

Parliamentary Procedure for Locals of the International Association of Heat and Frost Insulators and Allied Workers



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Why Robert's Rules of Order?

Article XIX, Section 21 of the International Constitution: Local unions shall decide all questions of parliamentary nature on which the Constitution of the International Association is silent, in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

- **What is the goal of the meeting? To do the work of the Union and to assure the rights of every member.** Rules of Order don't take away member rights ... they protect the rights of participation and to advocate for a member's preferences.
- Robert's Rules is **subordinate to other laws and governance documents:** Federal and/or State law; the International and/or National Constitution(s); the Local's Bylaws; and the Local's Special Rules of Order.
- Robert's addresses a myriad of administrative and organizational issues (like elections, bylaws, charges and trials, electronic meetings, etc.), but here **we are looking only at how it applies to meetings.**

Rules of Order

- Rules from Robert's – No need to adopt them – They are yours already! But you can print and distribute the rules to your members.
- These meeting rules can be Suspended during a meeting with a 2/3 vote.
- They can be Amended permanently with previous notice if they do not conflict with the International Constitution.

The International Constitution
Selected Provisions

Read the entire document, but relative to duties under Robert's Rules of Order, pay particular attention to:

- ❖ **ARTICLE XIX – LOCAL UNIONS**
- ❖ **ARTICLE XX – NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS**
- ❖ **ARTICLE XXI – LOCAL UNION OFFICERS**
- ❖ **ARTICLE XXIV – OFFENSES AND CHARGES**
- ❖ **ARTICLE SSV – TRIALS AND CHARGES**
- ❖ **ARTICLE XIII – INITIATION FEES, FINES, ASSESSMENTS
AND DUES**

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

- ❖ **Article XIX, Section 12 of the International Constitution states that: Special local union meetings can be called by the president, either with the approval of the local union Executive Board or with a petition signed by at least one-tenth (1/10) of the good-standing local union membership which in no instance shall number less than five (5), with reasonable advance notice given to all members of the time, place and purpose of said special meeting.**
- ❖ **Article XIX, Section 19 provides that: Local unions shall hold one (1) regular meeting monthly to transact business. Seven (7) members shall constitute a quorum at local union meetings. All initiation fees, re registration fees, reinstatement fees, assessments, fines, dues and other monies received shall be accounted for at these meetings, which shall be held at the regular time and place of meeting or such other time and place as designated by the president and of which due notice is given the membership.**

Notices and Agendas for Regular and Special Meetings

What to include in a meeting notice

- ❖ **Always include**: the **name** of the union / the **body that is meeting** (committee, executive committee, board of directors, membership) / the **type of meeting** (regular or special) / **where the meeting will be held** / if it will be an **electronic meeting**, include the platform invitation with the log-in link, the meeting i.d. number and the password, if there will be one.
- ❖ **The agenda** may be printed in the bylaws or constitution; whether it is printed in the bylaws or not, the members have the right to change the order of business. It will take a 2/3 vote.
- ❖ **Special Meetings can only be held if your bylaws authorize special meetings** – and that applies to Executive Committee, Board of Directors, Committees, and Membership.
- ❖ When it is a **Special Meeting, the notice must include the reasons for the meeting**. It is important to put the **exact language** of motions that will be considered for two reasons: (1) no other items can be raised at the meeting; and, (2) when previous notice is required on an item, it cannot be amended at the meeting beyond the scope of what was published. This keeps action from being wildly outrageous.,

Components of a Meeting Internaional Constitution

- Call to Order.
- Call of Roll.
- Minutes of Previous Meeting.
- Reports of Executive Board.
- Communications and Bills.
- Reports of Officers.
- Reports of Committees.
- Initiation of New Members.
- Unfinished Business.
- New Business.
- Election and Installation of Officers.
- Good and Welfare.
- Receipts and Expenditures.
- Adjournment.

Reports

- ❖ Present **Officer Reports** in the order the Officers are listed in the bylaws.
- ❖ **Standing Committee Reports** in the order they are listed in the Bylaws.
- ❖ **Special Committee Reports** in the order the Committees were established.
- ❖ **Reports may not be amended** - They merely provide information.
- ❖ **It is not necessary to adopt or approve reports** – if you feel compelled, you can entertain a motion to receive a report.
- ❖ **If Reports contain Recommendations**, be sure to adopt the Recommendation separately through a motion to do so.

Conducting Business

Parliamentary procedure is an orderly process designed to (1) **Control conflict** between the majority and the minority on an issue; (2) **Assure the minority a voice**; and, (3) **Ultimately provide for majority rule**.

