

MNU HOW-TO: ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

Robert's Rules of Order is the standard practice for facilitating discussions and group decision-making. The Rules were designed to allow groups to focus on the substance of meetings as opposed to the procedures. Robert's Rules help to ensure meetings are both effective and efficient.

Robert's Rules state that when a meeting begins, the Chairperson must call the meeting to order. To do this, they will stand at the front of the room (unless the meeting is being held virtually) and say, "The meeting will come to order." At this time, the order of business begins as follows:

- 1. Reading and approval of meeting minutes**
- 2. Reports of officers, boards, and committees**
- 3. Special orders/ unfinished business from the previous meeting**
- 4. New business**

Meeting business is handled through motions. Motions can come from the Chair of the meeting or others in attendance. If the motion is coming from someone other than the Chair, that person must address the Chair before stating their motion. The most common motions and how to bring them forward can be found below:

MOTIONS:

1. To introduce a new piece of business, a motion must be made. Each motion must be seconded. Once the motion has been seconded,

it can now be discussed. If the motion is not seconded, it cannot be discussed amongst the group.

- 2.** If a member would like to change something about a motion that is being discussed, they can move to "amend" the motion. All amendments must be seconded and receive a majority vote in order to be accepted.
- 3.** If one would like to table a discussion they must make a motion. This motion must be seconded and a majority vote is required.
- 4.** If one would like to stop discussion and prevent it from being brought back up throughout the meeting, they can move to "postpone indefinitely." A second is required, so too is a majority vote.
- 5.** If one would like to end a discussion immediately, not allowing for it to begin again at any time they must "Call the question." This motion must be seconded, and a 2/3 vote is required.
- 6.** If one would like to take a break, a group member can move for a recess.
- 7.** Once business has concluded, a motion is made to "adjourn." A seconder is required, and a majority vote.

At MNU, Robert's Rules are used at Board Meetings, Annual General Meetings, and for meetings of special committees.

TIPS:

- 1.** A tie vote is a lost vote.
- 2.** Votes can be taken by voice, a show of hands, or by standing.
- 3.** Every member has the right to speak in a debate, and no member should speak twice until all members who would like to speak have had a chance, or they have received permission from the Chair.
- 4.** There shall be no interrupting when someone is speaking, except in the case of an emergency.
- 5.** Although postponing indefinitely is an option, tabling a discussion is encouraged more often as postponing indefinitely can be seen as disrespectful.
- 6.** For more information on Robert's Rules of Order you can look for the official book titled: "Robert's Rules of Order" or you can look for the shortened version titled: Robert's Rules of Order- In Brief