

NOTE ON ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

*François Brouard, DBA, FCPA, FCA
Secretary of the Sprott Faculty Board
Sprott School of Business, Carleton University*

(This is not an official document from the Sprott School of Business.)

“An organized society requires certain rules to establish its basic structure and manner of operation.” (RONR (12th ed.), 2:1) The objective of this note is to summarize the Robert’s Rules of Order. Referring to official RONR are recommended in case of dispute. A number of special rules and exceptions are not summarized in this note.

“Robert’s Rules of Order is America’s foremost guide to parliamentary procedure. It is used by more professional associations, fraternal organizations, and local governments than any other authority.” (RROweb) The first edition was published in 1876 by US Army Colonel Robert and the most recent edition was published in 2020. The Robert’s Rules Association (RRA) manages a website (RROweb) with additional resources, such as official interpretations and Q & A forums.

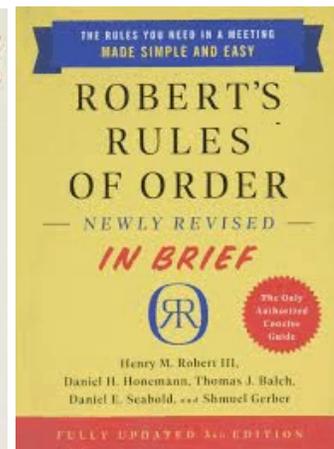
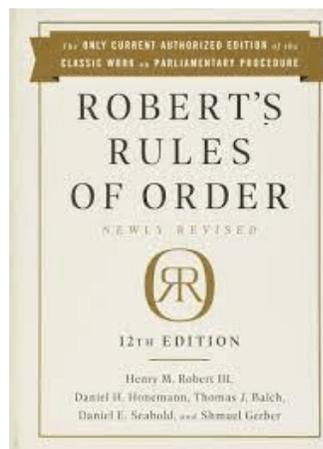
Sources of Authority

Robert, H.M., Honeman, D.H., Balch, T.J., Seabold, D.E., Gerber, S. (2020). *Robert’s Rules of Order - Newly Revised*, 12th edition, New York: PublicAffairs, 716p. (thereafter RONR or RONR (12th ed.))

Robert, H.M., Honeman, D.H., Balch, T.J., Seabold, D.E., Gerber, S. (2020). *Robert’s Rules of Order - Newly Revised In Brief*, 3rd edition, New York: PublicAffairs, 216p. (thereafter RONRIB or RONRIB (3rd ed.))

Robert’s Rules of Order Website,

www.robertsrules.com (thereafter RROweb)



References styles to RONR:

section (RONR 5:); paragraph (RONR 5:2); footnotes (RONR 56:49n1); page (RONR xlix); tables (RONR t4)

Hierarchy of Authorities / General Rules Governing an Organization

Among the rules governing an organization (for example the Sprott School of Business), the hierarchy of authorities (RONR 2:) are (with some examples):

- Federal and provincial laws and regulations
- Article of incorporation / Charter
(The Carleton University Act, 1952, c. 117, as amended 1957, c. 130; 1968-69, c.145, (7p.))
- Constitution and Bylaws
(Carleton University - General Operating By-Law No. 1, (2019 March 28, 37p.))
- University policies and procedures (*Academic Governance of the University*, A joint policy of the Board of Governors and the Senate of Carleton University, 2018 June 28, 21p.)
- Local Constitution and Bylaws (Sprott School of Business Faculty Board Constitution)
- Special Rules and Standing Rules
- Rules of Order (Robert's Rules of Order - RONR)
- Precedent, Practices and Custom

Purposes

- Provide a uniform comprehensive set of governance rules to place everyone at the same level.
- Provide a formal method (tested over time), if adopted by an organization.
- Provide order, fairness and decorum in running meetings and public gatherings.
- Offer “protection against instability”. (RONR xlix)
- Offer “the opportunity for a deliberative process of full and free discussion”. (RONR xlix)
- Allow everyone to be heard.
- Allow a careful balance between action and halting action.
- Enable the overall membership “both to establish and empower an effective leadership as it wishes, and at the same time to retain exactly the degree of direct control over its affairs that it chooses to reserve to itself”. (RONR, xlix)

Principles

- The rules will “be seen to be constructed upon a careful balance rights of persons or subgroups within an organization’s or an assembly’s total membership”, such as the majority, the minority, especially a strong minority (greater than 1/3), individual members, absentees, and all of these together (RONR xlix).
- A quorum must be present for conducting business (if none specified = 50% of membership).
- All members have equal rights, privileges and obligations.
- A majority vote decides an issue.
- The rights of the minority must be protected at all times.
- “Only one question can be considered at a time.” (RONR 5:4)
- Every matter presented for decision should be fully discussed.
- Silence gives consent.
- A “deliberative body is a free agent”. (RONR xlix)
- An “assembly cannot be asked to decide the same or substantially the same question twice during one session”, except with motion to rescind or motion to reconsider. (RONR 38:1)
- Rules should assist a meeting, not inhibit it.

Basic Procedures of Meetings

“A *meeting* of an assembly is a single official gathering of its members in one room or area to transact business for a length of time during which there is no cessation of proceeding and the members do not separate, unless for a short *recess*”; while a *session* “is meeting or series of connected meetings devoted to a single order of business, program, agenda, or announced purpose” (RONR 8:2). Figure A provides an overview of the rules for a meeting.