This is done by making **motions** and processing those motions through **debate**. The motion, then, is the **basis of all action/voting at a meeting**; is the **cornerstone of all rules of order**; and, happens as follows:

1. **Recognition**
2. **Make A Motion - "I Move That ..."**
3. **Seconding**
4. **Stating The Motion**
5. **Debate**
6. **Subsidiary Motions**
7. **Closing Debate**
8. **Putting the Question**
9. **Voting**
10. **Announcing the Results**
11. **Amendments**
12. **Point Of Order**
13. **Appeal from the Decision of the Chair**
14. **Request for Information.**

Standing Rules of Order from Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised

1. After a motion has been made and seconded, and prior to debate, the motion shall be restated by the chair.
2. The maker of a motion shall be given the first opportunity to speak on that motion.
3. No member shall speak in debate longer than ten minutes at one time, unless permission is granted by a majority of those voting. (Most organizations change this to 3 or 5 minutes)
4. No member shall speak in debate a second time unless all who wish to speak on the question have spoken.
5. No member shall speak in debate more than twice to the same question during the same meeting, unless permission is granted by a majority of those voting.
6. A member may not yield the microphone or speaking time to another member for the unused portion of his allotted time.
7. After debate has been closed and prior to voting, the motion shall be restated by the chair.
8. A Division may be called for by one member or by the Chair. Once called for by a member, a new vote must be taken by the Chair. The new count will escalate from a voice vote to a show of hands or a standing count. A teller count will require a motion, a second, and a majority vote. The Chair, however, may call for a teller count at will if he/she is uncertain about the vote.
9. A Secret Ballot vote shall be taken only after a motion has been made, seconded, and approval by a majority of those voting.
10. A Roll Call vote shall be taken only after a motion has been approved by a majority of those voting. The motion for a Roll Call vote shall be Out of Order when a motion for a Secret Ballot is pending or has been adopted.
11. The motion to Reconsider any motion which may be reconsidered, must be made at the same meeting at which the original motion was made and acted upon, and may only be made by a person who voted on the prevailing side or who abstained..

Standing Rules of Order - continued

12. The motion to Lay on the Table shall be in order only when it is being made to take up business of an emergency or immediate nature.

13. The Order of Business may be amended by a two-thirds vote.

14. These Standing Rules may be suspended by a two-thirds vote.

15. Non-voting members or guests shall be seated separately from voting members at meetings.

16. Executive Session may be called by a majority of those voting.

17. Points of Order may be made by any member, when appropriate, and the Chair shall make a ruling on the Point of Order.

18. Appeals from the Decision of the Chair may be made by any member, when appropriate; the decision of the Chair shall be upheld by a majority or a tie vote.

19. The Chair or any other member may “call a member to order” in the event the member is breaching order and decorum. The Chair will ask the member to cease and to be seated

20. The Chair can vote as any other member when the vote is by ballot. In all other cases, the Chair may vote when one vote may affect the result. **(Caution: many bylaws restrict the Chair to voting only to break a tie.)**

Some additional Rules of Order” not required by RRNR, but which the organization may wish to consider, are:

- The maker of a motion shall, prior to stating the motion, identify him/herself by name.
- All substantive motions shall be submitted in writing, prior to their being made, and shall be signed by the maker.
- New business items shall be submitted in writing prior the opening of New Business.
- New business items not acted upon or referred prior to the adjournment of the meeting will be the first items of New Business at the next regular meeting.

