



2012

# Board Chairman's Guide



Chapter Leader Training

NMA...THE Leadership Development  
Organization



Chapter Leader Training

# ***Board Chairman's Guide***



NMA... THE Leadership Development Organization  
2210 Arbor Boulevard  
Dayton, OH 45439-1580  
Phone 937-294-0421 • Fax 937-294-2374  
Email [nma@nma1.org](mailto:nma@nma1.org) Web <http://nma1.org>

*Updated March 2012*



# Board Chairman's Guide

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction .....	1
PREPARING FOR YOUR FIRST BOARD MEETING .....	1
ORIENTATION OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS .....	2
APPOINT A RECORDING SECRETARY .....	3
APPOINT A PARLIAMENTARIAN .....	3
Chairing the Meeting .....	3
FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS .....	3
LENGTH OF MEETINGS .....	3
WAYS TO IMPROVE BOARD MEETINGS .....	4
CHAIRMAN'S RESPONSIBILITY .....	6
SELECTING THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD .....	6
BOARD MANUAL .....	7
Board Checklist .....	8
MEETING ACCORDING TO ROBERT'S RULES .....	9
A SUGGESTED ORDER OF BUSINESS .....	9
HANDLING A MOTION .....	9
Introduction to Robert's Rules of Order .....	10
WHAT PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE IS .....	10
WHY PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE IS IMPORTANT .....	10
FOUR BASIC TYPES OF MOTIONS .....	11
HOW MOTIONS ARE PRESENTED .....	11
VOTING ON A MOTION .....	12
TWO OTHER MOTIONS COMMONLY USED THAT RELATE TO VOTING .....	12
Robert's Rules of Order - Summary Version .....	12
For Fair and Orderly Meetings & Conventions .....	12
The Rules .....	13
Robert's Rules of Order Motions Chart .....	15



## INTRODUCTION

The Chairman of the Board occupies a key leadership spot that is considerably different from other leadership positions. First, it is important that the board recognize that it has a special role to play. While the board must be concerned about the current chapter operation, that is, what's happening this year and how well this year's program is being accomplished, it also must address how the current operation and program is contributing to the long range purpose of the chapter. The Board Chairman has the responsibility to focus the board's attention on that responsibility. This requires a careful meshing of the efforts of the board with the efforts of the officers and their team. Last but not least, the Board Chairman must conduct the meetings of the board in an effective and efficient manner.

The Chairman's ability, or perhaps lack of it, will be most apparent at regular board meetings and will be measured by the manner in which the meetings are conducted. Conducting board meetings requires a great deal of finesse because the decisions the board makes are group decisions. The Chairman cannot make those decisions alone but must guide the board. The chair has one vote and one opinion just like everyone else and the responsibility for chairing the board meetings does not change that. In fact, in some cases, the chairman only votes when there is a tie.

On the other hand, the chairman's role is not just that of taking a poll of the board and casting a vote when there is a deadlock. There is a special skill required in blending together the talents of the board members in a way that will contribute to the overall progress of the NMA chapter.

## PREPARING FOR YOUR FIRST BOARD MEETING

The first major task facing you as the new chairman of the board is to get your board organized and molded into a working body. This is no easy task, but you do have some things going for you and some steps to take to speed up the process.

If your board members are elected on a staggered basis (half elected each year) they will experience a shorter delay in reaching full operational level. This comes about because half the board members already have one year of experience. These incumbents can carry a little extra load until the new board members are familiar with their responsibilities.

The effect is further enhanced because new board members learn more quickly by observing and participating with the experienced incumbents in an on-the-job training situation. Of course, the quicker the new board members take an active part in the board deliberations, the sooner the board assumes its new personality and characteristics.

## ORIENTATION OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS

You can further accelerate the process of forming a working board if each new board member receives adequate counseling prior to the first board meeting. This should be a carefully structured program that is your responsibility to plan and execute.

1. Welcome

Immediately after election, each new board member should receive a welcome and offer of assistance from you. Usually, the best method is a short personal visit to the individual's office, although a telephone call can be used. Doing this makes the new member feel important to the board, and tends to establish the board as a top function of the organization.

