution and Bylaws but can be set in other places. For example, Roberts sets quorum as a majority of the registered delegates in a convention.



Order of Business

Call to Order

Approval of the Minutes

Reports

Unfinished Business

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APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- Minutes to be approved should be distributed in advance. Do not read the minutes if they were distributed in advance.
- Use unanimous consent to correct and then approve the minutes, such as-

“Does anyone have any corrections for the minutes?”

Hearing none, is there any objection to approval of the minutes?

Hearing none, the minutes are approved.”



MEETING MINUTES

- Record of what was done in the meeting.
- Not a transcript of everything that was said at the meeting.
- Should include type of meeting, name of organization, time and date of the meeting, location of the meeting, and whether the typical chair and secretary were present at the meeting.
- Should include the disposition of all items of business and the maker of each motion, including vote counts for counted votes or the results of a roll call vote.
- Should include the time the meeting was adjourned.



Sample Association

February 28, 2026, Regular Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of Sample Association was held on Wednesday February 28, 2026 at 7 pm at the Association Office. The President, Steven Brown, and Secretary were present. The minutes of the January meeting were approved as corrected.

President Brown reported on the winter leadership summit held in January 2026. The President's written report was placed on file after questions.

Tracy Smith moved that the "Association should enter into the 2026 fundraising agreement with Better Future, Inc." After debate, the motion was adopted.

Paul George moved that the "the Association should enter into the transportation agreement with Blue Line Busing for travel to the convention in August." After debate and by unanimous consent, the motion was postponed to the March meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.
Katie Torres, Secretary



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List the officers that were present, but you do not need to list everyone that was present at the meeting. Nor do you have to detail all the changes to the prior minutes.



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Tracy Smith moved that the "Association should enter into the 2026 fundraising agreement with Better Future, Inc." **After debate**, the motion was adopted.

Paul George moved that the "the Association should enter into the transportation agreement with Blue Line Busing for travel to the convention in August." **After debate** and by unanimous consent, the motion was postponed to the March meeting.

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Do not detail the questions or the debate that happened during the meeting. The debate and questions are not actions of the association, so don't need to be included with the minutes.



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Katie Torres, Secretary

End with the time the meeting was adjourned. The Secretary should sign the minutes.



Order of Business

Call to Order

Approval of the Minutes

Reports

Unfinished Business

New Business

Announcements and Adjournment



REPORTS

- Order of Reports is usually (unless the Constitution or Bylaws say otherwise) :
 1. Officer Reports
 2. Standing Committee Reports
 3. Special Committee Reports
- If a report contains recommendations that need to be adopted, then consider and vote on those recommendations immediately.



REPORTS

- A purely informational report does not need to be voted on but instead is simply placed on file.
- A written report that was distributed in advance does not need to be read.
- Members can ask questions about reports after the report is made (regardless of whether the report includes recommendations).



Order of Business

Call to Order

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New Business

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UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Any item being considered when prior meeting was adjourned or any item that was postponed to this meeting.
- Is not something that was discussed or mentioned in a previous meeting.
- It is very common that there will not be any unfinished business at a meeting.
- If there is no unfinished business, then you can skip that and go directly to new business.



Order of Business

Call to Order

Approval of the Minutes

Reports

Unfinished Business

New Business

Announcements and Adjournment



NEW BUSINESS

- In many meetings, new business is where most of the debate and votes occur, as most items (not coming from a report) are considered under new business.
- Members can introduce business as they are recognized.
- New business is not a time for open discussion.
- Members should introduce items of business as motions to do something rather than simply stating they would like to discuss something.



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Tracy Smith moved the "Association should enter into the 2024 fundraising agreement with Better Future, Inc.". After debate, the motion was adopted.

Paul George moved that the "the Association should enter into the transportation agreement with Blue Line Busing for travel to the convention in August." After debate and by unanimous consent, the motion was postponed to the March meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.
Katie Torres, Secretary

This part of the sample minutes is the "New Business" portion of the meeting.



Order of Business

Call to Order

Approval of the Minutes

Reports

Unfinished Business

New Business

Announcements and Adjournment



ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ADJOURNMENT

- Typically, the presiding officer will make various announcements immediately prior to adjournment of the meeting. An announcement heading in the agenda does not prevent the presiding officer from making announcements at other parts of the meeting.
- If all business on the agenda is concluded, then then presiding officer can call for a motion to adjourn or simply declare the meeting adjourned (as all the business for the meeting has been completed).