CHART OF PARLIAMENTARY MOTIONS
ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER, NEWLY REVISED

	Motion	Purpose	Inter-rupt	Needs a Second	Debate -able	Amend -able	Vote Required	Recon-sider
14	Fix The Time At Which To Adjourn	To arrange the time/date of the next meeting	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	Yes
13	Adjourn (When No Previously Set Time)	To end/dismiss the meeting	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
12	Recess (Privileged Only If A Question is Pending)	To dismiss the meeting for a certain amount of time	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
11	Raise A Question Of Privilege	To make an urgent request or motion re: rights or privileges	Yes	No	No	No	Chair	No
10	Call For The Orders Of The Day	Requires that business conform to the Agenda	Yes	No	No	No	None	No
9	Lay On The Table	To temporarily postpone item	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
8	Call For The Previous Question	To close debate and vote immediately on motion	No	Yes	No	No	2/3	No
7	Limit Or Extend Debate	To change debate by time and/or number of speakers	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3	Yes
6	Postpone To A Certain Time	To defer action to a specific time, date, or following a specific item	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
5	Refer To Committee	To send a motion to a group for research, recommendations, etc.	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
4	Amend an Amendment (Secondary)	To modify the wording of a pending amendment to a main motion	No	Yes	If MM is	No	Majority	Yes
3	Amend The Main Motion (Primary)	To modify the wording of a main motion	No	Yes	If MM is	Yes	Majority	Yes
2	Postpone Indefinitely	To decline action on a main motion (kills adoption for the rest of the meeting)	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	Affirmative Vote Only
1	Main Motion Reconsider Rescind Take From The Table	To bring business to group To bring back a main motion To change a previous action To take back to act upon	No No No No	Yes Yes Yes Yes	Yes Yes Yes No	Yes No Yes No	Majority Majority Majority* Majority	Yes No Failed Only No
	Appeal From The Decision Of The Chair	Allows the members to make final decision on Chair's ruling	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	Yes
	Suspend The Rules	To suspend the Rules if no conflict with Bylaws	No	Yes	No	No	2/3	No
	Object To Consideration	To object, must be made before debate begins	Yes	No	No	No	2/3	Negative Vote Only
	Point Of Order	Call on the Chair for a ruling or enforcement of the rules	Yes	No	No	No	Chair	No
	Parliamentary Inquiry & Request for Information	To request information on parliamentary rules or for data in order to vote on the motion	Yes	No	No	No	None	No
	Modify Or Withdraw A Motion	To grant maker permission to modify or withdraw a motion	Yes	Yes, if maker	No	No	Majority	Negative Vote Only
	Divide A Motion	To consider a motion in separate parts	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
	Division of the House	Call for verification of a vote by taking a new vote at next level	Yes	No	No	No	New vote: on demand	No
	Ballot Vote or Roll Call Vote	Call for secret or roll call vote	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	Yes

Motions Most Often Used

1. Main Motions
2. Amending Motions
3. Request for Information
4. Parliamentary Inquiry
5. Point of Order
6. Appeal from the Ruling of the Chair
7. Question of Privilege
8. Division of the Assembly
9. Modify or Withdraw a Motion
10. Rescind

11. Reconsider
12. Postpone Indefinitely
13. Postpone to a Certain Time
14. Lay on the Table
15. Take from the Table
16. Refer to Committee
17. Call for the Orders of the Day
18. Limit or Extend Debate
19. Recess
20. Adjourn
21. Object to Consideration

MAIN MOTIONS

1. A Main Motion is an idea or a proposal that a member puts forward and wants the meeting to adopt.
2. There should be no debate unless there is a Main Motion pending.
3. To put a Main Motion before an assembly, the maker should start with "I move that ..." after being recognized by the Chair.
4. The Chair should insist that the motion make sense.
5. If the motion is substantive, then the Chair should request it in writing, both for the Secretary and so the Chair can read it back prior to the vote.
6. A "resolution" is a Main Motion.
7. The maker of the Main Motion is always called on first to debate.
8. The maker of a motion may vote against his/her own motion, but not speak against his/her own motion.

AMENDING MOTIONS

1. Amendments are made to improve or change a motion made to the liking of the member.
2. There can be no more than two levels of amendments on top of a Main Motion and the motions are voted on in the reverse order in which they were made.
3. The amendment must be germane to the Main Motion (relevant to the general intent of the motion, not the specific details) but need not be friendly.
4. Amendments are made in three basic ways:
 - By inserting or adding consecutive words.
 - By striking or deleting consecutive words.
 - By both deleting and inserting consecutive words.
5. When an amendment becomes longer than a paragraph, then a Motion to Amend by Substitution (amend by substitution) should be used. This motion is handled the same as an amendment.
6. Votes to amend or substitute must not be considered final votes on a Main Motion. If a motion to amend is adopted, then the Main Motion must be voted on in the form to which it was changed by the adopted amendment.
7. Even if the Main Motion being amended requires a 2/3 vote, the motion to amend or substitute the Main Motion only requires a majority.
8. Amendments to a motion requiring previous notice may only be amended within the scope of the notice.
9. Do not confuse amendments, of which there may only be two layers to Main Motions, with other subsidiary motions. Subsidiary motions are not limited to a specific number, but can only be made if the immediately pending question is lower in the Order of Precedence than the motion to be made.
10. There are special rules for amending anything that required "previous notice," such as by-law amendments. Amendments may be made but must be within the scope of the current language and what was "published."

POINT OF ORDER

1. A Point of Order can be raised if the Chair
 - overlooks the fact that the rules and governance documents of the organization or a parent organization are being violated, as well as the general laws of the local, state, or federal government;
 - fails to rule out of order a main motion that presents substantially the same question as a motion that was finally disposed of earlier in the same session (there are exceptions which use the motions to Reconsider and to Rescind) or motions that have been temporarily disposed of;
 - fails to rule out of order a Main Motion is outside of the society's objectives as defined by the Constitution or Bylaws;
 - assigns the floor to the wrong person;
 - fails to rule out of order a motion that is outside the announced purpose for which a special meeting has been announced;
 - fails to conform to the agenda or order of the day; or
 - fails to rule out of order a Main Motion that is contentious or otherwise objectionable, that is embarrassing or insulting in a personal sense to members or others.
2. Points of Order must be made immediately, except when the breach is of a continuing nature.
3. When a Point of Order is made, the Chair must rule promptly – "Your point is well taken and . . ." or "The point is not well taken and . . ."
4. If a second Point of Order is made before the Chair has an opportunity to rule on the first Point of Order, the Chair may say "Please hold your Point until the Chair has ruled on the first Point."
5. If the Chair is in doubt on how to rule on a Point of Order, he/she may submit the Point of Order to the assembly for a vote. If so, the Point of Order then becomes debatable and the Chair may debate.