“The minimum essential officers for the conduct of business in a deliberative assembly are a *presiding officer*, who conducts the meeting and sees that the rules are observed, and a *secretary*, or *clerk*, who makes a written record of what is done - usually called ‘the minutes’.” (RONR 3:6)

Different types of meetings may occur (see Table 1). Some meetings may be open to the public (RONR 9:28) or be conducted as electronic meetings (RONR 9:30; p.635-649). “In any organization, notice must be sent a reasonable time in advance of each regular meeting” (RONR 9:3).

Table 1 - Types of business meetings

	Types	Description
A	Regular meeting (or stated meeting)	“the periodic business meeting of a permanent society, local branch, or board, held at weekly, monthly, quarterly, or similar intervals” (RONR 9:1)
B	Special meeting (or called meeting)	“is a separate session of a society held at a time different from that of any regular meeting, and only to consider one or more items of business specified in the call of the meeting” (RONR 9:13)
C	Adjourned meeting	“is a meeting in continuation of the session of the immediately preceding regular or special meeting” (RONR 9:17)
D	Annual meeting	“the annual reports of officers and standing committees, the election of officers, and any other items of business that the bylaws may prescribe for the annual meeting are in order” (RONR 9:22)
E	Executive session (in camera)	“any meeting of the deliberative assembly, or a portion of a meeting, at which the proceedings are secret” (RONR 9:24) (rules on attendance (RONR 9:25); rules on secrecy (RONR 9:26))

“When the time of a meeting has arrived, the presiding officer opens it” (RONR 3:15). Following Quorum determination (RONR 3:3-5; 3:15; 40:), the presiding officer opens the meeting with the Call to Order, and confirms possible Conflicts of interest. “In a meeting where an established order of business is being followed, the chair calls for the different classes of business in the prescribed order” (RONR 3:17). The order of business is the Agenda, which could be amended, if needed, and then approved. Minutes of previous meeting are also revised and approved. Some reports may be presented by officers of the organization. “Business is brought before an assembly by the *motion* of a member” (RONR 3:21). After taking care of the main business, some unfinished business, new business and announcements (next meeting) may arise before adjourning the meeting.

Figure A - Robert's Rules of Order – Summary – Meetings

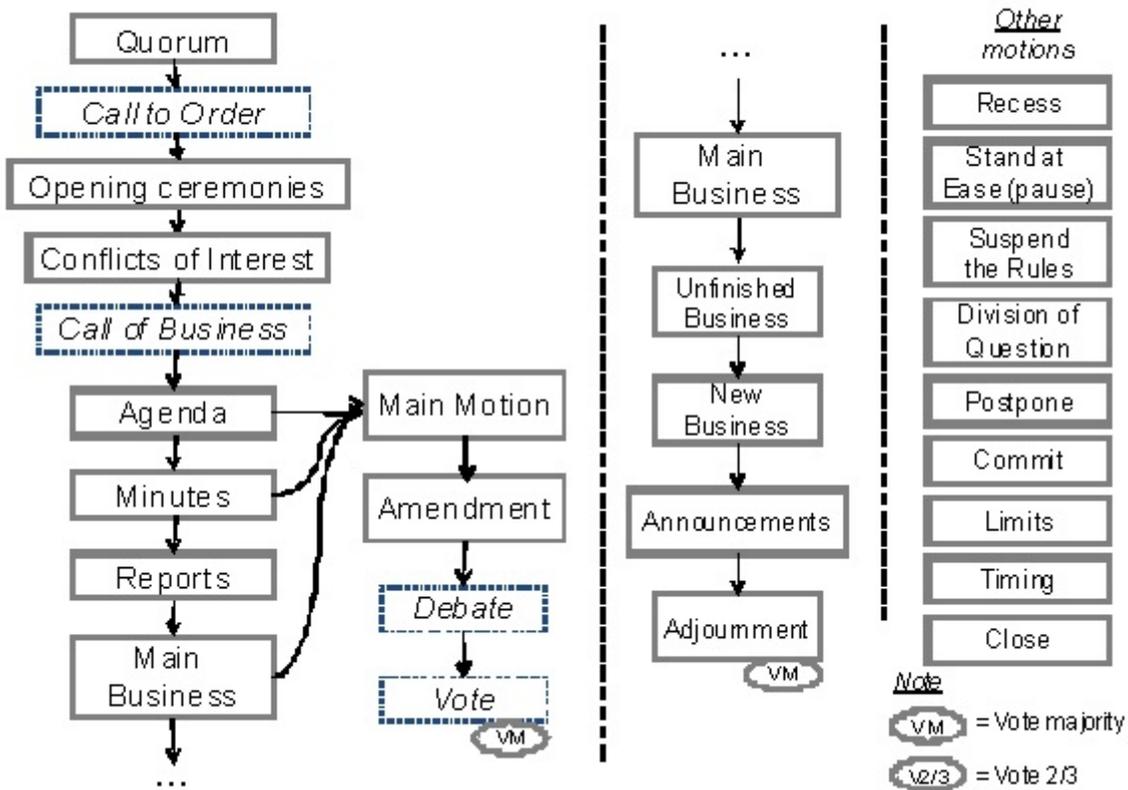


Table 2 presents some timing motions for meetings. Other types of motions will be described later. Figure B focuses with more details on various motions and main business.