2. Meet Jointly with New Board Members

While the initial welcome should be prompt (within hours after the election) a more leisurely conference can be arranged for a later date. At that time you will make sure the new board member understands the work of the board, and you can answer any questions he or she may have at that time. It is a good idea to give the new board member a kit (described in #4 below) during this conference and review rules and procedures concerning the board.

3. Orientation Session of the Board

In addition to your private meetings with the new board members, a joint session of both the new and old boards should be held. This is not a board meeting in which business will be conducted but it is an orientation conference. Rules and procedures are explained. Pending business and a general familiarization of past board activity is covered. This meeting serves as a get-acquainted meeting for both old and new board members who may not know each other well, and serves as an aid in the transition process.

4. Board Member's Kit

Much of the background material a board member needs is already in printed form. Copies of these can be placed in a "kit" for each member of the board. Naturally, you will want the content to reflect your organization, but here are items that are logical to include:

- a. Copy of the chapter's goals and objectives
- b. Latest annual report
- c. A copy of the constitution and by-laws
- d. The past budget and current budget
- e. Descriptive literature on the various programs of the Association
- f. Organization chart

- g. Complete set of minutes from the past year
- h. A copy of the Board Member's Guide
- i. A copy of your Board Manual (described on page 9)

#### APPOINT A RECORDING SECRETARY

It is your responsibility to appoint a recording secretary who takes minutes of the board meetings. A new secretary can be appointed for each meeting or someone can be asked to assume this responsibility for the year. Minutes should be drafted by the secretary and submitted to you so that you can review them for accuracy and completeness. If they meet your understanding of the meeting, they can be duplicated and distributed to the other board members. These should be completed as soon after a meeting as possible because many thoughts are quickly lost even when notes have been taken.

#### APPOINT A PARLIAMENTARIAN

You should have at least a working knowledge of parliamentary procedures. It is also good practice to appoint a parliamentarian who has the background or is willing to study the subject thoroughly. A meeting can get stalled easily by confusion over a technicality on procedure. To aid you in this vital subject most bookstores carry copies of Robert's Rules of Order. Also see Appendix A of this guide for some common procedures from Robert's Rules of Order, 10<sup>th</sup> edition.

#### CHAIRING THE MEETING

#### FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

It is customary for boards to meet on a monthly basis. In practice, monthly board meetings may not be the ideal frequency even though it is customary. Some boards could logically handle their responsibilities at less frequent intervals. Others may need more than twelve meetings a year if their volume of work is heavy. Whatever the number, it is important that the meetings be held at regular intervals. You must be sure that your agenda does not contain trivia or that it does not get involved in operational matters just so the board will have something to talk about, particularly when frequent board meetings are held. You must seek out substantial and meaningful subjects that will challenge the talents of the board and keep the board in its rightful realm.

#### LENGTH OF MEETINGS

The duration of board meetings will depend on:

1. The size of the board
2. The subject matter and the manner in which the meeting is organized
3. The skill with which you conduct the meeting

A lot of business can be completed in a reasonably short time if preparation has been good. There is no set rule, but over two hours of business is a long time to maintain alertness and interest by all board members. Less than 45 minutes can be too short to allow proper discussion of the issues. In any event, meetings should be scheduled so that they are neither protracted nor cut short just to satisfy some predetermined time limit.