APPEAL FROM THE DECISION OF THE CHAIR

1. Although the Chair has the responsibility for enforcing the rules, any member who believes he/she has noticed a case where the Chair is failing to do so can, at the time the breach occurs, call attention to it by making a Point of Order; the effect is to require the Chair to make a ruling on the question involved. An appeal may only be made on a Point of Order; a Point must be raised and ruled on by the Chair before an appeal can be made.

2. If a member disagrees with a ruling of the Chair affecting any substantial question, the member should not hesitate to appeal. Remember, an appeal is applicable only to a ruling by the Chair on a Point of Order. Any two members, by moving and seconding an Appeal immediately after the Chair has made a ruling, can require the Chair to submit the matter to a vote of the assembly.

3. An appeal is in order when another member has the floor, but the appeal must be made at the time of the ruling. If any debate or business has intervened, it is too late to appeal.

4. An Appeal is debatable unless it (a) relates to indecorum or a transgression of the rules of speaking; (b) relates to the priority of business; or (c) is made while the immediately pending question is undebatable.

5. The Chair need not leave the Chair in order to debate in an appeal. Members may only debate once in an appeal, but the Chair may speak twice; the Chair may speak first on the issue and may speak again at the close of debate. In addition, the Chair may, during debate, answer arguments and provide rationale in response to debate.

REFER TO COMMITTEE

1. The Motion to Refer to Committee can be made in either the qualified or unqualified form.
2. Motions can be referred to **standing committees** (established by the Bylaws with ongoing existence) or to **Special or Ad Hoc committees** that are created for a specific task and become non-existent when that task is completed.
3. When a Main Motion is referred to committee, **all pending amendments accompany it to committee.**
4. The committee reports back and the group **merely receives the report**, unless there is a **specific motion to adopt any recommendations within the report**, which would be voted separately at that time.
5. A committee's report cannot be amended by the group; it is merely "received."

RESCIND

1. The Motion to Rescind is used to nullify or negate a Main Motion adopted earlier.
2. The Motion to Rescind
 - may be made immediately, provided that the question cannot be reached by the motion to Reconsider,
 - may only be made once at each meeting: (Robert says that an assembly should only be asked to consider the same subject matter once at each meeting – with the exception of "Reconsider")
 - may be made forever; that is, once at each meeting forever, except it cannot cancel or countermand action already taken.
3. Part of a motion can be rescinded.
4. A majority vote is required to Rescind if previous notice of the intention to Rescind was provided: a two-thirds vote is required if no previous notice was provided.
5. Previous Notice may be given by any member, regardless of how they voted on an issue, of their intent to move to rescind an action at the next meeting.

RECONSIDER

1. To Reconsider a motion is the only exception to the rule that the assembly can only be asked to consider a motion once at each meeting.
2. Only someone who voted on the prevailing side (the side that won) can move to Reconsider.
3. The person who seconds the motion to Reconsider does not have to have voted on the prevailing side.
4. A person who abstained on the motion can be the mover to Reconsider, but only in Committees.
5. Reconsider may interrupt other business. The Chair would ask if there is a second, and then go on to complete the business that was interrupted with the motion to Reconsider. After completion of that item, the motion to Reconsider will then be taken up.
6. The motion to Reconsider:
 - may be made immediately after the vote on the motion.
 - may be made only until the end of the meeting where the motion was made, unless it is a multi-session meeting when the motion may be made the next day after the original vote was taken.
 - always requires a majority vote – even if the original motion required a two-thirds or more.
7. A member who voted on the losing side and who may believe there are valid reasons for a reconsideration may obtain the floor while no business is pending, and briefly state his reason(s) for hoping someone who voting on the prevailing side will move to reconsider.

