

1 Parliamentary Procedure Basics

(RONR = *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, 11th edition)

2 **PURPOSE.** The purpose of parliamentary procedure is to carry out the wishes of the assembly in an orderly manner,
3 to expedite business, and to insure fairness to all – the majority, the minority, individual members, absentees, and
4 the organization as a whole. (RONR p. li)

5 **AGENDA.** The chair will attempt to follow the printed agenda as closely as possible.

6 **MOTIONS.** A main motion (or overture or resolution) is how business is brought to the assembly. Secondary
7 motions normally take precedence over main motions and generally help the assembly resolve a main motion.

8 **SECONDING A MOTION.** “A *second* implies that the *seconder* agrees that the motion *should come before the*
9 *meeting*, not that he necessarily favors the motion.” (RONR p. 36, l. 9) A motion “made by...committee (of more
10 than one) requires no second from the floor...” (RONR p. 36, l. 15) While the proposed Standing Rules require
11 that nominations from the floor be seconded, normally a second is not needed. (RONR p. 432 l. 6)

12 **DEBATE.** One person speaks at a time and one motion is debated at a time. Unused time does not transfer.

13 **SECONDARY MOTIONS.** Listed below are some common secondary motions:

14 A. **AMEND.** A *primary* amendment proposes to improve a main motion or make it more likely to be adopted. A
15 *secondary* amendment proposes to amend a primary amendment. A *tertiary* amendment is not permitted. (In
16 other words, amending an amendment is permitted, but beyond that is not.) To propose an amendment, a
17 voting delegate may say, “*I move to amend by ...*”

18 1. “...*striking...*” simple words, a sentence, a paragraph, or several paragraphs.

19 2. “...*inserting...*” (in front of or within the motion) or “...*adding...*” (at the end of the motion) simple
20 words, a sentence, a paragraph, or several paragraphs.

21 3. “...*striking and inserting...*” simple words within a motion. Use “...*substituting...*” for a sentence, a
22 paragraph, or several paragraphs.

23 B. **REQUEST FOR INFORMATION** need not be seconded and is in order any time except during a vote. A
24 delegate may call out without recognition, “Mr. Chairman, I have a *request for information*,” and wait to be
25 recognized. (A *request for information* replaces *point of information* in previous editions of RONR; the
26 earlier phrasing was too often misused to *provide* rather than to *request* information.)

27 C. **PREVIOUS QUESTION.** (CALL THE QUESTION) Voting delegates may *move the previous question* on
28 any pending motion. Wait in line and say after recognition (name, church, location) , “I move *the previous*
29 *question*.” (“I call the question.”) It must be seconded, is not debatable and requires a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote. If *the*
30 *previous question* is adopted, debate stops and a vote is taken on the pending motion.

31 D. **POINT OF ORDER** is in order anytime rules may have been broken, need not be seconded, and ordinarily
32 must be made at the time of an infraction. A voting delegate may call out without recognition, “Mr.
33 Chairman, *point of order!*” and wait to be recognized.

34 E. **CALL FOR ORDERS OF THE DAY.** If the time has arrived for an agenda item, a voting delegate may call
35 out without recognition, “Mr. Chairman, I *call for orders of the day!*” Orders of the day must be adhered to
36 unless the assembly sets them aside with a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote.

37 **UNANIMOUS CONSENT.** “In cases where there seems to be no opposition...time can often be saved by
38 using...*unanimous consent*” without the formality a motion. (RONR p. 54 l. 13) The chair states “If there is no
39 objection to...,” followed by the proposed action, and then pauses. If no member objects, the action is decided. If
40 any member objects by calling out, “I object!” the chair must state the motion and put it to a vote.

41 **MINUTES.** Minutes are “the official record of the proceedings” of the convention. (RONR p. 468 l. 14) The Board of
42 Directors is scheduled to approve the minutes of the convention at its June meeting.

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