

# The ABC's of



## *“Running your Meetings and Robert’s Rules”*

An effective presiding officer is important to any organization. This workshop will test your knowledge of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised as well as provide you materials that will help you in running your meetings. Remember that *practice* is the key to your *success*.

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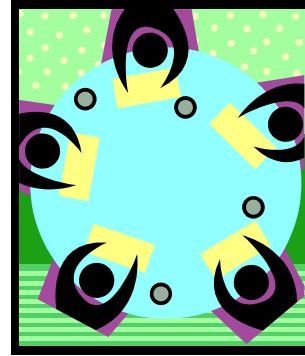
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## **GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE MEETINGS**

### **1. Know the Reasons to Have a Meeting**

### **2. Prepare and Distribute Agenda in Advance**

- Plan for the meeting and materials.
- Type and Time of meeting.
- Put Purpose Statement on the Agenda.
  - ü Discussion
  - ü Decision
  - ü Information
  - ü Planning
- Be aware of energy cycle and meeting phases.
- Think about room arrangement.



### **3. Distribute minutes of previous meeting ahead.**

### **4. Have someone take minutes.**

### **5. Follow Parliamentary Procedure.**

### **6. Follow the agenda. Papers distributed should be brief.**

### **7. Be objective. Facilitate.**

### **8. Encourage participation from everyone.**

### **9. Recognition.**

### **10. Keep meeting on track.**

### **11. Establish date and time of next meeting.**

### **12. Close with unifying items.**

### **13. Adjourn on time.**

### **14. Follow up.**

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## **PREPARING YOUR AGENDA**

**Creates purpose and energy. Identify backup materials required.  
Reach out and touch – Make phone calls. Everyone should be prepared.**

### **I. Call to Order**

### **II. Attendance**

President: Determine presence of a Quorum.

### **III. Minutes**

Secretary: Read minutes of previous meeting.

President: Ask for corrections.

### **IV. Financial Report**

Treasurer: Read revenue and expenses.

President: Asks if questions. Report not approved. File for audit.

### **V. Reports of Officers**

President: Activities, Information, Programs

Vice President: On assignments

Secretary: Correspondence, Executive Committee Reports

Treasurer: Other financial matters.

Recommendations can be acted upon at time of report.

### **VI. Reports of Committees**

Standing Committees: In order they are listed in Bylaws.

Special Committees, Task Forces, etc. in order of appointment.

Recommendations can be acted upon at time of report.

### **VII. Unfinished Business**

Items previously scheduled for this meeting.

Items held over from previous meetings.

Items on previous meeting agenda not reached.

### **VIII. New Business**

Introduce new topics.

### **IX. Announcements**

Upcoming events

Date of Next Meeting

### **X. Adjournment**

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## SAMPLE OF SCRIPT AGENDA

### ***Call to Order***

(One tap of the gavel) The presiding officer, after determining that a quorum is present, rises, waits or signals for quiet, and says, "The meeting will come to order."

### ***Opening Ceremonies*** (optional)

"Please rise and remain standing for the invocation or inspiration, which will be given... and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, which will be led by.

(If given, the invocation, the national anthem, and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America are given in that order.)

### ***Roll Call*** (if customary)

The Secretary will call the roll.

### ***Reading and Approval of Minutes***

"The Secretary will read the minutes." (The presiding officer sits down.)

"Are there any corrections to the minutes?" (pause)

"If there are no corrections, the minutes stand (or "are") approved as read."

With corrections: "If there is no objection, the Secretary will make the correction(s)..."

If there are no further corrections, the minutes stand (or "are") approved as corrected."

### ***Reports of Officers, Boards, and Standing Committees***

"The next business in order is hearing reports of the officers, boards, and standing committees."

Officers and standing committees are called on in the order that they are listed in the bylaws. The chair usually calls on only those who have reports to make.

In calling on the Secretary: "Is there any correspondence?"

In calling on the treasurer: "May we have the Treasurer's report."

Presiding Officer: "Are there any questions regarding the report of the Treasurer, if not, it will be filed"

A treasurer's report is not adopted unless it is the auditor's report.