Table 2 - Timing motions for meetings

	Types	Description
1	Recess	“short intermission or break within a meeting that does not end the meeting or destroy its continuity as a single gathering”
2	Stand at ease	“if the chair, without objection, simply permits a brief pause, without a declaration of recess”
3	Adjournment	“terminates a meeting”
4	Adjournment sine die (or without day)	“refers to the close of a session of several meetings”

Source: (RONR 8:2)

- It “is customary to send each member, in advance of a meeting”, an agenda. (RONR 41:62)
- The precirculated agenda is not binding, unless formally adopted.
- “When the adoption of a proposed agenda is pending, it is subject to amendment by majority vote.” (RONR 41:63)
- “After an agenda has been adopted by the assembly, no change can be made in it except by a two-thirds vote, a majority of the entire membership or unanimous consent.” (RONR 41:63)

Table 3 - Basic headings of order of business / agenda

1	Approval of the Agenda
2	Reading and Approval of Minutes
3	Consent Agenda (Consent Calendar)
4	Reports of Officers, Boards, and Standing Committees
5	Reports of Special (Ad-hoc) Committees
6	Special Orders
7	Unfinished Business and General Orders
8	New Business
9	Announcements
10	Adjournment

Source: (RONR 41:5; 41:32; 41:35)

Minutes

Minutes are the “official record of the proceedings of a deliberative assembly” (RONR 48:1).

The content of minutes are (RONR 48:3-7):

- “kind of meeting: regular, special, adjourned regular, adjourned special”
- “name of the society or assembly”
- “date and time of the meeting, and the place ”
- “fact that the regular chairman and secretary were present or, in their absence, the names of the persons who substituted for them”
- “whether the minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved - as read, or as corrected - and the date of that meeting”
- “declaration by the chair in ‘naming’ an offending member” (disciplinary procedures)
- “hour of adjournment”
- “signature”

For each subject matter:

- “all main motions” (debated, primary and secondary amendments, if any; vote results)
- “complete substance of oral committee reports”
- “all notices of motions”
- “all points of order and appeals”

Motions

“The basic form of motion - the only one whose introduction brings business before the assembly - is a *main motion*” (RONR 3:23); “*motion* refers to a formal proposal by a member, in a meeting, that the assembly take certain action ” (RONR 5:1).

Characteristics of Motions

Eight characteristics could be used to described motions (RONR 7:2):

- order of precedence between motions
(determine the rank of motions or which motions take precedence over one another)
- what motions or what type of situation it is applicable
(determine what motions, particularly subsidiary motions, are applicable to a motion)
- order when another motion has the floor
- whether it requires a second
- whether it is debatable
(whether debate on the merits of a motion is permitted or not)
- whether it is amendable
(whether amendment of a motion is permitted or not)
- what vote is required for its adoption
(majority or 2/3)
- whether it could be reconsidered
(whether a motion could be reconsidered or not)

Appendix A summarizes some of those characteristics of the various motions with the order of precedence. Appendix B presents examples of motions with purpose. Appendix C summarizes motions classified according to purpose.

Steps in Handling a Motion

Table 4 presents the six basic steps in handling a motion.

Table 4 - Basic steps in handling a motion

Phases	Steps
How a motion is brought before the assembly	1 A member <i>makes</i> or <i>moves</i> the motion.
	2 Another member <i>seconds</i> the motion.
	3 The chair <i>states the question on the motion</i> . (open the debate)
How a motion is considered by the assembly	4 Members <i>debate</i> the motion. (unless no member claims the floor for that purpose)
	5 The chair <i>puts the question</i> . (that is puts it to a vote)
	6 The chair <i>announces the result</i> of the vote.

Source: (RONR 4:2; 4:15; 4:25)

Types / Classes of Motions

Table 5 presents the classification of motions (RONR 5:2).

Table 5 - Classification of motions

	Classes of motions	Description
1	Main motions	“motion whose introduction brings business before the assembly; such motion can be made only while no other motion is pending” (RONR 10:1)
1a	Original main motion	“main motion that introduces a substantive question as a new subject” (RONR 10:3)
1b	Incidental main motion	“main motion that is incidental to or relates to the business of the assembly, or its past or future action” (RONR 10:4) Purposes (RONR 10:5) - adopt recommendations, - ratify action, - limit the length of speeches, - take recess
2	Secondary motions	“serves as a starting point for the division of motions into the classes shown”; “throws light on the order of precedence of motions” (RONR 5:3)
2a	Subsidiary motions	“assist the assembly in treating or disposing of a main motion (and sometimes other motions)” (RONR 6:3)
2b	Privileged motions	“do not relate to the pending business, but have to do with special matters of immediate and overriding importance which, without debate, should be allowed to interrupt the consideration of anything else” (RONR 6:11)
2c	Incidental motions	“deal with questions of procedure arising out of: (1) commonly, another pending motion; but also (2) sometimes, another motion or item of business a) that it is desired to introduce, b) that has been made but has not yet been stated by the chair, or c) that has just been pending” (RONR 6:15)
3	Motions that bring a question again before the assembly	“allow the assembly to consider again the merits of a question that has previously been disposed or in some way” (RONR 6:25)
4	Motions in special situations	renewal of motions; dilatory and improper motions (RONR 38:)

Source: (RONR 5:2; 38:)

Main Motions

Characteristics of Main Motions

Eight characteristics distinguished main motions (RONR 10:8):

- “Take precedence of nothing” i.e. at the end of the order of precedence (see Appendix A)
- “Can be applied to no other motion”
- “Is out of order when another has the floor”
- “Must be seconded”
- “Is debatable”
- “Is amendable”
- “Requires a majority vote”, with some exceptions
- “Can be reconsidered”

Example of a Motion

Motion “should always be submitted in writing” (resolution) (RONR 10:13)

Whereas, The ... [text of preamble clause];

Resolved, That ... [stating action to be taken]; and That ... [stating further action to be taken].