MODIFY OR WITHDRAW A MOTION

1. Only the maker of a motion may request permission to modify or withdraw it. However, any member may suggest that the maker ask permission to withdraw it.
2. A motion can be withdrawn without permission only up to the point that the Chair states to the assembly that "It has been moved and seconded that ..." After it is "given to the assembly for debate," it can only be withdrawn with permission, usually through the Unanimous Consent process.
3. If someone wishes to withdraw his/her motion after the Chair has read it to the assembly for debate, the Chair can state, "The maker would like to withdraw (or modify) the motion, if there are no objections." If there are none, then the motion is withdrawn (or modified); if there are objections, then a vote must be taken as to whether to allow the motion to be withdrawn or modified.
4. It is not necessary to get permission from the seconder to withdraw or modify a motion.
5. A motion may only be withdrawn up to the point prior to voting on the motion. Once voting has begun, it is too late.

CALL FOR THE PREVIOUS QUESTION (CLOSE DEBATE)

1. The motion to call for the previous question immediately closes debate **on the immediately pending question**.
2. The motion to call for the previous question and all adhering questions closes debate **on the main motion and all subsidiary motions on that issue**.
3. The motion must be made by a person who is next in the speaking order and has then been recognized by the Chair.
4. The maker may not interrupt another speaker to make the motion.
5. The motion to close debate **requires a second, is neither debatable nor amendable and requires a two-thirds vote**.
6. The motion may be reconsidered, but if the motion passed, only until the vote has begun.

DIVIDE A MOTION

1. A member who wishes to consider a motion in separate parts can move to Divide the Motion.
2. The motion needs a second and a majority vote, but is not debatable, amendable, nor can it be reconsidered.

LIMIT OR EXTEND DEBATE

1. The members can exercise control over debate on a motion, or a series of motions, by using the motion to Limit or to Extend Debate.
2. The organization's Bylaws or Standing Rules establish how long a member can speak to a motion. If the Bylaws are silent on this, then Robert's Rules provides for ten minutes.
3. The motion to Limit Debate can be made to,
 - Reduce the amount of time that each speaker is given to debate (for example, amend the speaking time from five minutes per speaker to one minute per speaker); or
 - Reduce the total time that will be spent on a motion or a group of motions (for example, limit the time to twenty minutes); or
 - Limit the number of speakers that will be allowed to debate (for example, limited the number of speakers to three in favor and three against); or
 - Determine the time at which debate will cease (for example, debate will be closed at 9:10 p.m.)
4. The motion to Extend Debate can be made to,
 - Increase the amount of time each speaker is given to debate (for example, amend the speaking time from three minutes per speaker to five minutes per speaker); or
 - Increase the total time that will be spent on a motion or a group of motions (for example, increase the time to twenty minutes); or
 - Increase the number of speakers that will be allowed to debate (for example, increase the number of speakers to three in favor and three against); or
 - Determine the time at which debate will cease (for example, debate will be closed at 9:10 p.m.)
5. The motion:
 - Requires a second, is debatable, is amendable, requires a 2/3 vote, can be reconsidered,

POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN TIME

1. Postpone to a Certain Time is the motion by which action on a pending question can be deferred, within limits, to a definite day, meeting, or hour, or until after a certain event. It needs a second; requires a majority vote; is debatable; amendable; and may be reconsidered.

POSTPONE INDEFINITELY

1. Postpone Indefinitely is a motion that the assembly may use to decline to take a position on the main question. Its adoption kills the main motion (for the duration of the session) and avoids a direct vote on the question. It is useful in disposing of a badly chosen main motion that cannot be either adopted or expressly rejected without possibly undesirable consequences.

2. The motion to Postpone Indefinitely can be used by opponents to a Main Motion because it allows debate on the merits of the Main Motion and it gives the opponents of the motion an opportunity to kill the motion without risking its adoption, as would be the case with a vote on the Main Motion itself.

DIVISION OF THE HOUSE AND TELLER COUNT

1. The purpose of calling for a Division is when either the accuracy of the vote or the way in which the vote was called is doubted and a member wishes that the vote be retaken. Do not confuse a Division with a Teller Count. A Division requires another vote, but only to the next level of voting from voice, to show of hands, to standing but without a count.

2. A Division must be called before the next item of business is announced. When calling for a Division:

- A member can interrupt another speaker;
- A second is not needed;
- It is not debatable,
- It requires no vote;
- It is not amendable.

3. Upon hearing a call for a Division, the Chair should automatically say "There has been a Division, we will vote again," and move to the next level of voting.

4. If the member is still not satisfied with the accuracy of the vote (versus the outcome of the vote) then a motion for a Teller Count, a Secret Ballot, or a Roll Call may be made.

5. The Chair may call for a Teller Count, without a motion, if he/she is unsure of the vote.

6. A fast and reliable process for holding a teller count is to ask all those in favor of the motion to stand and to count off one by one saying their number as they sit down. When all have voted by counting off, the same process is followed for the "no" votes. The process is expedient and trustworthy as everyone witnesses the actual voting.