"The question is one the adoption of the Auditor's report. As many as are in favor, say "Aye". Those opposed say "No". The ayes have it and the Auditor's report is adopted."

A motion arising out of an officer's, board or committee's report is taken up immediately.

Sample patter: ("on behalf of") or ("by direction of").

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**Reports of Special Committees**

“The next business in order is hearing reports of special committees. The committee appointed to ...will now report.”

**Special Orders** (announced only if there are such items)

Unfinished special orders from the previous meeting and items made special orders for this meeting and not set for specific hours are taken up under this heading. Matters set by the bylaws for a particular meeting may be taken up.

“The next business in order is the consideration of special orders. At the previous meeting, the motion relating to...was postponed to this meeting and made a special order. The question is on the motion that ... Are you ready for the question?”

“The Secretary will read from the bylaws Article\_\_\_Section\_\_\_concerning the election of a Nominating Committee.

**Unfinished Business and General Orders** (announced only if there are such items.)

Any questions previously introduced and not finished or any postponed to the present meeting are under this heading.

“Under Unfinished Business and General Orders, the first item of business is the motion relating to... that was pending when the previous meeting adjourned. The question is on the adoption of the motion that ...Are you ready for the question?”

“The next item of business is the motion relating to...that was postponed to this meeting. The question is on the adoption of the motion that...Are you ready for the question?”

**New Business**

“Is there any new business?” “Is there any further new business?”

**Announcements**

“The chair has the following announcements...Are there other announcements?”

**Program**

The chair does not “turn the meeting over” but announces, “The Program Committee will now present the program” or” ...will introduce our speaker.”

**Adjournment**

“Is there any further business? (pause) Since there is not further business, the meeting is adjourned.” (or) “A motion to adjourn is in order”.

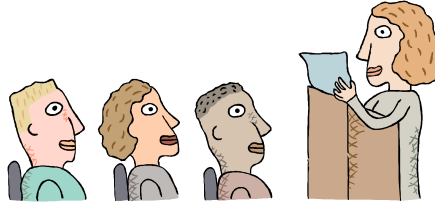
(One tap of the gavel)

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## TIPS FOR THE PRESIDENT OR THE CHAIR

### BEFORE MEETINGS

1. Practice
2. Be Prepared



- § **Bring documents to meetings: Minutes, Bylaws, Rules**
- § **Have a written agenda - Full script for a new chair**
- § **Do an agenda walk-through**
- § **Know Parliamentary procedure - Appoint a parliamentarian**
- § **Know your responsibilities and the duties of others**
- § **Ex-officio**
- § **Think ahead and plan appointments**
- § **Keep Vice President or Vice Chair informed**

### DURING MEETINGS

1. Be impartial
2. Preside to Benefit the Assembly, Not Yourself
3. Know the Rights of the Chair - Use Rights Sparingly

- § **The Chair's Rights in Debate**
- § **The Chair's Rights in Voting**

4. Do Not Respond to Debate

- § **Preside, Don't Explain**
  - § **Refer Questions to Knowledgeable People**
  - § **Chair Answers Parliamentary Questions**
  - § **Chair Rules on Parliamentary Issues**
  - § **No Personal Opinions**
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## Professionalism and Parliamentary Patter

Avoiding Personal Pronouns Improve professionalism and the appearance of impartiality when presiding by avoiding the first-person personal pronouns of I, me, my, mine.

I would like to announce . . .

The chair has the following announcement

I am pleased to report that . . .

Your president is pleased to report that . . .

It is my opinion that . . .

The chair is of the opinion that . . .

Do I hear a second?

Is there a second to the motion?

You are out of order.

The chair rules that the motion is out of order

(Briefly explain why)

(Or for breaches of order) The member is out of order and will be seated.