GOOD OF THE ORDER

- In some meetings, there may be time for “Good of the Order,” “General Good and Welfare,” or simply “Open Discussion.”
- These items are typically time for members to offer informal observations or comments regarding the organization without requiring any specific motions or business.
- If your members want to just talk about issues before deciding to act or not about that something, then this is the appropriate time to have those discussions.



QUORUM QUESTION

Your local has 100 members and a quorum for a meeting of 25% of the membership (so 25 members). At 7 pm, the meeting was called to order with 30 members in attendance. At 7:45 pm, someone notices that 8 people have left and only 22 members are at the meeting. What happens?

- (1) The meeting continues since you had enough people at 7 pm
- (2) The meeting ends since you don't have 25 members
- (3) No business can be done until 25 members are present



MINUTES QUESTIONS

Your local Association adopted a budget at the end of a long, contentious meeting after a counted vote. Should the following be included in the meetings minutes?

- (1) The name of the member moved to adopt the budget.
- (2) The name of the member who seconded the budget motion.
- (3) The names of each member who spoke in debate on the budget.
- (4) The Secretary's opinion on the budget.
- (5) The questions from members to the Treasurer about the budget.
- (6) The vote count on the motion to adopt budget.



ORDER OF BUSINESS QUESTIONS

- 1) The Treasurer has a proposed budget to be adopted. Where in the order of business should it be?
- 2) A motion to approve travel reimbursement for convention was postponed from last month's meeting to the meeting next week. Where in the order of business should it be?
- 3) You want to discuss whether other members think the association should get hoodies made. Where in the order of business can you have this discussion?



AGENDAS AND RULES

Agenda

An even better method for keeping the meeting on track than relying on simply the standard order of business. Will allow members at the meeting to know exactly what is scheduled to be considered at the meeting.

Agenda should include items that your Constitution or Bylaws require to have advance notice.



TYPES OF AGENDAS

Informal agenda

Not voted, guideline,
helpful for members

Adopted agenda

Voted on, requires 2/3 to
change later, useful in
difficult situations or with
large groups.

Timed agenda

Can expedite meeting
greatly. If voted on, then
requires that the meeting
move onto the new item
at the appropriate time.



Sample Association

February 28, 2026 - Meeting Agenda

[call to order]

Approval of the Minutes

Reports –

1. President's Report
2. Treasurer's Report
3. Legislative Update

New Business

1. Community Outreach Project

Announcements

Adjourn



Sample Association

February 28, 2026 - Meeting Agenda

7:00 pm [call to order]

7:02 pm Approval of the Minutes

Reports –

7:03 pm 1. President's Report

7:23 pm 2. Treasurer's Report

7:33 pm 3. Legislative Update

New Business

7:40 pm 1. Community Outreach Project

7:55 pm Announcements

8:00 pm Adjourn



EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive Session is the portion of the meeting in which the proceedings are secret. Only members of the organization, special invitee, and necessary staff or employees are allowed to remain in the meeting.

An organization can go into executive session by unanimous consent. If a member makes a motion to go into executive session or there is disagreement about whether to go into executive session, then a majority vote is required.



EXECUTIVE SESSION

The proceedings during Executive Session should not be disclosed to nonmembers except to the extent necessary to carry them out. For example, if a pay raise for an employee was decided during executive session, then that raise would be disclosed (but the deliberations on the raise should remain secret).

Minutes of executive session proceedings should be kept separately from the normal minutes and approved in executive session.



SMALL BOARD RULES

Relaxed rules (small board rules) apply if a dozen or so are present.

- No formal recognition
- No seconds required
- No limits on debate, but should still not debate undebatable items
- Chair can debate
- Can vote without a formal motion if it's clear to everyone what is being voted on
- Informal discussion allowed
- Chair can always vote



Special Rules

Adopting special rules for a particular meeting at the beginning of the meeting can be appropriate when dealing with numerous or particularly difficult issues.

Special rules can be used to regulate debate, to provide for members to attend the meeting virtually, or provide a clear process when dealing with a particularly contentious issue.