7. Motions for Teller Counts, Secret Ballot, and Roll Call Votes require a second and a majority vote.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

1. A Request for Information is a request directed to the Chair or through the Chair to another officer or member for information relevant to the business at hand but not related to parliamentary procedure.
2. A Request for Information is used to ask for or to receive information, not to provide information – which is otherwise known as “debate.” If a member debates when recognized on a Request for Information, the member is Out of Order.
3. Neither Request for Information nor Parliamentary Inquiries are allowed after any member has voted.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

1. A Parliamentary Inquiry is a question on a matter of parliamentary law or the rules of the organization bearing on the business at hand and the Chair gives an opinion on the matter.
2. The difference between a Point of Order and a Parliamentary Inquiry is that a Point of Order is used to call the attention of the assembly to a violation of the rules and to which the Chair gives a ruling while a Parliamentary Inquiry is a question directed to the Chair to which the Chair gives an opinion (a decision vs. an opinion).
3. Because the Chair gives an opinion on a Parliamentary Inquiry, the opinion may not be appealed. The ruling on a Point of Order may be appealed.
4. If the Chair gives an opinion on a Parliamentary Inquiry, a member may act contrary to it and, if called Out of Order by the Chair, may then appeal that ruling.

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

A Question of Privilege is used to make an urgent request that relates to the rights, privileges or welfare of the assembly, or of individual members. To raise a Question of Privilege is a device that permits a member of Main Motion relating to the rights and privileges of the assembly or any of its members to be brought up for possible immediate consideration because of its urgency.

A Question of Privilege can be either a request or a motion.

CALL FOR THE ORDERS OF THE DAY

This is a privileged motion by which a member can require the assembly to conform to the agenda program or order of business. In other words, members have the right to expect business to be conducted in the order they anticipated as a result of the agenda.

This motion would be used when an item of business has been assigned a specific time to be acted upon and that time is passing, or when the Chair is taking business out of the order that is presented on the agenda. A motion to suspend the rules (2) could be made if it is preferred to finish the current agenda item.

Upon the call by a single member, the Orders of the Day (the established agenda) must be enforced by the Chair.

To call for the Orders of the Day, a member rises without being recognized by the Chair and in fact may interrupt another speaker and say, "Mr. Madam Chair, I call for the Orders of the Day" (with a brief explanation if it is necessary). The Chair would then announce the orders of the day have been called for and would call the appropriate item before the group.

LAY ON THE TABLE

1. Lay on the Table enables the assembly to lay the pending question aside temporarily when something more urgent has arisen, in such a way that (1) there is no set time for taking the matter up again; (2) but its consideration can be resumed at the will of a majority and in preference to any new questions that may then be competing with it for consideration.
2. By adopting the motion to Lay on the Table, the majority has the power to halt consideration of a question immediately without debate. This motion is often misused, however, particularly in place of the motion to Postpone Indefinitely.
3. If an important question must be settled immediately and there is no urgent reason for the assembly to lay it aside, a motion to lay the question on the table is clearly dilatory, and consequently should be ruled out of order by the Chair.

TAKE FROM THE TABLE

1. Take from the Table is a special Main Motion that makes pending again before the meeting a motion or a series of adhering motions that previously had been laid on the table.
2. It may be moved while no other questions is pending, but may be made when another main motion has been made but not yet been stated by the chair. It can be applied to any question or series of adhering questions that lie on the table after some business or interrupting matter has been transacted since the matter was laid on the table.
3. It must be seconded; it is not debatable, or amendable; it requires a majority vote, and it may not be reconsidered.
4. Time Limits for making the motion: may be made at the same session that the question was laid on the table, but after intervening business; or at the next session if the next regular business session will be held before a quarterly time interval.

RECESS

1. The motion to Recess is a Privileged Motion only when business is pending. A motion to Recess when no question is pending is merely a Main Motion.
2. The motion to **Recess is not debatable.**
3. The only difference between a meeting that has been recessed and a meeting that that has been adjourned to a specific time is that **when business is taken up at the meeting adjourned to a specific time, the minutes of the previous session are usually read.** In both cases, business is taken up where it left off.
4. While the term "recess" in most organizations is meant to be a short interval, the only formal **limitation on the amount of time** is that it cannot extend beyond the time for which the next regular meeting or special meeting has been set.