Resolved, That Sprott Faculty Board recommends to Senate the approval of a revised faculty regulation in the Calendar, specifically those governing admission as described in report “X”.

Amendments

An amendment “is a motion to modify the wording - and within certain limits the meaning - of a pending motion before the pending motion itself is acted upon”. (RONR 12:1)

Two levels of amendments (RONR 12:12):

- Amendment of the first degree = amendment to the main question
- Amendment of the second degree = amendment to the amendment

Withdrawal

Withdrawal of a motion cancels the motion.

Withdrawal rules depends on (RONR 33:11-19) :

Before a motion has been stated by the chair

- maker / mover could withdraw it without asking the consent of anyone
- another member could ask if the mover is willing to withdraw it

After a motion has been stated by the chair

- motion belongs to the meeting
- maker / mover must request the assembly permission to withdraw it
 - chair treats as a unanimous-consent request, if no objection = withdrawn
 - if objection = motion to request for permission to withdraw

Subsidiary Motions

Characteristics of Subsidiary Motions

Five characteristics distinguished subsidiary motions (RONR 6:6):

- “always applied to another motion while it is pending, to aid in treating or disposing of it”
- “they can be applied to any main motion”
- “they fit into an order of precedence”
- “they are out of order when another member has the floor”
- “they are in order during the entire that a motion to which they can be applied is pending”

Types of Subsidiary Motions

Table 6 presents the seven types of subsidiary motions.

Table 6 - Types of subsidiary motions

	Types	Description	
1	Postpone Indefinitely	“If an embarrassing main motion has been brought before the assembly”	11:
2	Amend	“If a main motion might be more suitable or acceptable in an altered form, a proposal to change its wording” Two types: - friendly amendment (RONR 12:91) “amendment offered by someone who is in sympathy with the purposes of the main motion, in the belief that the amendment will either improve the statement or effect of the main motion, presumably to the satisfaction of its maker, or will increase the chances of the main motion’s adoption” - regular	12:
3	Commit or Refer	“But it may be that much time would be required to amend the main motion properly, or that additional information is needed”; “turn the motion or resolution over to a committee for study”	13:
4	Postpone (to a certain time or definitely)	“If the assembly might prefer to consider the main motion later in the same meeting or at another meeting”	14:
5	Limit or Extend Limits of Debate	“If it is desired to continue consideration of a motion but debate is consuming too much time, a member can move to place a limit on the debate; on the other hand, if special circumstances make it advisable to permit more or longer speeches than under usual rules”	15:
6	Previous Question	“If it is the desired to close debate and amendment of a pending motion so that it will come to an immediate vote”	16:
7	Lay on the Table	“If there is reason for the assembly to lay the main motion aside temporarily without setting a time for resuming its consideration, but with the provision that it can be taken up again whenever a majority so decides”	17:

Source: (RONR 6:5)

Privileged Motions

Characteristics of Privileged Motions

Some characteristics distinguished privileged motions (RONR 6:11):

- “do not relate to the pending business, but have to do with special matters”
- “have to do with special matters of immediate and overriding importance which, without debate, should be allowed to interrupt the consideration of anything else”
- “fit into an order of precedence”
- “all of them take precedence over motions of any other class”

Types of Privileged Motions

Table 7 presents the five types of privileged motions.

Table 7 - Types of privileged motions

	Types	Description	
1	Call for the Orders of the Day	“If the adopted program or order of business is not been followed, or if consideration of a question has been set for the present time and is now in order but the matter is not being taken up”	18:
2	Question of Privilege (or Point of privilege)	“If a pressing situation is affecting a right or privilege of the assembly or of an individual member (for example, noise, inadequate ventilation, introduction of a confidential subject in the presence of guests, etc.)” which permits interruption for an urgent request Two types (RONR 19:7) - “those relating to the privileges of the assembly as a whole” - “questions of personal privilege”	19:
3	Recess	“short intermission in a meeting ... for a specified length of time”	20:
4	Adjourn	“member can propose to close the meeting entirely”	21:
5	Fix the Time to Which to Adjourn	“Under certain conditions while business is pending, the assembly - before adjourning or postponing the pending business - may wish to fix a date and hour, and sometimes the place”	22:

Source: (RONR 6:12)

Incidental Motions

Characteristics of Incidental Motions

Some characteristics distinguished incidental motions (RONR 6:15); they “deal with questions of procedure arising out of”:

- “commonly, another pending motion”
- “some times, another motion or item of business
 - a) that it is desired to introduce
 - b) that has been made but has not yet been stated by the chair, or
 - c) that has just been pending”

Types of Incidental Motions

Table 8 presents the eleven types of incidental motions.