## WAYS TO IMPROVE BOARD MEETINGS

Boards perform many functions and engage in a number of activities. However, when reduced to its most elemental state, it's the regular meetings of the board that determine just how good or bad a board really is. Here are six techniques you can use to improve board meetings:

1. Establish Routine  
The patterns and procedures of the board meetings should be standardized as far as possible, so that constant discussion and decisions over operational details are eliminated. For example, it should not be necessary for the board to set time, place, and frequency of regular membership or board meetings; the procedure should be spelled out in the organization's by-laws and/or policy manual. The board acts once to set up the procedure, then further action by the board is not needed. Boards will not be able to standardize all procedures, but to the extent that they can do so, they will save themselves constant and tedious discussions about procedural matters.
2. Meeting Content  
The meeting content, i.e., the agenda, has much to do with how the chapter is run. Agendas must be planned to include all the business to be considered at the meeting and the approximate length of time needed for each item. The agenda serves as a guide and timetable, but only in rare instances is it so rigid that some flexibility is not allowed to accommodate the unexpected. The items listed should not be sketchy notations indicating generally what is to be discussed, but should be stated at such length that the board will know what to expect. The agenda with, all supporting information and material should be sent to all board members well in advance of the meeting date. If the board members have a chance to examine the material prior to the meeting, then their participation in the deliberations will be more meaningful. Better decisions will be made more quickly.
3. Preparation  
The board meeting should be the culmination of a long process of preparation. The preparation takes two forms. The first and most obvious is the agenda we discussed.

The other, and in the long run the more important, is preparing the numerous reports that are the lifeblood of the board. Department reports, special board sub-committee reports, and treasurer's report are examples. The person most familiar with a particular problem (treasurer, etc.) should have the responsibility for summarizing it for the whole board. You should alert persons presenting reports to the board that they should be fully prepared and have their material documented. Time for the report should be predicted and the presenter should have written copies available for advance distribution with the agenda.

4. Presentation

Reports made to the board should be well presented. Much of the time of most meetings is spent reading or listening to reports. The value of such reporting is directly proportional to the skill of the reporter and the ability of the listener to comprehend. The members of the board should be concerned not only with reaching proper conclusions, but also with communicating them effectively.

5. Discussion

As much time of the board meeting as possible should be reserved for discussion. A board by its very nature is composed of individuals who probably vary widely in personality and background. It is the purpose of the board to draw upon this heterogeneity in order to reach consensus. The process through which such pooling takes place is discussion.

Unfortunately, there are many exercises that resemble discussion, but are actually pseudo-discussion. Some of the more common varieties are: set speeches following one another without any relationship among them; mere conversation that has no relevance to the point at issue; floundering about without clarifying the issues; participation by a few while the rest remain silent; a series of observations made by the board members as the chairman calls upon them in turn; and all the other ways of seeming to have a discussion without really having one; ways that are familiar to you and everyone who has ever been in a meeting.

Real discussion is something quite different. It is an active participation that creates involvement and a sense of responsibility on the part of the members. Real discussion focuses on issues with a logical progression from one point to the next. The conversation is directed to and among all the board, not just the chairman or some dominate figure. Everyone knows when a real discussion has taken place because the participants feel rewarded and stimulated.

6. Informality

There should be as little formality as possible. Normally, there are no problems with austerity or formality, however, in larger organizations it is possible that fellow board members will not know each other, or be more than casually acquainted. If so, this situation should be relieved as quickly as possible. One of the best ways is to hold mealtime meetings. Where this is not possible, other forms of sociability can be introduced.

#### CHAIRMAN'S RESPONSIBILITY

The ultimate responsibility for making effective meetings in these six ways falls on you, the chairman. Just how you will do this will vary somewhat with your individuality as well as the situation. You should be clearly in control of the meetings. However, your own views must be contained so that they do not appear out of proportion. You must be sure all board members are free to express their own views. Lastly, you should see that any decision is arrived at in the right way, on the basis of all known facts and after the fullest and freest participation possible.

#### SELECTING THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

Since the board is responsible for establishing its own structure and procedures, it brings up an important point: Who should be chairman of the board?

Many practices are followed, each with its advantages. One common practice is to have the immediate past president become chairman. The advantage is that person has fresh in his or her mind, the operations of the organization and a carry-over of enthusiasm to keep the organization moving. The disadvantage is that there might be a tendency to direct the new president too strongly and, in effect, retain reins of operational control.