ADJOURN

1. The difference between the motion to Recess and the motion to Adjourn is that at the termination of recess, business begins where it was interrupted. When the assembly moves to adjourn (unless it is moved to adjourn to a specific time), the next meeting begins with a complete new order of business.
2. Different forms of the motion to Adjourn are:
 - when another meeting is already scheduled and when no pre-set time to adjourn the present meeting has been established, the motion to Adjourn is a privileged motion (and therefore not debatable, even if business is pending);
 - when the motion to Adjourn is qualified (to a specific time), the motion to Adjourn becomes a Main Motion and is therefore debatable;
 - when the time to end the meeting has been previously established, a motion to Adjourn before that time is a Main Motion and is debatable;
 - When the effect of the motion to Adjourn would dissolve the assembly (as in an annual convention) the motion to Adjourn is a Main Motion and is debatable.
3. An adjourned meeting is a continuation of the meeting at which the motion to Adjourn to a specific time was adopted and should not be confused with a "special meeting."
4. The Chair may just announce that the meeting is adjourned, without a motion to do so, if all of the business has been completed.

OBJECTION TO CONSIDERATION

1. The purpose of an Objection to the Consideration of a Question is to enable the members to avoid consideration of a particular main motion when they believe it would be strongly undesirable for the motion to even come before the assembly regardless of the outcome.

2. The Objection to Consideration can be raised only before there has been any debate or before a subsidiary motion (except Lay on the Table) has been stated by the chair. Once debate has begun or the chair has re-stated a subsidiary motion, it is too late to object.

3. Object to Consideration cannot be applied to incidental main motions. No subsidiary motion can be applied to it alone, but while it is pending, the main question can be laid on the table, and the objection then goes to the table with the main question.

4. It is in order when another has the floor, until consideration of the question has begun.

5. It does not require a second; it is not debatable; it is not amendable; and a two-thirds vote against consideration is required to sustain the objection.

6. The presiding officer, on his own initiative, can submit his objection of this kind to a vote, just as he can raise a question of order on his own accord.

7. **EFFECT OF THE OBJECTION.** If an objection to consideration is sustained, the main motion is dismissed for that session and cannot be renewed during the same session except by unanimous consent or by reconsideration of the vote on the objection. If the objection is not sustained, consideration of the main motion proceeds as if no objection had been made.

8. **MANNER OF PUTTING THE QUESTION.** A member rises, even if another has been assigned the floor, and without waiting to be recognized, addresses the chair as follows: "Mr. President, I object to the consideration of the motion." The chair responds, "The consideration of the question is objected to. Shall the question be considered? Those in favor of considering it, raise your hand; those opposed to consideration, raise your hand. There are 2/3 opposed-- the question will not be considered."

Executive Session

- Executive session is a meeting, or portion of a meeting, at which the **proceedings are secret.**
- Executive session occurs only when **required by rule** or established custom, or **upon an adopted motion, which is a Question of Privilege, and is adopted by a majority vote.**
- Attendance is limited to **members of the body and any special invitees, employees, or staff members** that are invited.
- Regarding the secrecy of an Executive Session, anything that **occurs in executive session may not be divulged to non-members, except those who were entitled to attend.**
- However, **any action taken, as distinct from that which was said in debate, may be divulged to the extent—and only to the extent—necessary to carry it out.**

Executive Session - continued

- **A member of a society can be punished under disciplinary procedure if he/she violates the secrecy.** Anyone else permitted to be present is also honor-bound to secrecy.
- **Reading and approval of the minutes of an executive session must take place only in executive session,** unless that which would be reported in the minutes is not secret. When the minutes of an executive session must be considered for approval at an executive session held solely for that purpose, the brief minutes of the latter meeting are, or are assumed to be, approved by that meeting.
- **The motion to go into Executive Session may be made by any member, and once seconded, the Chair may determine whether this privileged motion, in fact, warrants secrecy** (“The chair rules that the question is one of privilege to be entertained immediately. It is moved and seconded to go into executive session.”)

Special Meetings

- * Special Meetings can only occur if they are authorized in the Bylaws.
- ◊ Notice of the time, place, and purpose of the meeting, clearly and specifically describing the subject matter of the motions or items of business to be brought up, must be sent to all members a reasonable number of days in advance.
- ◊ The bylaws on special meetings should prescribe (1) by whom the meeting will be called (the president, perhaps with the approval of the board) or at the written request of a specific number of members; and, (2) the number of days' notice required.
- * The business that can be transacted at a Special Meeting must have been specified in the call of the meeting. If, at a Special Meeting, action is taken relating to business not mentioned in the call, that action, to become valid, must be ratified by the organization at a regular meeting (or at another Special Meeting properly called for that purpose).
- ◊ Don't confuse business within a Special Meeting with business requiring previous notice. When a main motion related to business specified in the call of a Special Meeting is pending, it is as fully open to germane amendment as if it had been moved at a regular meeting.
- * A Special Meeting does not approve minutes, they are approved at the next regular meeting.

Business in Small Boards and Committees

Boards operate within the bylaws, the parliamentary authority, and standing rules but may adopt special rules if they do not conflict with these others. Large boards follow all the same rules, as do small boards (twelve or less), with the following exceptions.