Virtual Meetings

1. Virtual meeting etiquette
2. The plan for the chat
3. Technical issues
4. Who is administering the meeting
5. Have rules, especially for large meetings



VIRTUAL MEETING RULES

IAFF has created model virtual meeting rules.

Those rules are available at –

https://www.iaff.org/wp-content/uploads/Local_Officers/Best-Practices-and-Model-Rules-for-Virtual-Meetings_22Jun30.pdf



SELECT MODEL VIRTUAL MEETING RULES

4. The Local shall designate an officer or member other than the President to host the virtual meeting and be responsible for technical support during the meeting. If a waiting room is used, the host will monitor the waiting room and admit members to the meeting. The Local shall inform members how to contact that officer or member prior to and during the meeting.



SELECT MODEL VIRTUAL MEETING RULES

8. Members shall remain on mute during the meeting, and the Local officer or individual designated as the host of the meeting will unmute speakers when recognized by the President (or officer running the meeting).

9. Members who seek the floor to speak shall use the hand raising function in the virtual meeting platform, and the President (or officer running the meeting) shall recognize speakers in order.



SELECT MODEL VIRTUAL MEETING RULES

12. If possible, the text of motions shall be provided to members sufficiently in advance of the meeting that they can be printed and reviewed by members prior to the start of the meeting. During the meeting, the text of motions must be displayed on the virtual meeting platform using the share screen function prior to opening the floor for discussion on the motion.



EXECUTIVE SESSION QUESTIONS

Last weekend, your local went into executive session to get advice from your attorney on a pending lawsuit that your local is involved in. Your attorney answered questions about the lawsuit, and a few members made some comments about the lawsuit. No votes were taken during the executive session.

(1) Should you keep minutes of the executive session?

(2) If you should, then what would be in the minutes of this executive session?



PROCESSING MOTIONS

MOTIONS GENERALLY

- Motions are formal proposals that the assembly take some action.
- Motions are debated (if debatable) and voted on one at a time.
- Some motions are for the organization itself to substantively act (put out a statement, hire employees, etc.), while other motions can be procedural in nature (adopt the agenda for the meeting, end debate on an item of business etc.)



STEPS IN PROCESSING A MOTION

1. Member makes a motion
2. Another members seconds
3. Chair states the motion
4. Debate the motion (if the motion is debatable)
5. Take the vote and then the Chair announces the results



PROCESSING A MOTION SUMMARY

Motion Made

Second

Motion Stated

Debate

Vote



MAKING A MOTION

1. Member seeks recognition from the Chair (usually by raising their hand, standing, or going to a microphone)
2. Member is recognized by the Chair (normally by saying the member's name)
3. Member makes the motion ("I move that we adopt the budget")



PROCESSING A MOTION SUMMARY



Motion Made

Second

Motion Stated

Debate

Vote



SECONDS

- Not necessarily an endorsement, just means someone else believes motion should come before the assembly.
- Can second a motion if you want it to be rejected.
- Member seconding does not need to be recognized.
- The name of the person seconding the motion does not need to be included in the minutes.
- A second is not required if a motion is coming from a committee or a board.



PROCESSING A MOTION SUMMARY

Motion Made

Second

Motion Stated

Debate

Vote



CHAIR STATES THE MOTION

- Chair states the exact wording of the motion to be considered by the Assembly.
- Important as everyone may not have heard the maker of the motion.
- If the language of the motion not clear, then it's the duty of the Chair to clarify the motion with the maker before stating it to the Assembly.



PROCESSING A MOTION SUMMARY

Motion Made

Second

Motion Stated

Debate

Vote



DEBATE

- Maker of the motion is entitled to speak first.
- All members are entitled to speak twice.
- Alternate between supporters and opponents of the motion being considered if possible.
- Members who have not spoken should be recognized before members attempting to speak a second time.
- There is no right to respond. Members cannot respond without being recognized again.



DEBATE

- Debate must be germane to the pending motion and be limited to the merits of the motion itself. Speeches in debate should not include remarks about other members personally.
- Rhetorical questions constitute debate.
- Absent a rule, the time limit on speeches in debate is ten minutes per speech. If possible, adopt a shorter time limit.
- You cannot yield your speaking time to another member.