In other cases, the board will have the current president as chairman. Sometimes a chapter will have all other officers as board members, also. When this happens, the board members often chair committees. There is little to recommend for this arrangement. The slight advantage that it permits tight communications and provides a strong action group, is lost when the board abdicates its responsibility for detachment from operational matters. More important, this dual role does not allow the board sufficient time to spend on planning and policy matters.

The separation of responsibilities between officers and the board provides an appropriate balance in the leadership of the organization. However, it is recommended that the president be a member of the board. The president is the operational chief and the person through whom the board works in getting things done during the year. This arrangement improves communications and general efficiency.

If the past president is not recommended for board chairman, then who should be? The logical approach is for the board to elect one of its own members. The big advantage is that this places the

board in an objective position to evaluate the effectiveness of the total operations. Further, such a chairman has only one hat to wear and can keep his mind clear of all detail except the direction in which the organization should proceed.

## BOARD MANUAL

Every board member should have a Board Manual. This book is prepared and maintained by the board and remains the property of the board, even though a copy is loaned to each individual on the board for the duration of his or her term. This is a reference book containing vital information for each board member. Generally, the book consists of a durable looseleaf binder, tough index dividers and, of course, the pages of information. Since most of the material changes periodically, it is a good practice to date each page. In this way, it is an easy matter to be sure a book contains all the up-to-date material.

Typical Contents of a Board Manual are:

1. Description of the Goals and Objectives of the organization
2. The organization's constitution and by-laws
3. Annual schedule, or plan of work, of the board
4. List of all the organization's leaders, complete with their home addresses and telephone numbers, as well as, their company telephone numbers and email addresses
5. List of all departments and sub-committees of the organization, along with a statement of the function and membership of each
6. Statement of policies of the board and the organization
7. Statement of provisions of major commitments to outside controlling groups, such as NMA Area Council or the company coordinating office

Each organization will want to tailor its Board Manual to fit its particular needs and interests. It may contain more or it may contain less than the above suggestions. The important thing is that the manual is a working tool for each board member.

## BOARD CHECKLIST

### I. MECHANICS

1. The physical arrangements of meeting room, chairs, heat, lights, etc.
2. Are there advance written agendas, minutes, reports?
3. Do the board members like the time and location for meetings and arrive about on time?

### II. MEMBERSHIP

1. Are the members of the board experienced and active members of the chapter?
2. Are the diverse interests of the membership represented by the board members?
3. Are the members of the board interested and involved in the work of the board?
4. Do board members have a sense of progress and accomplishment?
5. Is board membership regarded as a learning opportunity?
6. Are the relationships between the board members open and friendly?
7. Are there good relationships between the board members and the officers?

### III. FUNCTIONS

1. Is there a clear understanding of the difference in function between board membership, officer positions, and committees?
2. Do the board members have a good understanding of how the activities of the organization help to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization?
3. Does the board formulate goals to guide its work?

### IV. DECISION-MAKING

1. Does most of the discussion during a board meeting concern problem solving or policy making?
2. Are decisions on policy made only after a full and complete discussion?

3. Are decisions primarily made by leader, minority, majority, or consensus?
4. In formulating policy, are conflicts avoided, given token consideration, or explored fully?

## MEETING ACCORDING TO ROBERT'S RULES

We have included on page 12 of this booklet, some common references from Robert's Rules of Order that was first published in 1876, and is still being used today. It uses the principles learned by the experience of legislative bodies in England and the United States. These references are from the 10<sup>th</sup> edition.

We suggest that these rules be applied in business meetings of your organization, Board of Directors meetings, committee meetings, chapter business meetings, etc.

## A SUGGESTED ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Have the minutes of the previous meeting read by the secretary, corrected if necessary and accepted by a main motion to that effect and carried by a majority vote.
2. Hear the reports of standing and special committees.
3. Take up unfinished business.
4. Take up new business.
5. Adjourn the meeting.

## HANDLING A MOTION

Member: Standing to get recognition and addressing the chair.

Chair: "The chair recognizes....."

1st Member: "I move that....." (use wording for motion being made)

Chair: "The motion has been made that...." "Is there a second?" (if second is necessary)

2nd Member: "I second the motion."