The chair recognizes ——, the chairman of the Finance Committee, for a special report

**A Presiding Officer relinquishes chair when a motion is made that refers to the chair alone (except elections)**

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## **CONDUCTING BUSINESS IN A COMMITTEE**

1. Meetings should be called by the Chair. Can be called by any two members if the chair fails to call it.
2. Quorum is a majority of its members unless the assembly prescribes a different quorum.
3. Chair may act as secretary or choose a secretary.
4. In a small committee or board (not more than 12):
  - § Members are not required to obtain the floor.
  - § Motions need not be seconded.
  - § No limit on the number of speeches.
  - § Informal discussion is permitted without a motion.
  - § Voting can be taken by a show of hands or unanimous consent.
  - § Chair can be seated while conducting the meeting.
  - § Chair can speak without leaving the chair.
  - § Chair can usually make motions and vote on all questions.
  - § Committee can reconsider a question without time limit and any number of times.
  - § Motion to reconsider can be made by any member who didn't vote on the losing side – even if they were absent or abstained before.
  - § Motions to close or limit debate are not permitted.
  - § May not adopt its own rules except by permission of the society or the bylaws.
  - § May appoint subcommittees.



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## PARLIAMENTARY BASICS

### § TYPES OF MOTIONS

- 1. Main Motions - Introduces a new idea or subject.**
- 2. Subsidiary Motions - Changes the idea or deals with handling it.**
- 3. Privileged Motions - Urgent situations relating to the meeting, not related to the main motion.**
- 4. Incidental Motions - Questions or actions on procedures.**

### § ABOUT MOTIONS

- 1. Is it in order? -- Must relate to the business at hand and be presented at the right time. Must not be frivolous, obstructive or against the Bylaws.**
- 2. Can the speaker be interrupted? -- Some motions are so important the speaker can be interrupted for another member to make them.**
- 3. Is a second needed? - Usually yes.**
- 4. Is it debatable? -- A basic right is to have full and free debate on most motions. Some privileged and incidental motions are not debatable.**
- 5. Can it be amended? -- Changing a motion by striking out, inserting or both. Amendments must relate to the subject (be germane).**
- 6. What vote is needed? -- Majority vote is most common. Motions that take away rights of members need a two-thirds vote.**
- 7. Can it be reconsidered? -- Some motions can be debated and voted on over again to give members a chance to change their minds. A motion to reconsider must come from the winning side.**



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## HOW TO GET THINGS DONE-SIX STEPS TO HANDLE A MOTION

### 1. A Member Makes A Motion

A main motion introduces new business. The member is recognized by the chair and says: "I move that (or "I move to...") fund a study for solutions to transportation problems."

### 2. Another Member Seconds the Motion

Seconding means the member thinks the idea should be discussed, not that he necessarily agrees with it. Without being recognized, says: "Second."

### 3. The Chair States the Motion

The chair must state the motion in order to place it before the assembly. The chair states the exact motion and indicates it is open to discussion by saying: "It is moved and seconded that we obtain three bids to resurface the parking lot."

### 4. Members Debate the Motion

#### *Rules of Debate*

- The chair manages the debate by calling on speakers.
- Everything--all debate, questions, answers--is addressed to the chair.
- The maker of the motion is recognized to speak first. Then others in turn.
- Each speaker entitled to 10 minutes twice on a topic. No second speech until others have been able to speak for their first speech.
- Debate issues, not personalities. No personal remarks allowed.
- Stick to the subject.

### 5. The Chair Takes the Vote

If no one is trying to be recognized, the chair may say, "Are you ready for the question?" If there is no further debate, the chair can proceed.

The chair must state the question again, so everyone knows for sure what they are voting on: "The question is on the adoption of the motion to obtain three bids to resurface the parking lot."

The chair then tells the group how they are supposed to vote:

**Chair:** "Those in favor of the motion, say aye."

**Members:** Aye!

**Chair:** "Those opposed, say no."

**Members:** "No!"

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## **6. The Chair Announces the Result of the Vote**

When voting is complete, the chair announces the result by saying which side had the most votes, declares the motion adopted or lost, and indicates the effect of the vote.

“The ayes have it and the motion is adopted. The staff is instructed to obtain three bids to resurface the parking lot.”

Or

“The nos have it and the motion is lost. Is there further new business?”

