

UVLSRPC Commission Meeting Etiquette

"The application of parliamentary law is the best method yet devised to enable assemblies of any size, with due regard for every member's opinion, to arrive at the general will on the maximum number of questions of varying complexity in a minimum amount of time and under all kinds of internal climate ranging from total harmony to hardened or impassioned division of opinion."

— Robert's Rules of Order, 10th Edition

As adopted in the By-laws, "Except where these bylaws otherwise provide, Robert's Rules of Order, As Revised, shall govern."

The following paraphrased Rules of Order cover most of the discussions in our meetings

1. No member may speak until the chair recognizes them.
2. Discussion must be relevant to the pending question (the agenda).
3. Members must address the chair, not other members.
4. All members must have the opportunity to speak before a member may speak a second time.
5. If you have heard enough discussion, move to close the debate or "call the question." If passed, this cuts off discussion and brings the assembly to a vote on the pending question only. It requires a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote.
6. You may interrupt a speaker for these reasons only:
 - to get information about the business – Point of Information
 - to get information about rules – Parliamentary Inquiry
 - if you cannot hear, safety reasons, comfort, etc. – Question of Privilege
 - if you see a breach of the rules – Point of Order
 - if you disagree with the chair's ruling – Appeal
 - if you disagree with a call for Unanimous Consent – Object
7. The chair will appoint a parliamentarian if there is a challenge to any rule or procedure.

Robert's Rules of Order, Quick Guide

GLOSSARY

- **Abstain** - not to vote at all
- **Adjourn** - close the meeting
- **Executive Session** - to discuss confidential matters, requires approval of 2/3 of present voting members, not to be used to make policy decisions, only voting and executive members of the assembly may be in attendance unless the assembly invites community members
- **Friendly Amendment** - amendment to enhance a motion that must be adopted by the body by either a simple majority vote or unanimous consent
- **Lay on the Table** - put a motion aside temporarily when something else of immediate urgency comes up
- **Objection to the Consideration of a Question** - to object to the discussion of a main motion even being discussed
- **Obtain the floor** - recognition from the chair to speak in debate
- **Point of Information or Point of Parliamentary Inquiry** - Used to gain information not to make a point, not about procedure
- **Point of Order** - To address a breach of the rules or procedures
- **Point of Privilege** - request for immediate attention on a matter that directly affects members, such as safety or comfort
- **Postpone Indefinitely** - the group has agreed not to decide, and the matter cannot be brought up again at the same meeting, used when a member wishes to kill a main motion and avoid a direct vote on the question, cannot be used with a pending motion to Amend
- **Quorum** - a number of the voting members of the Assembly required to conduct business
- **Reconsider** - to bring a motion from earlier in the meeting back on the floor as if a vote had never occurred, may only be done by someone on the "winning" side of the motion, requires a majority
- **Rescind** - to change an action from an earlier meeting, only needs a majority approval if previous written notice is given, needs $\frac{2}{3}$ if no notice is given
- **Refer to a Committee** - send a resolution back to a committee for further discussion or consideration
- **Second** - agreement that motion should be considered

Robert's Rules of Order, Quick Guide

- **Secondary Motion** - subsidiary motions, privileged motions, and incidental motions must be resolved before a main motion can be considered
- **Simple Majority** - over half of all ballots cast
- **Table** - to put aside indefinitely without taking any action on it (can be brought up again at any time as long as nothing else is currently being discussed)
- **Unanimous Consent** - No opposition to an action from any voting member of the Assembly
- **Withdrawing a Motion** - can be done before the chair states the motion
- **Yield My Time to the Chair (or to someone else)** - If the chair has recognized you to speak and no longer wants to speak, you can yield your time back to the chair or turn the floor over to any other member

CLASSIFICATIONS OF RESOLUTIONS

ACTIONS OF THE ASSEMBLY

- **Legislation**- Action of the Assembly to conduct its legislative and policy-making functions
- **Internal Policy Resolution**- Action to enact internal rule changes and to make amendments to the Assembly Charter
- **Investigation**-Action of the Assembly to gain information on issues pertinent to its purview
- **Recommendation**- Action of the Assembly expressing the recommendation in policy areas over which the Assembly, through its Charter, may or may not have policy-making power
- **Sense-of-the-Body**- Expression of the opinion of the Assembly regarding a matter of constituent concern
- **Calls for a Sense of the Community Referendum**- Action of the Assembly to determine community opinion regarding matters of constituent concern

MOTIONS

- Anyone eligible to vote can make a motion
 - Members must obtain the floor by being recognized by the chair
 - Maker of the motion has the right to speak first
 - Maker cannot speak against their motion, BUT they can vote against it

Robert's Rules of Order, Quick Guide

- All motions need to be seconded
- Discussion must be relevant to the current motion until it is voted on
- Typical Proceedings of a Motion
 - A member makes a motion
 - Another voting member seconds a motion
 - All members can debate the current question
 - The chair restates the exact motion and takes the vote
 - The chair or secretary announces the result of the vote
- Amending A Motion or Resolution
 - Move to Amend
 - By adding a word
 - Striking a word
 - Striking and inserting words

SUSPENDING THE RULES

- Only pertains to Roberts Rules and Standing Rules
- Should be used rarely (the rules are there for a reason)
- Requires a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote of members present

APPEALING A RULING BY THE CHAIR

- Requires a majority vote of the members present to overturn a decision
- “Yes” Vote- sustains the decision of the chair
- “No” Vote- overturns the decision of the chair

ABSTENTIONS

- # Of Abstentions > # Of Votes in Favor = RESOLUTION FAILS
- Members can abstain from voting at any regularly scheduled meeting or special meeting

Robert's Rules of Order, Quick Guide

PROXY VOTES

- Only excused voting members can cast a proxy vote
- Can only be used on “aye” or “nay” votes on Old Business Resolutions
- Proxies must be in writing directed to the Chair
- Proxies do not count as part of quorum

DISSENT

- Opposition to an action
- The chair does not have to give you the opportunity to explain your dissent
 - If the chair gives you the opportunity to explain your dissent you may only explain why conversation should be continued
 - Example: You believe there is still more to discuss before the vote is called
 - NOT: To share your opinion on the topic