Table 8 - Types of incidental motions

	Types	Description (RONR 6:17)	
1	Point of Order	“Although the presiding officer has the responsibility of enforcing the rules, any member who believes he has noticed a case where the chair is failing to do so can, at the time the breach occurs, call attention to it”	23:
2	Appeal	“any two members ... immediately after the chair as made such a ruling, can require him to submit the matter to a vote of the assembly”	24:
3	Suspend the Rules	“When it is desired that the assembly take up a question or do something that would be in violation of a rule that applies, it can be postponed”	25:
4	Objection to the Consideration of the Question	“If an original main motion has been made and a member believes that it would do harm for the motion even to be discussed in the meeting”	26:
5	Division of a Question	“If a pending main motion (or a pending amendment) contains two or more parts capable of standing as separate questions, the assembly can vote to treat each part accordingly in succession”	27:
6	Consideration by Paragraph or Seriatim	“If the main motion is in the form of a resolution or document containing several paragraphs or sections which (although not separate questions) could be most efficiently handled by opening each paragraph or section to amendment one at a time”	28:
7	Division of the Assembly	“If a member doubts the accuracy of the chair’s announcement of the result of a voice vote (or even a vote by show of hands) - or doubts that a representative number of persons voted”	29:
8	Motions relating to Methods of Voting and the Polls	“A member can move that a vote be taken (a) by ballot, (b) by roll call, or (c) by a counted standing vote, especially if a division of the assembly has appeared inconclusive and the chair neglects to order a count” “also includes a motion (d) that the polls be closed or reopened in a ballot vote”	30:

	Types	Description (RONR 6:17)	
9	Motions relating to Nominations	“If the bylaws or rules of the organization do not prescribe how nominations are to be made, and if the assembly has taken no action to do so prior to an election, any member can move while the election is pending (a) to specify one of various methods by which the candidates shall be nominated; or, if the need arises, (b) to close nominations, or (c) to reopen them”	31:
10	Request to Be Excused from a Duty	“if he wishes to be relieved from an obligation imposed upon him by the bylaws or by virtue of some position or office he holds”	32:
11	Requests and Inquiry	“several other types ... which a member can make in connection with business that someone desires to introduce, or which is pending or has just been pending”	33:
11a	Parliamentary Inquiry	“a request for the chair’s opinion on a matter of parliamentary procedure as it relates to the business at hand - not involving a ruling”	
11b	Point of Information	“an inquiry as to facts affecting the business at hand - directed to the chair or, through the chair, to a member”	
11c	Request Permission (or Leave) to Withdraw or Modify a Motion	only “after is has been stated by the chair”	
11d	Request to Read Papers	“a member has no right to read from ... any paper or book as part of his speech without permission from the assembly” (RONR 33:20)	
11e	Request for Any Other Privileges	“a request not covered by one of the four types” above (RONR 33:22)	

Motions that Bring a Question Again Before the Assembly

Table 9 presents the four types of motions that bring a question again before the assembly.

Table 9 - Types of motions that bring a question again before the assembly

	Types	Description (RONR 6:26)	
1	Take from the Table	“If it is desired to resume consideration of a main motion ...which lies on the table ... that the motion or series become pending again”	34:
2	Rescind / Repeal / Annul or Amend Something Previously Adopted	“If it is desired to cancel or countermand an entire main motion, resolution, order, or rule that has been adopted and has continuing force and effect”	35:
3	Discharge a Committee	“If a question has been referred, or a task has been assigned, to a committee that has not yet made its final report, and it is desired to take the matter out of the committee’s hands”	36:
4	Reconsider	“If, in the same session that a motion has been voted on but no later that the same day or the next day on which a business meeting is held, new information or a changed situation makes it appear that a different result might reflect the true will of the assembly”	37:

Motions in Special Situations

Table 10 presents motions in special situations or that are out of order.

Table 10 - Motions in special situations

	Types	Description	
1	Renewed motion	<p>“If a motion is made and disposed of without being adopted, and is later allowed to come before the assembly after being made again by any member in essentially the same connection” (RONR 38:1)</p> <p>Renewed motion rules not applicable to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - withdrawn motion - lack of second 	38:
2	Dilatory motion	“if it seeks to obstruct or thwart the will of the assembly as clearly indicated by the existing parliamentary situation” (RONR 39:1)	39:
3	Improper motion		
3a	Conflicting with the law	conflicting with “national, state, or local laws” (RONR 39:5)	
3b	Conflicting with organizations’ bylaws	conflicting “with the corporate charter, constitution, or bylaws of a society” (RONR 39:5)	
3c	Already adopted	“conflict with one or more motions previously adopted at any time and still in force” (RONR 39:5)	
3d	Already decided	“when they present practically the same motion, as previously decided at the same session” (RONR 39:6)	
3e	Beyond the scope	“No motion can be introduced that is outside the object of the society” (exception if 2/3 vote for it by the assembly) (RONR 39:7)	

Principles governing the renewal of motions (RONR 38:3)

- “No motion can be renewed during the same session in which it has already been before the assembly, except where its renewal is permitted by a specific rule; and such rule always implies circumstances under which the motion has in some respect become a different question.”
- “Any motion that is still applicable can be renewed at any later session, except where a specific rule prevents its renewal; and such an impediment to renewal at a later session normally can exist only when the first motion goes over to that session as not finally disposed of, in which case the question can then be reached through the first motion.”

Debate / Decorum

“Debate ... is an essential element in the making of rational decisions of consequence by intelligent people.” (RONR 43:1)

Rules of debate

- Members have a right to know what the immediately pending question is and to have it restated before a vote is taken.
- Every member has the right to understand the meaning of any question presented to a meeting, and know what effect a decision will have.
- Full and free discussion of every motion is a basic right.
- No person can speak until recognized by the chair.
- Only one question at a time may be considered.
- Only one person may have the floor at any one time.

