

Summary of the Rules

Fairness (equal rights of members) and good order are the underlying principles (page 8).

The final authority is the majority of voting members, provided a quorum is present, subject always to any applicable higher law (a law of the land, a constitution, a bylaw, or an existing standing rule) (page 15).

In formal meetings, the chair guides impartially without taking part in discussion. In informal meetings, the chair participates as an equal member (page 16).

A motion should be worded affirmatively and must not conflict with any higher law. Each motion requires a seconder (page 18).

The mover's privilege allows the mover to reword or withdraw the motion provided there is a seconder and not more than one member objects (page 19).

Amendments can delete, substitute, or add words to a motion on the floor but must not negate it or change its topic. An amendment cannot be amended (page 20).

Postpone, refer: A motion can be postponed to an indefinite or a specific future occasion or referred to a committee for further study (page 21).

Voting: Common voting methods include voting by ballot, standing, show of hands, show of voting cards, and voice. For a motion to pass, a quorum must be present and more than half the votes cast must be affirmative (pages 21-24).

Informal discussion: A motion to informally discuss some topic, if passed, allows members to consider an idea without the formality of a motion (page 24).

Rescind, reconsider: A previous decision can be rescinded or reconsidered by the members at any appropriate time (pages 24 and 25).

Ratify a previous decision: A decision exceeding the authority of a member, committee or meeting can be ratified at a later meeting (page 27).

Good order: Members should discuss only one motion at a time. A member must not take more than a fair share of floor time nor interrupt another member except as allowed with a point of order (pages 28-30).

Point of order: A member who believes that a law or the meeting's good order is being breached may rise immediately and say "point of order." The chair should allow the member to explain and, if necessary, should call for a vote for a decision (page 29).