## **10:12... Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised- 12<sup>th</sup> Edition**

### **Negative Motions**

**It is preferable to avoid a motion containing a negative statement even in cases where the effect of the motion is to propose that something be done, since members may become confused as to the effect of voting, for or against such a motion. Rather than moving for example, that the association go on record as “not in favor of the proposed public bond issue,” it should be moved that the association “oppose” or “declare its opposition to” the bond issue. In this connection, it should be noted that voting down a motion or resolution that would express a particular opinion since – if the motion is voted down – neither opinion has been expressed. A member may be in complete agreement with the views contained in such a resolution yet feel that his organization should not speak out on the matter, and he might therefore vote against the resolution.**

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## HANDLING A MOTION - LANGUAGE FOR THE CHAIRMAN

- Chairman: Is there any new business?
- Member A: Mr/Madam Chairman.
- Chairman: Member A
- Member A: I move that . . .
- Member B: Second
- Chairman: It is moved and seconded that ... Is there any debate?  
(Look at or call on Member A first.)
- Member A: (Give explanation or reasons for the motion.)
- Chairman: Thank you. Is there further debate?
- Member B: (Make comments)
- Chairman: Thank you. Is there further discussion?
- Member C: (Make comments)
- Chairman: Thank you. (See that no one is seeking recognition). Are  
You ready for the question? (Pause)  
The question is on the motion to... (state motion).  
Those in favor say "aye." (Pause)  
Those opposed, say "no." (Pause)  
The ayes have it and the motion is adopted and we will ...  
(state what will be done as a result of the motion's adoption.)
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## KNOW THE MOTIONS AND WHEN TO USE THEM

Use the following to help you know what motions to use and how to say them:

MOTION OR ACTION	WHAT TO SAY	WHEN TO SAY IT
<b>Main motion</b>	“I move to ...”	To bring up an idea or topic for action
<b>MOTIONS THAT HELP YOU MAKE A DECISION</b>		
<b>Postpone Indefinitely</b>	“I move to postpone the motion indefinitely.”	To kill a motion for the current session. It avoids a direct vote on the motion.
<b>Amend</b>	“I move to amend by— Adding Inserting Striking out Striking and inserting	To change or improve the wording of a motion
<b>Refer to a committee</b>	“I move to refer the motion to the _____ committee.”	To send a motion to a committee for more study
<b>Postpone definitely</b>	“I move to postpone the motion until _____.”	To delay considering the motion and to set a specific time to bring it up again.
<b>MOTIONS THAT HELP THE MEETING</b>		
<b>Limit Debate or Extend Debate</b>	“I move to limit debate to 10 minutes on this motion.” “I move to limit debate to two minutes for all speakers.”	To set a limit on how long to discuss a motion or to allow a longer amount of time or speeches.
<b>Previous question or call the question.</b>	“I move the previous question” or “I call the question.”	To close debate
<b>Recess</b>	“I move to recess for _____ minutes.”	To take a short break during a meeting.
<b>Adjourn</b>	“I move to adjourn.”	To end the meeting
<b>MOTIONS THAT PROTECT RIGHTS</b>		
<b>Point of Order</b>	“Point of order!” (Call out without recognition)	To require the chair to rule when you think the rules of the assembly are being violated
<b>Appeal</b>	“I appeal from the decision of the chair.”	After the chair has ruled, this takes the decision from the chair and the assembly votes to make the final decision.
<b>Request for Information</b>	“I have a request for information.”	To ask for relevant information related to a motion
<b>Parliamentary inquiry</b>	“I rise to a parliamentary inquiry.”	To ask for information about procedure

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## THIRTEEN RANKING MOTIONS

- § **Privileged Motions**, while they do not have any relation to the pending question, are so urgent or important they are entitled to immediate consideration.
- § **Subsidiary Motions** are those that may be applied to another motion to modify it, delay action, or dispose of it.
- § **Main Motions** are the basis of all parliamentary procedure. They provide the method to bring business before the assembly for consideration and action.