Chair: "It has been moved and seconded that (repeat motion)." "Is there any discussion?" (if motion allows discussion)

Chair: "Are you ready for the questions?" (pause) "All in favor of the motion that..... (re-state entire motion) say aye (pause) All opposed say no (pause) the (ayes or noes) have it, and the motion is (carried or defeated)."

## INTRODUCTION TO ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

### WHAT PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE IS

It is a set of rules for conduct at meetings, that allows everyone to be heard and to make decisions without confusion

### WHY PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE IS IMPORTANT

Because it's a time tested method of conducting business at meetings and public gatherings. It can be adapted to fit the needs of any organization. Today, Robert's Rules of Order newly revised is the basic handbook of operation for most clubs, organizations and other groups. So it's important that everyone know these basic rules!

Organizations using parliamentary procedure usually follow a fixed order of business. Below is a typical example:

1. Call to order.
2. Roll call of members present.
3. Reading of minutes of last meeting.
4. Officers reports.
5. Committee reports.
6. Special orders --- Important business previously designated for consideration at this meeting.
7. Unfinished business.
8. New business.
9. Announcements.
10. Adjournment.

The method used by members to express themselves is in the form of moving motions. A motion is a proposal that the entire membership take action or a stand on an issue. Individual members can:

1. Call to order.
2. Second motions.
3. Debate motions.
4. Vote on motions.

## FOUR BASIC TYPES OF MOTIONS

1. **Main Motions:** The purpose of a main motion is to introduce items to the membership for their consideration. They cannot be made when any other motion is on the floor, and yield to privileged, subsidiary, and incidental motions.
2. **Subsidiary Motions:** Their purpose is to change or affect how a main motion is handled, and is voted on before a main motion.
3. **Privileged Motions:** Their purpose is to bring up items that are urgent about special or important matters unrelated to pending business.
4. **Incidental Motions:** Their purpose is to provide a means of questioning procedure concerning other motions and must be considered before the other motion.

## HOW MOTIONS ARE PRESENTED

1. Obtaining the floor
  - a. Wait until the last speaker has finished.
  - b. Rise and address the Chairman by saying, "Mr. Chairman, or Mr. President."
  - c. Wait until the Chairman recognizes you.
2. Make Your Motion
  - a. Speak in a clear and concise manner.
  - b. Always state a motion affirmatively. Say, "I move that we ..." rather than, "I move that we do not ...".
  - c. Avoid personalities and stay on your subject.
3. Wait for Someone to Second Your Motion
4. Another member will second your motion or the Chairman will call for a second.
5. If there is no second to your motion it is lost.
6. The Chairman States Your Motion
  - a. The Chairman will say, "it has been moved and seconded that we ..." Thus placing your motion before the membership for consideration and action.
  - b. The membership then either debates your motion, or may move directly to a vote.
  - c. Once your motion is presented to the membership by the chairman it becomes "assembly property", and cannot be changed by you without the consent of the members.
7. Expanding on Your Motion
  - a. The time for you to speak in favor of your motion is at this point in time, rather than at the time you present it.
  - b. The mover is always allowed to speak first.
  - c. All comments and debate must be directed to the chairman.
  - d. Keep to the time limit for speaking that has been established.
  - e. The mover may speak again only after other speakers are finished, unless called upon by the Chairman.
8. Putting the Question to the Membership
  - a. The Chairman asks, "Are you ready to vote on the question?"
  - b. If there is no more discussion, a vote is taken.
  - c. On a motion to move the previous question may be adapted.

## VOTING ON A MOTION

The method of vote on any motion depends on the situation and the by-laws of policy of your organization. There are five methods used to vote by most organizations, they are:

1. By Voice -- The Chairman asks those in favor to say, "aye", those opposed to say "no". Any member may move for an exact count.
2. By Roll Call -- Each member answers "yes" or "no" as his name is called. This method is used when a record of each person's vote is required.
3. By General Consent -- When a motion is not likely to be opposed, the Chairman says, "if there is no objection ..." The membership shows agreement by their silence, however if one member says, "I object," the item must be put to a vote.
4. By Division -- This is a slight verification of a voice vote. It does not require a count unless the chairman so desires. Members raise their hands or stand.
5. By Ballot -- Members write their vote on a slip of paper, this method is used when secrecy is desired.