- Members may remain seated to be recognized and while making motions and debating.
- Motions need not be seconded
- There is no limit to the number of times a member can speak to a debatable question, († Appeals go by regular rules, though)
- Informal discussion of a subject is permitted while no motion is pending.
- When a proposal is perfectly clear to all present, a vote can be taken without a motion's having been introduced, unless an objection to unanimous consent is raised.
- The Chair may speak to and vote on all questions.

Minutes

- Minutes are legal documents and should be kept indefinitely.
- They are approved in chronological order if more than one set is being considered.
- No motion is required. The Chair asks: Are there any corrections to the minutes (as read / as printed / as presented)? **General Consent**
- Corrections that are approved (usually by unanimous consent) are made in the text of the minutes being approved (often in red); the replaced language is not erased. It is noted in minutes of the meeting that corrected them.

Contents of Minutes

- ❖ **The first paragraph:** Name of organization / kind of meeting / Date, Time, Place / Quorum if announced / Chair and Secretary, or their replacements
- ❖ Minutes will also contain a separate paragraph for each subject: Call to Order – Time / Opening Ceremonies / Call to Order / Reports / Motions & Amendments to Motions / Reconsider / Secondary Motions Not Lost
- ❖ **Minutes should not contain:** Debate / Motion not stated by the Chair / Personal Opinions or flowery language / Withdrawn motions
- ❖ **Minutes are adopted as presented, mailed, or corrected, etc.**

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SECRETARY

The secretary is the recording officer and custodian of the official records (unless the bylaws assign certain records to others, such as the treasurer's financial records).

Duties of the Secretary:

- 1) **keep a record of all the proceedings of the organization - the minutes.**
- 2) **keep on file all committee reports.**
- 3) **keep the organization's official membership roll (unless another officer or staff member has this duty); and to call the roll where it is required.**
- 4) **make the minutes and records available to members upon request.**
- 5) **notify officers, committee members, and delegates of their election or appointment.**
- 6) **furnish committees with whatever documents are required for the performance of their duties, and to have on hand at each meeting a list of all existing committees and their members.**
- 7) **furnish delegates with credentials.**
- 8) **sign all certified copies of acts of the society.**
- 9) **maintain record book(s) in which the bylaws, special rules of order, standing rules, and minutes are entered, with any amendments to these documents properly recorded, and to have the current record book(s) on hand at every meeting.**
- 10) **send out to the membership a notice of each meeting.**
- 11) **conduct the general correspondence of the organization—**that is, correspondence that is not a function proper to other offices or to committees.
- 12) **prepare, prior to each meeting, an order of business for the use of the presiding officer, showing in their exact order, under the correct headings, all matters known in advance that are due to come up.**
- 13) **In the absence of the president and vice-president, call the meeting to order and preside until the immediate election of a chairman pro tem.**

ROLE OF THE SECRETARY – continued

- ◆ In the absence of the secretary, a secretary pro tem must be elected.
- ◆ **Records of the secretary.** When written reports are received from boards or committees, the secretary records on them the date they were received and what further action was taken on them, and preserves them among his records. **It is not necessary for an assembly to vote that a board or committee report be “placed on file,” as that is done without a vote.**
- ◆ **Any member has a right to examine membership reports and record books,** including the minutes of an executive session, at a reasonable time and place, but this privilege **must not be abused to the annoyance of the secretary.**
- ◆ Members are free to share their contents with others, except for any content protected by the secrecy of an executive session that has not been lifted.
- ◆ The same principles apply to records kept by boards and committees, these being accessible to members of the boards or committees.
- ◆ **When a committee requires certain records for the proper performance of its duties, the secretary turns them over to the committee chairman—**after consulting with the president in any cases where he or she is in doubt. The corporation law of each state frequently provides for the availability of records of any group incorporated in that state.

Supporting Documents

1. CHART: Robert's Rules at a Glance – Your folder and for possible member distribution
2. Conducting Business at a Meeting – Your folder and for possible member distribution
3. Standing Rules of Order – Your folder and for possible member distribution
4. Overview of motions most often used – Your folder
5. Scripts on Point of Order, Appeal, Dilatory, Amending, etc. – Your folder
6. Conduct of business in Boards and Committees – Your folder & Board
7. Electronic Meetings: Draft Bylaw and Policy Language for possible adoption
8. Policy and Procedures Governing the Committee on Local Bylaws and Processing Proposed Amendments – Draft Policy Language
9. The Chain of Command
10. Sample: Nomination and Election Notices
11. Sample: Special Meeting Notice
12. Role of the Secretary
13. Minutes - What to Include, What not to Include, and Sample Minutes
14. Guide on Options and Considerations in Drafting Bylaw Language
15. Selected Provisions of The International Constitution