

BASICS OF ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER FOR ANY LIONS MEETING

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This information will present the **basics of Robert's Rules**. Knowledge of these rules will assist in, more efficiently, any and all lion's meetings and make easier the administration of any and all lion's affairs.

Points to Remember

Profanity is not appropriate.
Business is taken up one item at a time.
Always promote courtesy, justice, impartiality and equality of all members.
The rules on **members-in-good-standing** must be respected.
The majority rules, but the rights of the individual, the minority and absent members are protected.
Meetings will follow a prescribed agenda.
Only one Main Motion can be pending at a time. Secondary motions may be made for a variety of reasons.
Only **ONE** member may be assigned the floor at a time.
Members will take turns speaking, with equal representation from all sides of an issue.
Members take turns speaking and no member may speak again until all others that wish to have spoken on an issue.
Members are limited to speaking only twice on any given motion (*except in committee of the whole*).
The chair may limit the period to speak on an issue depending on the number of members who signified to speak.
Members address **ALL** comments through the chair; cross-talking is not permitted.
Discussion must focus on the issue, not personalities or the motives of other members.
The chair does not take sides during discussion and votes only when electing officers, to break a tie or to break a two-third's vote.
The chair does not engage in the debate of a motion unless he/she relinquishes the chair to another officer or a member that wishes not to speak on the motion.

The chair directs discussion to assure equal representation of all sides.

Members may call for a vote by ballot on any motion.

All work is conducted in the open rather than secretly to the membership.

The Order of Business

The meeting is called to order precisely at the specified time.

Roll call.

Consent calendar (in case there is) are called up.

The minutes of the previous meeting are read and approved.

Reports of officers, boards and committees are read and discussed.

The reports of *special committees* are read and discussed.

Any special orders are presented.

Old (unfinished) business and general orders are discussed.

New business is discussed.

Adjournment.

Quorum

Meetings are conducted only after it has been established that a quorum is present. A quorum does not necessarily mean majority, it is the number of members required as specified in the C&BL. In the cabinet meeting, a quorum exists when majority of the cabinet members in good standing are present at the meeting.

It is legal to call the meeting to order even without quorum however the only action that can be taken in the absence of a quorum is to fix the time to which to adjourn, adjourn, recess, or to take measures to obtain a quorum.

Types of Motions

A main motion. Discussion of the main motion can be interrupted for a secondary motion. Discussion then focuses on the secondary

motion only and must be resolved before discussion may return to the main motion.

Secondary motions: Subsidiary.

These assist the members in helping decide what to do with the main motion and are ranked in order of importance (listed here in order from highest to lowest ranking).

- Lay on the Table (set aside temporarily)
- Previous Question (stops debate and moves to immediate vote)
- Limit or Extend the debate
- Postpone consideration to a certain time (put off to another time)
- Refer to a committee (let a committee investigate further)
- Amend (change a motion)
- Postpone Indefinitely (kills a motion)

Secondary Motions: Privileged.

Relate not to the pending main motion, but to special matters of immediate importance, ranked here in order of importance (listed from highest to lowest).

- Fix the time to which to adjourn (sets a time to continue the meeting)
- Adjourn (ends the meeting)
- Recess (takes a break in the meeting)
- Raise a question of privilege (for the welfare of the assembly or individual)
- Call for the orders of the day (sticks to the agenda)

Secondary Motions: Incidental.

These deal with questions of procedure arising from the pending business, again ranked here in order of importance (listed highest to lowest).

- Point of Order (calls something against the rules)
- Appeal (disagrees with a ruling of the chair)
- Division of the Assembly (question the result of a vote)

- Requests and Inquiries (asks a question)
- Suspend the Rules (temporarily puts aside a standing rule of order)
- Division of the Question (divides a motion into two or more questions or motions)

The Order of Making Motions

To assure only one motion is discussed at a time, various motions are rank ordered as listed below. The most important motions are listed here first and must be resolved before a lower ranked motion can be entertained. The order of making motions listed here are acted on (voted) in descending order from the highest to the lowest. Motions are made in order from the lowest to the highest.

- Fix the time to which to adjourn
- Adjourn
- Recess
- Raise a question of privilege
- Call for the orders of the day
- Lay on the table
- Previous Question
- Limit or extend limits of debate
- Postpone to a certain time
- Refer to committee
- Amend
- Postpone indefinitely
- Main motion

To debate or not to debate

Certain motions can be debated while others cannot. The following list presents both types.

Debatable (discussion allowed before the vote)

- Main Motions
- Postpone Indefinitely
- Amend
- Refer to Committee
- Postpone to a certain time
- Appeal from the decision of the chair
- Rescind
- Amend something previously adopted
- Reconsider
- Recess (as an incidental motion)
- Fix the time to which to adjourn (as an incidental main motion)

Not Debatable (moves to an immediate vote)

- Limit or extend the limits of debate
- Previous question
- Lay on the table
- Call for the orders of the day
- Raise a question of privilege
- Recess
- Adjourn
- Fix the time to adjourn
- Point of order
- Withdraw a motion
- Suspend the rules (*rules prescribed in the C&BL cannot be suspended no matter how large the votes are*)
- Object to consideration of the motion
- Division of the assembly
- Division of the question
- Incidental motions relating to voting, when the subject is pending
- Dispense with the reading of the minutes

A simple vs. a two-third's vote

The following table presents motions that require a simple majority (50% plus 1 of the eligible voting members present when a quorum is present, abstentions excluded) or a two-thirds (two-thirds of the eligible voting members present when a quorum is present, abstentions excluded).

Simple Majority

- Fix the time to which to adjourn
- Adjourn
- Recess
- Lay on the table
- Refer to a committee
- Amend
- Postpone indefinitely
- A main motion
- Request permission to withdraw a question
- Take from the table
- Reconsider
- Rescind
- Amend something adopted
- Reopen nominations

Two-thirds vote

- Previous question (close debate)
- Limit or extend debate
- Close nominations

- Object to the consideration of a question
- Suspend the rules (*rules prescribed in the C&BL cannot be suspended no matter how large the votes are*)

Proper Terminology

While proper terminology at times sounds humorous, it is necessary to minimize questions or confusion.

- To obtain the floor: **Mr. President or Chairman....** (state while standing)
- To make a motion: **I move that..**
- Taking the vote: All those in favor say "**Aye**".....Those opposed say "**Nay**"
- Division (when doubting the announced result of a vote): **Division**
- **Seriatim:** is to review or discuss and consider by paragraph, one after the other
- To postpone indefinitely (to kill a motion): **I move the motion be postponed indefinitely.**
- To amend a motion: **I move to amend the motion by** (adding or subtracting words).
- To close debate: **I move the previous question.....**

To present other motions or calls for order, the previous statements can be modified in such a way as to present the issues efficiently and effectively.

To Commit or Refer

An assembly may not tackle some issues or business unless referred to a committee. To commit or refer is generally used to send a pending question to relatively small group of selected persons- a committee- so that the question maybe carefully investigated and put into better condition for the assembly to consider. When we commit or refer, we either "go into committee of the whole"; or "go into quasi committee of the whole"; or "consider informally."