IEEE Standards and Robert’s Rules of Order
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- History
- Principles
- Definitions
- Order of Business
- Motions
- Precedence of Motions
- Application of Robert’s Rules of Order
History

- 400-500 A.D. Early Anglo-Saxon tribes meet
- 1066 Great Councils began after Norman Conquest
- 1258 "Parliament" was first used
- 1547-1623 *Journal of the House of Commons*
- 1801 Jefferson’s *Manual of Parliamentary Practice*
- 1845 Cushing's *Manual of Parliamentary Practice & Rules of Proceeding and Debates in Deliberative Assemblies*
Who was Robert?

- Henry Martin Robert
- An engineering officer in the Army
- 1863 - Interest sparked when asked to preside over a meeting
Principles Underlying Parliamentary Law

- Justice tempered by courtesy must be afforded to all equally
- Balance of rights
  - The majority to decide
  - The minority to be heard
  - Absentees to be protected
Deliberative Assembly

- Determines courses of action
- Group size demands formality
- Members are free to act
- Members present have equal weight
- Members are free to disagree
- Members present act as a whole
  - The will of the majority, determined by vote, is accepted as the decision of the assembly
Board/Committee

- Derives power and authority from another body by an instrument of law, such as bylaws
- Does not function autonomously
- An administrative, managerial or quasi-judicial body of elected or appointed persons
- Has the character of a deliberative assembly
- No minimum size
Meeting

- A single official gathering of members
- In one room (area)
- To transact business
- No cessation of proceedings
  - Members do not separate, except for a recess
Rules of Order

- Written rules of parliamentary procedure
  - Formally adopted
- For the orderly transaction of business
- IEEE uses Robert's Rules of Order; however, superior documents take precedence
Precedence of Documents for IEEE Standards

- New York State Not-for-Profit Law
- IEEE Certificate of Incorporation
- IEEE Constitution
- IEEE Bylaws
- IEEE Policy
- IEEE Board of Director Resolutions
- IEEE-SA Standards Board Bylaws
- IEEE Standards Style Manual
- Sponsor Operating Procedures
- Robert's Rules of Order
- IEEE Standards Companion
Quorum

- Can be set by the bylaws; otherwise, a simple majority
- If no quorum exists a meeting can be called to order; however, the only acceptable actions are
  - Adjourn
  - Recess and take measures to obtain a quorum
- Once a meeting begins, a quorum is presumed to exist until the chair or a member notices a quorum no longer exists
- Chair must announce loss of a quorum before taking a vote
- Member may question the presence of a quorum by making a point of order
- Once loss of a quorum is confirmed, business can no longer be transacted
Order of Business

- Notice
- Call to order
  - Quorum
- Order of business
  - Agenda
- Approval of minutes
- Report of officers
- Report of standing committees
- Report of special committees
- Special orders
  - Motions previously postponed
- Unfinished business and general orders
  - Items interrupted by adjournment
  - Motions to be taken from the table
  - Motion to reconsider an earlier action
- New business
- Adjourn
Agenda

- Unofficial agenda accompanies notice
- May be modified before adoption
- Once approved, it is property of assembly
- Changes to order of business require a two-thirds vote
- Consent agenda
Motion

- A formal proposal by a member that the assembly take a certain action
- Business is brought before an assembly by the motion of a member
- Basic form is a main motion
  - Sets a pattern from which other motions are derived
  - Other motions may be made and are considered with respect to the main motion
Making a Motion

- Member makes the motion
  - Uses the word "move"
- Another member seconds the motion
  - Not required for motions from committees
- The chair "states the question"
  - Ensure clarity by re-stating the motion
  - Only the chair can place business before the assembly
- Prior to the chair stating the question, the motion can be amended
  - By same maker, seconder must agree
  - By another member, second is not necessary if maker accepts
Considering a Main Motion — Debate

- Once the question is stated, the motion is pending and open to debate
- At this point, the motion belongs to the assembly
- Maker of motion has the right to speak first
- Chair assigns floor
- Floor can be assigned to a member again after all wishing to speak have done so
- There may be a time limit
Considering a Main Motion — Debate (cont.)

- Debate is confined to the merits of the pending motion
- Debate cannot be closed by the chair as long as any member wishes to speak
  - Except by order of the assembly:
    - Motion to “call the question”
    - Not debatable, requires majority
- Speakers cannot be interrupted so long as rules are not violated
- Speakers should address the chair
- Speakers should not attack or allude to the motives of members
Considering a Main Motion — The Vote

- Putting the question
  - Chair assumes unanimous consent
  - “Are you ready for the question?”
- Take vote
  - Voice
  - Show of hands
  - Roll call
- Announce result
  - "Carried," or "adopted"
  - "Lost," or "rejected"
Order of Precedence of Motions

- **Main motions**
  - Can be made only when no other motion is pending
  - Only one main motion at a time
- **Secondary motions**
  - Subsidiary motions
  - Privileged motions
  - Incidental motions
- Only one question can be considered at a time
  - Main motions rank lowest, therefore
  - Main motions are last in sequence (not importance) and
  - Secondary motions are considered before main motions
Order of Precedence of Motions (cont.)

- Unclassified motions
  - Bring a question again before the assembly
  - Reconsider
  - Remove from the table
  - Are considered as main motions, but cannot be amended
Secondary Motions — Privileged Motions

- Questions of privilege take precedence over all other motions
- Do not relate to pending business
- Are not debated
- Examples:
  - Question of privilege
  - Request executive session
  - Recess/adjourn
  - Stick to the agenda ("orders of the day")
Privileged Motions — Executive Session

- Executive session:
  - Any meeting or portion of a meeting at which the proceedings are secret
  - Only members are entitled to attend
  - Minutes are not recorded
- Good standards practice requires openness and precludes use of executive session
Secondary Motions — Subsidiary Motions

- Can be made and considered while a main motion is pending
- Assists in treating or disposing of the main motion
  - Examples:
    Amend
    Divide the question
    Refer to committee
    Postpone until _____
    Limit debate/call the question/lay on the table
- Are in order from the time the question is stated until the vote begins
  - If the vote has been ordered, only a motion to “lay on the table” is proper
Secondary Motions — Incidental Motions

- Deal with procedure arising out of:
  - A pending motion
  - Another motion or item of business
- Usually they are related to the main question in such a way that they must be decided immediately, before business can proceed
- Most are not debatable
- Examples:
  - Maker withdraw his/her motion
  - Point of order
  - Request procedural information
  - Object to taking a vote
Application of *Robert’s Rules of Order*

- Guideline for chair to handle business
  - Discretionary degree of formality
  - Good format for order of business
- Amending motions
  - An IEEE practice — friendly amendments
- General consent
  - “If there is no objection ....”
  - Useful in managing changes to the agenda during the meeting
  - Should not be used in place of voting on motions