## TWO OTHER MOTIONS COMMONLY USED THAT RELATE TO VOTING

1. Motion to Table -- This motion is often used in the attempt to "kill" a motion. The option is always present, however, to "take from the table", for reconsideration by the membership.
2. Motion to Postpone Indefinitely -- This is often used as a means of parliamentary strategy and allows opponents of motion to test their strength without an actual vote being taken. Also, debate is once again open on the main motion.

***Parliamentary Procedure is the best way to get things done at your meetings. But, it will only work if you use it properly.***

1. Allow motions that are in order.
2. Have members obtain the floor properly.
3. Speak clearly and concisely.
4. Obey the rules of debate.

Most importantly, *BE COURTEOUS.*

## ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER - SUMMARY VERSION

### FOR FAIR AND ORDERLY MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS

Provides common rules and procedures for deliberation and debate in order to place the whole membership on the same footing and speaking the same language. The conduct of ALL business is controlled by the general will of the whole membership - the right of the deliberate majority to decide. Complementary is the right of at least a strong minority to require the majority to be deliberate - to act according to its considered judgment AFTER a full and fair "working through" of the issues involved. Robert's Rules provides for constructive and democratic meetings, to help, not hinder, the business of

the assembly. Under no circumstances should "undue strictness" be allowed to intimidate members or limit full participation.

The fundamental right of deliberative assemblies require all questions to be thoroughly discussed before taking action!

The assembly rules - they have the final say on everything!

Silence means consent!

- Obtain the floor (the right to speak) by being the first to stand when the person speaking has finished; state Mr./Madam Chairman. Raising your hand means nothing, and standing while another has the floor is out of order! Must be recognized by the Chair before speaking!
- Debate can not begin until the Chair has stated the motion or resolution and asked "are you ready for the question?" If no one rises, the chair calls for the vote!
- Before the motion is stated by the Chair (the question) members may suggest modification of the motion; the mover can modify as he pleases, or even withdraw the motion without consent of the seconder; if mover modifies, the seconder can withdraw the second.
- The "immediately pending question" is the last question stated by the Chair! Motion/Resolution - Amendment - Motion to Postpone
- The member moving the "immediately pending question" is entitled to preference to the floor!
- No member can speak twice to the same issue until everyone else wishing to speak has spoken to it once!
- All remarks must be directed to the Chair. Remarks must be courteous in language and deportment - avoid all personalities, never allude to others by name or to motives!
- The agenda and all committee reports are merely recommendations! When presented to the assembly and the question is stated, debate begins and changes occur!

## THE RULES

- **Point of Privilege:** Pertains to noise, personal comfort, etc. - may interrupt only if necessary!
- **Parliamentary Inquiry:** Inquire as to the correct motion - to accomplish a desired result, or raise a point of order
- **Point of Information:** Generally applies to information desired from the speaker: "I should like to ask the (speaker) a question."
- **Orders of the Day (Agenda):** A call to adhere to the agenda (a deviation from the agenda requires Suspending the Rules)
- **Point of Order:** Infraction of the rules, or improper decorum in speaking. Must be raised immediately after the error is made
- **Main Motion:** Brings new business (the next item on the agenda) before the assembly