PROCESSING A MOTION SUMMARY

Motion Made

Second

Motion Stated

Debate

Vote



Voting

1. Chair restates the motion being voted on
2. Chair asks for affirmative votes
3. Chair asks for negative votes
4. Chair announces the prevailing side
5. Chair announces whether motion was adopted or defeated (and what will be done as a result)



PROCESSING MOTION QUESTIONS

- 1) Who speaks first on a motion? And, if members want to speak both for and against the motion, then who should be recognized as the second speaker to a motion?
- 2) Can you speak three times on a motion?
- 3) Can you vote against a motion that you seconded?



COMMON MOTIONS

COMMON MOTIONS

Motion	Debatable?	Vote Required?
Adjourn (End the Meeting)	No	Majority
Recess (Take a Break)	No	Majority
Question of Privilege (Request Something)	No	Chair Decides
Lay on the Table (Set Aside for Something More Urgent)	No	Majority
Close Debate (End Debate and Vote Immediately)	No	2/3
Limit or Extend Debate (Adjust Debate Time)	No	2/3
Postpone to a Certain Time (Set to a Specific Time)	Yes but limited	Majority
Refer (Send the Motion to a Committee)	Yes but limited	Majority
Amend (Modify the Motion)	Yes	Majority
Postpone Indefinitely (Dispose Without a Direct Vote)	Yes	Majority
Main Motion (Present Business to the Assembly)	Yes	Majority



TYPES OF MOTIONS

- Main motions (such as a motion to adopt a resolution) are the motions whose introduction brings business before the assembly.
- Subsidiary motions (such as a motion to amend) are motions that assist the assembly in disposing of the main motion.
- Privileged motions (such as a motion to recess) are matters of importance that do not relate to pending business.
- Incidental motions (such as point of order) relate to other motions and need to be decided before business can proceed.



COMMON MOTIONS

Motion	Debatable?	Vote Required?
<u>Adjourn (End the Meeting)</u> ←	<u>No</u>	<u>Majority</u>
<u>Recess (Take a Break)</u> <u>Privileged</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Majority</u>
<u>Question of Privilege (Request Something)</u> ←	<u>No</u>	<u>Chair Decides</u>
<u>Lay on the Table (Set Aside for Something More Urgent)</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Majority</u>
<u>Close Debate (End Debate and Vote Immediately)</u> ←	<u>No</u>	<u>2/3</u>
<u>Limit or Extend Debate (Adjust Debate Time)</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>2/3</u>
<u>Postpone to a Certain Time (Set to a Specific Time)</u>	<u>Yes but limited</u>	<u>Majority</u>
<u>Refer (Send the Motion to a Committee)</u> <u>Subsidiary</u>	<u>Yes but limited</u>	<u>Majority</u>
<u>Amend (Modify the Motion)</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Majority</u>
<u>Postpone Indefinitely (Dispose Without a Direct Vote)</u> ←	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Majority</u>
<u>Main Motion (Present Business to the Assembly)</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Majority</u>



MAIN MOTION

Motion that brings business before the assembly.

- Most common motion. Debatable and requires a majority vote to adopt, unless governing documents or prevailing law require a different vote threshold for adoption.
- Cannot be moved when anything else is pending.
- Should present a new question for the assembly. It is not in order to consider another motion on substantially the same question that was decided earlier in the meeting.



MAIN MOTIONS

- Should not “reaffirm” a previous motion that is still in effect. That has no purpose and creates an ambiguous situation if it fails.
- If the same effect of the motion can be achieved by doing nothing, then a main motion is unnecessary.
- Should be worded to minimize confusion. For example, a motion to take a position against proposed legislation should be worded as “the Association should oppose” rather than “the Association should not support”



COMMON MOTIONS

Motion	Debatable?	Vote Required?
Adjourn (End the Meeting)	No	Majority
Recess (Take a Break)	No	Majority
Question of Privilege (Request Something)	No	Chair Decides
Lay on the Table (Set Aside for Something More Urgent)	No	Majority
Close Debate (End Debate and Vote Immediately)	No	2/3
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MOTION TO POSTPONE INDEFINITELY

Motion to dispose of an item of business without taking a direct position on the matter.