Type	Name of Motion	In order when another has the floor?	Does it require a second?	Is it debatable?	Is it amendable?	Vote needed to adopt?	May it be reconsidered?
<b>P</b>	Fix the Time to which to Adjourn	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	Yes
<b>P</b>	Adjourn	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
<b>P</b>	Recess	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
<b>P</b>	Raise a Question of Privilege	Yes	No	No	No	Chair Decides	No
<b>P</b>	Call for the Orders of the Day	Yes	No	No	No	No vote; Demand	No
<b>S</b>	Lay on the Table	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
<b>S</b>	Previous Question	No	Yes	No	No	2/3	Yes
<b>S</b>	Limit or Extend Limits of Debate	No	Yes	No	Yes	2/3	Yes (1)
<b>S</b>	Postpone to a Certain Time (Definitely)	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority (2)	Yes
<b>S</b>	Commit (Refer to a Committee)	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes (3)
<b>S</b>	Amend	No	Yes	Yes (4)	Yes	Majority	Yes
<b>S</b>	Postpone Indefinitely	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	Aff. Only
<b>M</b>	Main Motion	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes

- (1) Unexecuted part may be reconsidered.  
 (3) Only if committee has not started work.

- (2) 2/3 vote if made a special order.  
 (4) If applied to a debatable motion.

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## INCIDENTAL AND RESTORATIVE MOTIONS

- § **Incidental Motions** (1) arise out of a pending question; or (2) arise out of a question that has just been pending; or (3) related to the business of the assembly. Incidental motions usually apply to the method of transacting business rather than the business itself. They have no rank among themselves because they are in order whenever they are incidental to the business at hand.
- § **Motions that Bring a Question Again before the Assembly (Restorative)** are motions that bring a question again to the assembly for consideration.

Type	Name of Motion	In order when another has the floor?	Does it require a second?	Is it debatable?	Is it amendable?	Vote required to adopt?	May it be reconsidered?
<b>I</b>	Appeal	Yes	Yes	Yes (1)	No	Majority (2)	Yes
<b>I</b>	Consideration by Paragraph or Seriatim	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
<b>I</b>	Division of the Assembly	Yes	No	No	No	No vote; Demand	No
<b>I</b>	Division of a Question	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
<b>I</b>	Objection to the Consideration of the Question	Yes	No	No	No	2/3 against consideration sustains the objection	Negative only.
<b>I</b>	Parliamentary Inquiry	Yes	No	No	No	Chair answers	No
<b>I</b>	Point of Order	Yes	No	No	No	Chair rules	No
<b>I</b>	Suspend the Rules	No	Yes	No	No	2/3	No
<b>R</b>	Reconsider	(3)	Yes	Yes (1)	No	Majority	No
<b>R</b>	Take from the Table	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No

- (1) If applied to a debatable question.  
 (2) Majority in the negative required to reverse the Chair's decision.  
 (3) In order if another has been assigned the floor – if that member has not begun to speak.

## WHAT GOES IN THE MINUTES?

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**Minutes are the official record of your organization's meetings.**

**The first paragraph should contain the following information:**

- kind of meeting: regular, special, adjourned regular, or adjourned special, and the name of the group.
- date, time of the meeting, and place, if it is not always the same.
- the fact that the regular chairman and secretary were present
- whether the minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

**The body should contain:**

- all main motions, except any that were withdrawn.
- secondary motions if necessary for completeness or clarity.
- the complete substance of oral committee reports.
- all notices of motions.
- all points of order and appeals.