- **Divide the Question:** Divides a motion into two or more separate motions (must be able to stand on their own)
- **Consider by Paragraph:** Adoption of paper is held until all paragraphs are debated and amended and entire paper is satisfactory; after all paragraphs are considered, the entire paper is then open to amendment, and paragraphs may be further amended. Any Preamble can not be considered until debate on the body of the paper has ceased.
- **Amend:** Inserting or striking out words or paragraphs, or substituting whole paragraphs or resolutions
- **Withdraw/Modify Motion:** Applies only after question is stated; mover can accept an amendment without obtaining the floor
- **Commit /Refer/Recommit to Committee:** State the committee to receive the question or resolution; if no committee exists include size of committee desired and method of selecting the members (election or appointment).
- **Extend Debate:** Applies only to the immediately pending question; extends until a certain time or for a certain period of time
- **Limit Debate:** Closing debate at a certain time, or limiting to a certain period of time
- **Postpone to a Certain Time:** State the time the motion or agenda item will be resumed
- **Object to Consideration:** Objection must be stated before discussion or another motion is stated
- **Lay on the Table:** Temporarily suspends further consideration/action on pending question; may be made after motion to close debate has carried or is pending
- **Take from the Table:** Resumes consideration of item previously "laid on the table" - state the motion to take from the table
- **Reconsider:** Can be made only by one on the prevailing side who has changed position or view
- **Postpone Indefinitely:** Kills the question/resolution for this session - exception: the motion to reconsider can be made this session
- **Previous Question:** Closes debate if successful - may be moved to "Close Debate" if preferred
- **Informal Consideration:** Move that the assembly go into "Committee of the Whole" - informal debate as if in committee; this committee may limit number or length of speeches or close debate by other means by a 2/3 vote. All votes, however, are formal.
- **Appeal Decision of the Chair:** Appeal for the assembly to decide - must be made before other business is resumed; NOT debatable if relates to decorum, violation of rules or order of business
- **Suspend the Rules:** Allows a violation of the assembly's own rules (except Constitution); the object of the suspension must be specified

**ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER MOTIONS CHART**

*Based on Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (10th Edition)*

**Part 1, Main Motions.** These motions are listed in order of precedence. A motion can be introduced if it is higher on the chart than the pending motion. § indicates the section from Robert's Rules.

§	PURPOSE:	YOU SAY:	INTERRUPT?	2ND?	DEBATE?	AMEND?	VOTE?
§21	Close meeting	I move to adjourn	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§20	Take break	I move to recess for ...	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
§19	Register complaint	I rise to a question of privilege	Yes	No	No	No	None
§18	Make follow agenda	I call for the orders of the day	Yes	No	No	No	None
§17	Lay aside temporarily	I move to lay the question on the table	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§16	Close debate	I move the previous question	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
§15	Limit or extend debate	I move that debate be limited to ...	No	Yes	No	Yes	2/3
§14	Postpone to a certain time	I move to postpone the motion to ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§13	Refer to committee	I move to refer the motion to ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§12	Modify wording of motion	I move to amend the motion by ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
§11	Kill main motion	I move that the motion be postponed indefinitely	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
§10	Bring business before assembly (a main motion)	I move that [or "to"] ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

**Part 2, Incidental Motions.** No order of precedence. These motions arise incidentally and are decided immediately.

§	PURPOSE:	YOU SAY:	INTERRUPT?	2ND?	DEBATE?	AMEND?	VOTE?
§23	Enforce rules	Point of Order	Yes	No	No	No	None
§24	Submit matter to assembly	I appeal from the decision of the chair	Yes	Yes	Varies	No	Majority
§25	Suspend rules	I move to suspend the rules	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
§26	Avoid main motion altogether	I object to the consideration of the question	Yes	No	No	No	2/3
§27	Divide motion	I move to divide the question	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
§29	Demand a rising vote	I move for a rising vote	Yes	No	No	No	None
§33	Parliamentary law question	Parliamentary inquiry	Yes	No	No	No	None
§33	Request for information	Point of information	Yes	No	No	No	None

**Part 3, Motions That Bring a Question Again Before the Assembly.** No order of precedence. Introduce only when nothing else is pending.

§	PURPOSE:	YOU SAY:	INTERRUPT?	2ND?	DEBATE?	AMEND?	VOTE?
§34	Take matter from table	I move to take from the table ...	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
§35	Cancel previous action	I move to rescind ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3 or Majority with notice
§37	Reconsider motion	I move to reconsider ...	No	Yes	Varies	No	Majority