Obtaining the floor by being recognized by the chair (RONR 3:30-33; 42:2-17)

- Preference to mover of motion
- Preference to committee’s report presenter
- Preference to any member who has not spoken before those with second time
- Try to alternate between members with opposite opinions, if known

Decorum in debate (RONR 43:19-28)

- “Confining remarks to the merits of the pending question”
- “Refraining from attacking a member’s motives”
- “Addressing all remarks through the Chair”
- “Avoiding the use of members’ names”
- “Refraining from speaking adversely on a prior action not pending”
- “Refraining from speaking against one’s own motion”
- “Reading from reports, quotations, etc., only without objection or with permission”
- “Refraining from disturbing the Assembly”
- “No longer than 10 minutes unless he obtains the consent of the assembly” (RONR 43:8).
- “No member can speak more than twice to the same question on the same day” (RONR 43:12).
- “Rights in regard to debate are not transferable” (RONR 43:10).

Voting

- “One person, one vote” (RONR 45:2)
- “Right of abstention” (RONR 45:3)
- “Abstaining from voting on a question of direct personal interest” (RONR 45:4)
- “Voting on question affecting oneself” (e.g. vote for himself for a position) (RONR 45:5)
- “No right to ‘explain his vote’ during voting” (RONR 45:7)
- Chair can vote “when the vote is by ballot” (RONR 44:12)

Methods of Voting

Table 11 presents methods of voting. Table 12 presents the choice for vote on motions.

Table 11 - Methods of voting

	Types	Description
1	voice (viva voce)	“normal method” (RONR 45:11)
2	rising	“used in verifying an inconclusive voice vote” (RONR 45:11)
3	show of hands	“alternative method that can be used in place of rising vote” (RONR 45:11) also normal method
4	ballot (secret ballot)	“used when secrecy of the members’s votes is desired” (RONR 45:18)
5	roll call (yeas and nays)	“has the effect of placing on the record how each member, or sometimes each delegation, votes” (RONR 45:45) (confined to representative bodies)

Table 12 - Choice for vote on motions

In favour	Opposed / Against	Abstain	Don’t vote
Yeas /Yes	Nays / No	Abstain	

Voting Levels

Table 13 presents different voting levels.

Table 13 - Voting levels

	Types	Description
1	Unanimous Consent (or general consent)	“If there is no objection to ...?” (RONR 4:59) “does not necessarily imply that every member present is in favor of the proposed action; it may only mean that the opposition, feeling it is useless to oppose or discuss the matter, simply acquiesces” (RONR 4:60)
2	Majority vote	“more than half” ... “of the votes cast by persons entitled to vote, excluding blanks or abstentions” (RONR 44:1)
	Example (RONR 44:8)	Member present = 30 (Membership = 150) Member voting = 25 valid vote; + 2 abstain + 3 blank or no vote Majority = 13 valid vote; Majority present = 16; Majority membership = 76
3	2/3 vote	“at least two thirds of the votes cast by persons entitled to vote, excluding blanks or abstentions” (RONR 44:3)
	Example (RONR 44:8)	Member present = 30 (Membership = 150) Member voting = 25 valid vote; + 2 abstain + 3 blank or no vote 2/3 = 17 valid vote ; 2/3 present = 20; 2/3 membership = 100

Chair / Presiding Officer and Secretary Responsibilities

- Presiding officer is the Chair.
- Chair acts as the Moderator.
- Chair keeps track of the motion currently before the assembly.
- Chair grants the floor to speak before the assembly.
- The Chair should always remain impartial.
- Chair acts as a judge to determine when motions are out of order.
- Any ruling of the chair can be challenged, but such appeals must be made immediately after the ruling.

Chair / Presiding Officer Duties

The duties of the presiding officer (Chair / Secretary of Sprott Faculty Board) is (RONR 47:7):

- “open the meeting at the appointment time by ... calling the meeting to order”
- “announce in proper sequence the business to come before the assembly”
- “recognize members who are entitled to the floor”
- “to state and to put to vote all questions ”
- “protect the assembly from obviously dilatory motions by refusing to recognize them”
- “enforce the rules relating to debate and those relating to order and decorum”
- “expedite business in every way compatible with the rights of members”
- “decide all questions of order, subject to appeal”
- “respond to inquiries of members” (parliamentary procedures, factual information)
- “authenticate by his or her signature, when necessary, all acts, orders, and proceedings”
- “declare the meeting adjourned when the assembly so votes” or “sudden emergency”

Secretary Duties

The duties of the secretary (help from administrative support) is (RONR 47:33):

- “keep a record of all the proceedings of the organizations” (minutes)
- “keep on file all committee reports”
- “keep the organization’s official membership roll”
- “make the minutes and records available to members upon request”
- “notify officers, committee members, and delegates of their election or appointment, to 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”
- “furnish delegates with credentials”
- “sign all certified copies of acts of the society”
- “maintain record book(s) in which the bylaws, special rules of order, standing rules, and minutes are entered, with any amendments”
- “send out to the membership any required notice of each meeting”
- “prepare, prior to each meeting, an order of business”
- “in the absence of the president and vice-president, to call the meeting to order and preside until the immediate election of a chairman pro tem”

Information for meeting

At each meeting, information to be on hand are (RONR 47:8):

- “copy of the bylaws and other rules of the organization”
- “copy of its parliamentary authority” (e.g. RONR)
- “list of all standing and special committees and their members”
- “memorandum of the complete order of business listing all known matters”

Appeal

“By electing a presiding officer, the assembly delegates to him the authority and duty to make necessary rulings on questions of parliamentary law.” (RONR 24:1)

Appeal is possible and “question is taken from the chair and vested in the assembly for final decision” (RONR 24:2)

- “But any two members have the right to Appeal from his decision on such a question.”
- “By one member making (or ‘taking’) the appeal and another seconding it.”