- Debatable and requires a majority vote to adopt.
- Useful when taking a position either for or against an item of business would have undesirable consequences.
- For example, can be used in response to endorsement resolutions for a politician when if members do not want to either take a position for OR against that particularly politician.



COMMON MOTIONS

Motion	Debatable?	Vote Required?
Adjourn (End the Meeting)	No	Majority
Recess (Take a Break)	No	Majority
Question of Privilege (Request Something)	No	Chair Decides
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MOTION TO AMEND

Motion to modify the pending item of business.

- Debatable and requires a majority vote to adopt.
- Four methods of amending are :
 - Inserting words
 - Striking out words
 - Inserting and striking out words
 - Substitution
- Key is to be specific on what words are being changed.



MOTION TO AMEND

- Amendments must relate to the motion being amended.
- Amendments can be hostile (are allowed to change the intent of the motion).
- Amendments cannot render the original motion out of order.
- Amendments cannot be the negative of the current motion (improper to just add “do not” at the beginning of the motion).



MOTION TO AMEND EXAMPLE

If the association is considering purchasing a pet, and the specific motion being considered is:

The Association should purchase a cat.



MOTION TO AMEND EXAMPLE

1

Amend to make this motion cheaper.

2

Amend by striking “cat” and inserting “dog.”

3

Amend by striking “cat” and inserting “pool table.”

4

Amend by inserting “not” before “purchase”.



MOTION TO AMEND EXAMPLE

1

~~Amend to make this motion cheaper.~~

2

Amend by striking “cat” and inserting “dog.”

3

~~Amend by striking “cat” and inserting “pool table.”~~

4

~~Amend by inserting “not” before “purchase”.~~



EXAMPLE AS AMENDED

The Association should purchase a dog.



COMMON MOTIONS

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Recess (Take a Break)	No	Majority
Question of Privilege (Request Something)	No	Chair Decides
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MOTION TO REFER

Motion to send a pending item of business to a committee for that committee's consideration.

- Requires a majority vote to adopt.
- Debatable, but debate must be limited to whether or not the item of business should be referred to a committee and the appropriateness of that particular committee.
- Debate is not proper on the merits of the underlying motion.
- It is appropriate and in order to argue the motion should not be sent to a committee so that it can be decided now.



COMMON MOTIONS

Motion	Debatable?	Vote Required?
Adjourn (End the Meeting)	No	Majority
Recess (Take a Break)	No	Majority
Question of Privilege (Request Something)	No	Chair Decides
Lay on the Table (Set Aside for Something More Urgent)	No	Majority
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MOTION TO POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN TIME

Motion to delay consideration of an item of business until a specific time or until after a certain event. Also, known as the motion to postpone definitely.

- Requires a majority vote to adopt.
- Debatable, but debate is limited to whether the item of business should be postponed.
- Is not in order if it will interfere with the proper handling of the postponed motion. For example, if a contract must be accepted or rejected within the next week, then it is not in order to postpone consideration of that contract until next month.



COMMON MOTIONS

Motion	Debatable?	Vote Required?
Adjourn (End the Meeting)	No	Majority
Recess (Take a Break)	No	Majority
Question of Privilege (Request Something)	No	Chair Decides
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MOTION TO LIMIT OR EXTEND DEBATE

Motion to exercise special control over debate on an item of business or a series of items.

- Requires a two thirds vote to adopt and is not debatable.
- Can extend debate by allowing more or longer speeches.
- Can limit debate by :
 - Reducing the number or length of speeches.
 - Require that debate end at a specific time
 - Require that debate end after a certain amount of time.



COMMON MOTIONS

Motion	Debatable?	Vote Required?
Adjourn (End the Meeting)	No	Majority
Recess (Take a Break)	No	Majority
Question of Privilege (Request Something)	No	Chair Decides
Lay on the Table (Set Aside for Something More Urgent)	No	Majority
Close Debate (End Debate and Vote Immediately)	No	2/3
Limit or Extend Debate (Adjust Debate Time)	No	2/3
Postpone to a Certain Time (Set to a Specific Time)	Yes but limited	Majority
Refer (Send the Motion to a Committee)	Yes but limited	Majority
Amend (Modify the Motion)	Yes	Majority
Postpone Indefinitely (Dispose Without a Direct Vote)	Yes	Majority
Main Motion (Present Business to the Assembly)	Yes	Majority



MOTION TO CLOSE DEBATE

Motion to end debate and bring the item of business to an immediate vote.