**The last paragraph should state the hour of adjournment.**

**Approving minutes:**

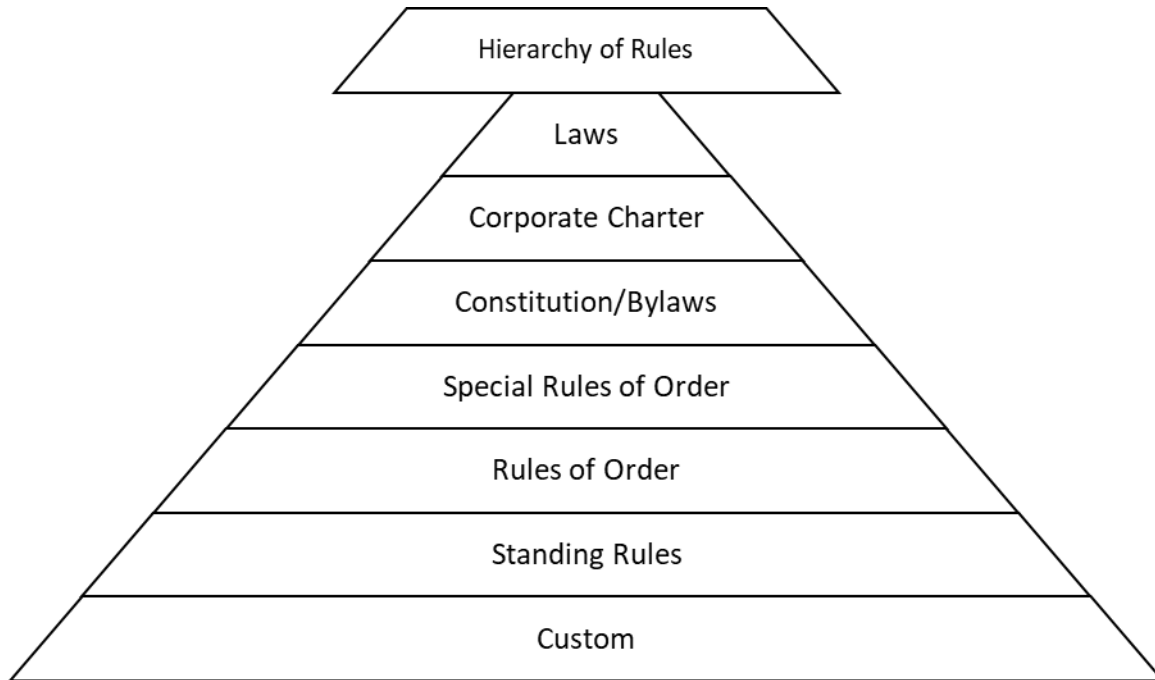
- Must be done as soon as possible.
- Do not have to be read if they are sent to everyone before the meeting.
- The chair says:  
“The secretary will read the minutes.” OR “The minutes were sent to all members in advance of the meeting. Are there any corrections to the minutes? There being no corrections (or no further corrections to the minutes, the minutes stand approved (or approved as corrected.)”



**Remember that:**

- The minutes should contain what was *done*, not what was *said*.
- Include the name of the maker of a main motion but not the seconder.
- When the vote is counted or by ballot, record the number of votes for each side
- The secretary signs the minutes. Do not use “*respectfully submitted.*”
- The approved minutes are the only official permanent record.
- The secretary should sign the minutes and they can be signed by the president, too, if the group wishes
- When the minutes are approved, the word *Approved*, with the secretary's initials and the date, should be written below them
- Minutes can be corrected at any time, even years later, by using the motion to *amend something previously adopted*.





1. Federal, state, and local laws are the highest authority.
2. Articles of Incorporation are the highest authority related specifically to an organization.
3. Bylaws contain the basic rules of an organization.
4. Special rules of order supersede the parliamentary authority.
5. Rules of order relate to the conduct of business in meetings.
6. Standing rules are administrative rules.
7. Customs are not rules but may be followed as if they were.

Rules	To Adopt	To Amend or Rescind		To Suspend
		Without Notice	With Notice	
<b>Articles of Incorporation</b>	In accordance with the legal procedure for incorporation in the state	In accordance with the legal procedure for incorporation in the state	In accordance with the legal procedure for incorporation in the state	Cannot be suspended
<b>Constitution and Bylaws</b>	Majority for initial documents	Majority of entire membership	Two-thirds	Cannot be suspended*

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<b>Special Rules of Order</b>	2/3 with notice or majority of the entire membership without notice	Majority of entire membership	Two-thirds or majority of entire membership	Two-thirds
<b>Rules of Order if not included in bylaws</b>	2/3 with notice or majority of the entire membership without notice	Majority of entire membership	Two-thirds	Two-thirds vote
<b>Standing Rules</b>	Majority	Two-thirds or majority of entire membership	Majority	Majority
<b>Custom</b>	Not adopted	N/A	N/A	N/A

\*Rules of order contained in the bylaws may be suspended