An “appeal is applicable only to a *ruling* by the Chair”. (RONR 24:5)

It “must be made at the time of the chair’s ruling. If any debate or business has intervened, it is too late to appeal.”

Chair replacement

Temporary occupant as the chair / relinquishing the chair (RONR 47:11)

“If it is necessary for the president to vacate the chair during a meeting, or if the president is absent, the chair is occupied temporarily by another” person

- if temporary vacancy: “appointed chair pro tempore”
- if absence for a meeting: “elected chair pro tempore”
 - Secretary could call the meeting in order
 - Need advance notice of election if chair to hold office beyond the current session
- if chair desire to participate in debate
 - Need to turn over the chair: “appointed chair pro tempore” (RONR 43:29)

Appointment or election (RONR 43:29)

Motion to appoint with unanimous consent or majority vote, seconded, debatable

Return of the chair puts an end to this appointment

Assembly could end this appointment or election by adopting a motion to ‘declare the chair vacant and proceed to elect a new chair’

Removal of Presiding Officer from Chair for all or part of a session (RONR 62:10)

“If the chair fails to act in accordance with the assembly’s decision on an appeal (or on a point of order submitted to a vote of the assembly) or otherwise culpably fails to perform the duties of the chair properly in a meeting, the assembly may employ measures temporarily to replace the chair with another presiding officer expected to act in accordance with the will of the assembly”

Appendix A - Summary - Characteristics of Motions

Source: RONR (2020, 12th ed., t4-t34; 5:11; 6:7; 6:8; 10:80); RONRIB (2020, 3rd ed., p. 210-211)

Notes: B=Bring a question before the assembly; I=Incidental; M=Main; P=Privileged; S=Subsidiary

D=Debatable; A=Amendable

VM=Vote majority; V2/3=Vote at 2/3; n/a=not applicable

R=Yes possible to Reconsider; RNvo= Reconsider Negative vote only; RAvo= Reconsider Affirmative vote only

*=special rules or exceptions

A1 - Characteristics of Main and Privileged Motions and Order of Precedence

	R a n k	R O N R	Motion	May interrupt speaker	Second required	Debatable / Amendable		Reconsider or not	Vote	
						D	A		Majority	2/3
P	1	22:	Fix the time to Which to Adjourn	no	yes	yes if not pending no if pending	yes	R	VM	
P	2	21:	Adjourn	no	yes	no	no	no	VM	
P	3	20:	Recess	no	yes	no	yes	no	VM	
P	4	19:	Question of Privilege	yes	no	no	no	no	chair decision	
P	5	18:	Call for the Orders of the Day	yes	no	no	no	no	chair decision	V2/3 to refuse
S	6	17:	Lay on the Table	no	yes	no	no	RNvo	VM	
S	7	16:	Previous Question	no	yes	no	no	RAvo		V2/3
S	8	15:	Limit or Extend Limits of Debate	no	yes	no question yes meeting	yes	RAvo		V2/3
S	9	14:	Postpone to a Certain Time or Postpone Definitely	no	yes	yes merits	yes	R	VM	
S	10	13:	Commit or Refer	no	yes	yes	yes	RAvo	VM	
S	11	12:	Amend	no	yes	yes if D	yes	R	VM	V2/3 agenda
S	12	11:	Postpone Indefinitely	no	yes	yes	no	RAvo	VM *	
M	13	10:	Main Motion	no	yes	yes	yes	R	VM * 10:8(7)	

A2 - Characteristics of Incidental Motions (and no Order of Precedence)

R a n k	R O N R	Motion	May interrupt speaker	Second required	Debatable / Amendable		Reconsider or not	Vote			
					D	A		Majority	2/3		
I	-	23:	Point of Order	yes	no	no	no	no	chair decision		
I	-	24:	Appeal	yes	yes	yes merits	no	R	VM		
I	-	25:	Suspend the Rules	no	yes	no	no	no		V2/3	
I	-	26:	Objection to the Consideration of the Question	yes *	no	no	no	RNvo		V2/3	
I	-	27:	Division of a Question	no	yes	no	yes	no	VM		
I	-	28:	Consideration by Paragraph or Seriatim	no	yes	no	yes	no	VM		
I	-	29:	Division of the Assembly	yes	no	no	no	no	n/a		
I	-	30:	Motions relating to Methods of Voting and the Polls	no	yes	no	yes	R	VM		
I	-	31:	Motions relating to Nominations	make	no	no	yes	no	no	VM bylaws	
				close	no	yes	no	yes	no		V2/3
				reopen	no	yes	no	yes	RNvo	VM	
				election pending	no	yes	no	yes	R	VM	
				election not pending	no	yes	yes	yes	R	VM	
I	-	32:	Request to be Excused from a Duty	yes	yes	yes	yes	RNvo	VM		
I	-	33:	Requests and Inquiry	yes	no	no	no	n/a	n/a		
I	-	33:	Point of Information	yes	no	no	no	no	n/a		

A3 - Characteristics of motions that bring a question again (and no Order of Precedence)

R a n k	R O N R	Motion	May interrupt speaker	Second required	Debatable / Amendable		Reconsider or not	Vote		
					D	A		Majority	2/3	
B	-	34:	Take from the Table	no	yes	no	no	no	VM	
B	-	35:	Rescind / Repeal / Annul Amend Previously Adopted	no	yes	yes	yes	RNvo	VM if notice	V2/3
B	-	36:	Discharge a Committee	no	yes	yes	yes	RNvo	VM if notice	V2/3
B	-	37:	Reconsider	no	yes	yes D	no	no	VM	