- Requires a two thirds vote to adopt and is not debatable.
- Need to take a vote on whether to end debate.
- Prevents the making of most other subsidiary motions.
- Many names for this motion. For example –
 - “I move the previous question.”
 - “I call for the question.”
 - “I move that we vote now.”



COMMON MOTIONS

Motion	Debatable?	Vote Required?
Adjourn (End the Meeting)	No	Majority
Recess (Take a Break)	No	Majority
Question of Privilege (Request Something)	No	Chair Decides
Lay on the Table (Set Aside for Something More Urgent)	No	Majority
Close Debate (End Debate and Vote Immediately)	No	2/3
Limit or Extend Debate (Adjust Debate Time)	No	2/3
Postpone to a Certain Time (Set to a Specific Time)	Yes but limited	Majority
Refer (Send the Motion to a Committee)	Yes but limited	Majority
Amend (Modify the Motion)	Yes	Majority
Postpone Indefinitely (Dispose Without a Direct Vote)	Yes	Majority
Main Motion (Present Business to the Assembly)	Yes	Majority



MOTION TO LAY ON THE TABLE

Motion to set aside the pending item of business when something else of immediate urgency must be addressed.

- Requires a majority vote to adopt and is not debatable.
- Almost always misused. To delay consideration of something, then use the motion to postpone.
- Improper and out of order unless something else is of immediate urgency. Cannot be used to kill an item of business without a direct vote or to suppress an item of business without debate.
- Chair can ask maker of the motion for their rationale.



COMMON MOTIONS

Motion	Debatable?	Vote Required?
Adjourn (End the Meeting)	No	Majority
Recess (Take a Break)	No	Majority
Question of Privilege (Request Something)	No	Chair Decides
Lay on the Table (Set Aside for Something More Urgent)	No	Majority
Close Debate (End Debate and Vote Immediately)	No	2/3
Limit or Extend Debate (Adjust Debate Time)	No	2/3
Postpone to a Certain Time (Set to a Specific Time)	Yes but limited	Majority
Refer (Send the Motion to a Committee)	Yes but limited	Majority
Amend (Modify the Motion)	Yes	Majority
Postpone Indefinitely (Dispose Without a Direct Vote)	Yes	Majority
Main Motion (Present Business to the Assembly)	Yes	Majority



RAISE A QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

Motion to request something either personally or on behalf of the assembly.

- Ruled on by the Chair and does not require a second.
- Typically, is about the conditions of the meeting itself. For example, heating, noise, ventilation, or lighting in the room.
- A common question of privilege concerns how the text of motion should be shared with members, such as distribution in writing or have it displayed on a screen in the front of the room.



COMMON MOTIONS

Motion	Debatable?	Vote Required?
Adjourn (End the Meeting)	No	Majority
Recess (Take a Break)	No	Majority
Question of Privilege (Request Something)	No	Chair Decides
Lay on the Table (Set Aside for Something More Urgent)	No	Majority
Close Debate (End Debate and Vote Immediately)	No	2/3
Limit or Extend Debate (Adjust Debate Time)	No	2/3
Postpone to a Certain Time (Set to a Specific Time)	Yes but limited	Majority
Refer (Send the Motion to a Committee)	Yes but limited	Majority
Amend (Modify the Motion)	Yes	Majority
Postpone Indefinitely (Dispose Without a Direct Vote)	Yes	Majority
Main Motion (Present Business to the Assembly)	Yes	Majority



MOTION TO RECESS

Motion to take a break in the meeting, which does not close the meeting and afterwards business will be resumed at the same point.

- Requires a majority vote to adopt. Not debatable.
- Can be used to allow members to more quickly come to a consensus on an item of business than through subsequent motions and debate.
- For example, if an important but very poorly worded motion is made, then taking a recess (to find a consensus on the best wording) may be faster than considering a series of amendments.



COMMON MOTIONS

Motion	Debatable?	Vote Required?
Adjourn (End the Meeting)	No	Majority
Recess (Take a Break)	No	Majority
Question of Privilege (Request Something)	No	Chair Decides
Lay on the Table (Set Aside for Something More Urgent)	No	Majority
Close Debate (End Debate and Vote Immediately)	No	2/3
Limit or Extend Debate (Adjust Debate Time)	No	2/3
Postpone to a Certain Time (Set to a Specific Time)	Yes but limited	Majority
Refer (Send the Motion to a Committee)	Yes but limited	Majority
Amend (Modify the Motion)	Yes	Majority
Postpone Indefinitely (Dispose Without a Direct Vote)	Yes	Majority
Main Motion (Present Business to the Assembly)	Yes	Majority



MOTION TO ADJOURN

Motion to end the meeting.

- Requires a majority vote to adopt and is not debatable.
- Is not required if agenda sets a specific time for adjournment or all business has been completed.
- Even if adjournment is pending, it is in order for the Chair to inform the assembly of business requiring attention before adjournment, to make announcements, and to set the time for the next meeting.



MOTION QUESTIONS

What is the appropriate motion (if any) to make in each situation-

- 1) You do not want the Association to vote on whether to endorse a particular candidate for mayor.
- 2) You want the meeting to end, so you can leave.
- 3) You want to talk about this proposal next meeting instead of now.
- 4) The Association is considering the budget, and you want less money to be allocated to a specific budget item.
- 5) The room is too cold. You want the heat to be turned up.



Incidental Motions

Incidental motions relate to other motions and need to be decided before business can proceed.

- Each are applicable only in special circumstances and typically must be considered at the time they are made.
- Will not be in order if not raised at the appropriate time.
- An incidental motion has no rank and cannot be assigned a position within the order of precedence.



POINT OF ORDER

A Member can raise a point of order to request that the Chair correct a breach of the rules and for enforcement of the regular rules.

- Can raise a Point of Order if an action is being taken in violation of the rules.
- Ruled on by the Chair without debate.
- Must be raised promptly at the time the breach of the rules occurs. Can interrupt a speaker to make a Point of Order.
- If the Chair is in doubt, then the Chair can refer the Point of Order to the Assembly for decision via a majority vote.



POINT OF ORDER

- Can raise a Point of Order if an action is being taken in violation of any rules, including those contained in the Constitution, Bylaws, and State or Federal law.
- Cannot use a Point of Order to make a motion (improper to say “Point of order, I call the previous question”)
- Cannot use a Point of Order to ask a question.
- Cannot use a Point of Order to correct someone who says something in debate that is wrong.
- Cannot use a Point of Order if you disagree with the Chair’s judgment on the results of a vote (instead must retake the vote).



REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

A request directed to the Chair for information relevant to the business at hand, but not related to parliamentary procedure.

- No second required, not debatable and no vote is required.
- Chair can answer or direct someone else to answer.
- In prior editions of Robert's, this was a "Point of Information," but the name of this request was changed to prevent confusion.
- Not a way for a member to give information.
- Needs to be an actual question, not a rhetorical question.



DIVISION OF THE ASSEMBLY

If a member is in doubt the result of a voice vote, then that member can call for the vote to be taken again as a standing vote.

- Can be requested yelling “Division.” Does not require you to be recognized by the Chair or to have a second.
- Must be done immediately after the results of the vote in question are announced.
- Is not proper if result of a vote is clear.



MOTIONS RELATED TO METHODS OF VOTING

If a member wants a vote to be taken by a different method, then a member can move to take (or retake) a vote as a counted vote, a ballot vote, or by some other method.

- Can be moved before the vote is taken or immediately after the Chair announces the results of the vote. Requires a second. Requires a majority to be adopted.
- Is not debatable, but maker can offer a brief explanation for why the motion is being made.
- Is not in order to move to retake the vote in question by the same method again.
- Is not proper if result of a vote is clear.



POINT OF ORDER QUESTIONS

Is a Point of Order appropriate in these situations?

- 1) You don't want to hear the guest speaker on the adopted agenda.
- 2) You don't think there is a quorum at the meeting anymore.
- 3) Another member in debate misstated your position on the item that is under consideration.
- 4) A guest is speaking in debate.
- 5) The seconder of a motion is arguing against that motion in debate.
- 6) It is after the ending time for the meeting on the adopted agenda.