Appendix B - Examples of Motions with Purpose

Source: RONR (2020, 12th ed., t34-t43); RONRIB (2020, 3rd ed., p. 203-213)

Notes: B=Bring a question before the assembly; I=Incidental; M=Main; P=Privileged; S=Subsidiary

	R a n k	R O N R	Motion	Purpose	Examples of forms used in making motions
P	1	22:	Fix the time to Which to Adjourn	Adjourn to a specific time	I move that when this meeting adjourns, it adjourn to next Tuesday at 15h00.
P	2	21:	Adjourn	Close a meeting	I move to adjourn.
P	3	20:	Recess	Take break	I move to recess for ten minutes.
P	4	19:	Question of Privilege	Register complaint	I rise a question of privilege.
P	5	18:	Call for the Orders of the Day	Make follow agenda	I call for the orders of the day.
S	6	17:	Lay on the Table	Lay aside temporarily	I move that the motion be laid on the table.
S	7	16:	Previous Question	Close debate and vote on motion	I move the previous question. I call the question.
S	8	15:	Limit or Extend Limits of Debate	Limit or extend debate	I move that during this meeting debate be limited to five minutes for each member.
S	9	14:	Postpone to a Certain Time or Postpone Definitely	Postpone a certain time	I move to postpone the question to the next meeting.
S	10	13:	Commit or Refer	Refer to committee	I move that a committee [details] be appointed to conduct ... I move to refer the motion to the committee.
S	11	12:	Amend	Modify wording of motion	I move to amend by ...
S	12	11:	Postpone Indefinitely	Kill main motion	I move that the resolution be postpone indefinitely.
M	13	10:	Main Motion	Bring business before assembly	I move that (or to) ,,,
				Second	Second!
I	-	23:	Point of Order	Enforce rules	Point of order!
I	-	24:	Appeal	Submit matter to assembly	I appeal from the decision of the chair.
I	-	25:	Suspend the Rules	Suspend rules	I move to suspend the rules which interfere with ...

	R a n k	R O N R	Motion	Purpose	Examples of forms used in making motions
I	-	26:	Objection to the Consideration of the Question	Avoid main motion all together	I object to the consideration of the question.
I	-	27:	Division of a Question	Divide motion	I move to divide the resolution so as to consider separately ...
I	-	28:	Consideration by Paragraph or Seriatim	Examination by paragraph	I move that the resolution be considered by paragraph.
I	-	29:	Division of the Assembly	Demand a call for verification of a voting result	I call for a division.
I	-	30:	Motions relating to Methods of Voting and the Polls	Methods of voting	I move that the vote on the pending question be taken by ballot.
I	-	31:	Motions relating to Nominations	Nominations	I nominate [name of the person]. I move that nominations be closed.
I	-	32:	Request to be Excused from a Duty	Duty, to be excused from	I ask that I be excused from ...
I	-	33:	Requests and Inquiry	Parliamentary law question	I rise to a parliamentary inquiry.
I	-	33:	Point of Information	Request for information	I have a request for information. Point of information!
B	-	34:	Take from the Table	Take matter from table	I move to take from the table the motion relating to ...
B	-	35:	Rescind / Repeal / Annul Amend Something Previously Adopted	Cancel previous action	I move that the entry relating to ... be rescinded and expunged from the minutes.
B	-	36:	Discharge a Committee	Discharge a committee	I move that the [... committee] be discharged from further consideration of the resolution relating to ...
B	-	37:	Reconsider	Reconsider motion	I move to reconsider ... the vote on the motion relating to ...

Appendix C - Motions Classified According to Purpose

Notes: B=Bring a question before the assembly; I=Incidental; M=Main; P=Privileged; S=Subsidiary

Purposes / Motions	R O N E	Types				
		M	P	S	I	B
To debate or modify a question						
Main Motion	10:	M				
Amend	12:			S		
To suppress debate or hasten action						
Call for the Orders of the Day	18:		P			
Limit (or Extend) Limits of Debate	15:			S		
Previous Question	16:			S		
Take from the Table	10:	M				
Make special order of business	10:	M				
To pause or close a meeting						
Recess	20:		P			
Stand at ease (brief pause)	8:2		P			
Adjourn	21:		P			
Fix the time to Which to Adjourn	22:		P			
Suspend the Rules	25:				I	
To delay action						
Commit or Refer	13:			S		
Postpone to a Certain Time or Postpone Definitely	14:			S		
Lay on the Table	17:			S		
Discharge a Committee	36:					B
To prevent action						
Postpone Indefinitely	11:			S		
Withdraw a motion	10:				I	
Objection to the Consideration of the Question	26:				I	
Take from the Table	34:					B
Discharge a Committee	36:					B



Purposes / Motions	R O N R	Types				
		M	P	S	I	B
To consider more carefully						
Commit or Refer	13:			S		
(Limit or) Extend Limits of Debate	15:			S		
Division of a Question	27:				I	
Consideration by Paragraph or Seriatim	28:				I	
Motions relating to Methods of Voting and the Polls	30:				I	
To change a decision						
Rescind / Repeal / Annul /Amend Something Previously Adopted	35:					B
Reconsider	37:					B
To maintain rules and order						
Question of Privilege	19:		P			
Point of Order	23:				I	
Appeal	24:				I	
Division of the Assembly	29:				I	
Motions relating to Methods of Voting and the Polls	30:				I	
Motions relating to Nominations	31:				I	
Request to be Excused from a Duty	32:				I	
Requests and Inquiry	33:				I	
Point of Information	33:				I	