Precedence

The ranking of motions, and whether a motion is in order or not while other motions are pending.

- The main motion is the lowest ranked motion and is not in order while any other motion is pending.
- For subsidiary and privileged motions, if they are in order depends on what else pending. Use the chart.
- Incidental motions take precedence over all other motions that are pending and are decided immediately



MOTIONS ARE ARRANGED BY PRECEDENCE

Motion

11. Adjourn (End the Meeting)
10. Recess (Take a Break)
9. Question of Privilege (Request Something)
8. Lay on the Table (Set Aside for Something More Urgent)
7. Close Debate (End Debate and Vote Immediately)
6. Limit or Extend Debate (Adjust Debate Time)
5. Postpone to a Certain Time (Set to a Specific Time)
4. Refer (Send the Motion to a Committee)
3. Amend (Modify the Motion)
2. Postpone Indefinitely (Dispose Without a Direct Vote)
1. Main Motion (Present Business to the Assembly)



PRECEDENCE EXAMPLE

A motion to adopt the budget and then a subsidiary motion to refer the budget back to the finance committee is pending.

Which of these motions are in order?

1. A motion to change part of the budget (motion to amend)
2. A motion to vote now (a motion to close debate)
3. A motion to take a 30-minute break (motion to recess)



PRECEDENCE EXAMPLE

Common Motion

11. Adjourn (End the Meeting)
10. Recess (Take a Break) ← Motion #3
9. Question of Privilege (Request Something)
8. Lay on the Table (Set Aside for Something More Urgent)
7. Close Debate (End Debate and Vote Immediately) ← Motion #2
6. Limit or Extend Debate (Adjust Debate Time)
5. Postpone to a Certain Time (Set to a Specific Time)
4. Refer (Send the Motion to a Committee) ← Motion to send budget to finance
3. Amend (Modify the Motion) ← Motion #1
2. Postpone Indefinitely (Dispose Without a Direct Vote)
1. Main Motion (Present Business to the Assembly) ← Motion to adopt the budget



PRECEDENCE EXAMPLE

Common Motion

11. Adjourn (End the Meeting)
10. Recess (Take a Break) ← Motion #3 – IN ORDER
9. Question of Privilege (Request Something)
8. Lay on the Table (Set Aside for Something More Urgent)
7. Close Debate (End Debate and Vote Immediately) ← Motion #2 – IN ORDER
6. Limit or Extend Debate (Adjust Debate Time)
5. Postpone to a Certain Time (Set to a Specific Time)
4. Refer (Send the Motion to a Committee) ← Motion to refer budget to finance
3. Amend (Modify the Motion) ← Motion #1 – OUT OF ORDER
2. Postpone Indefinitely (Dispose Without a Direct Vote)
1. Main Motion (Present Business to the Assembly) ← Motion to adopt the budget





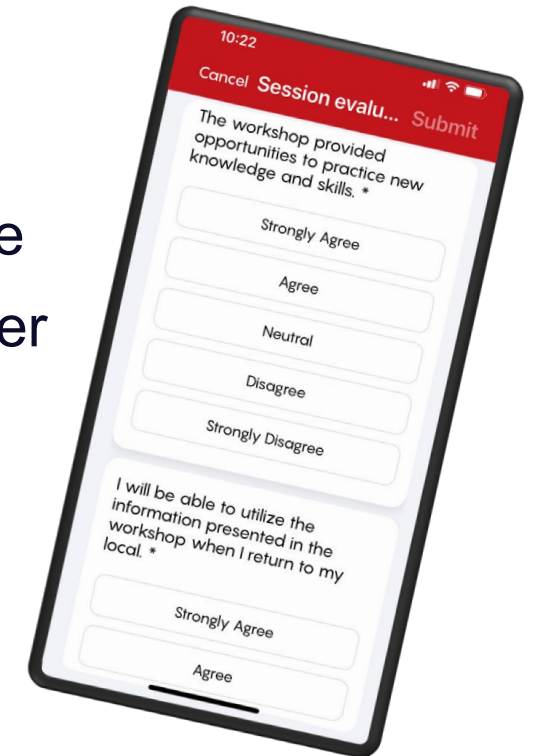
THANK YOU!
ANY QUESTIONS?



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