

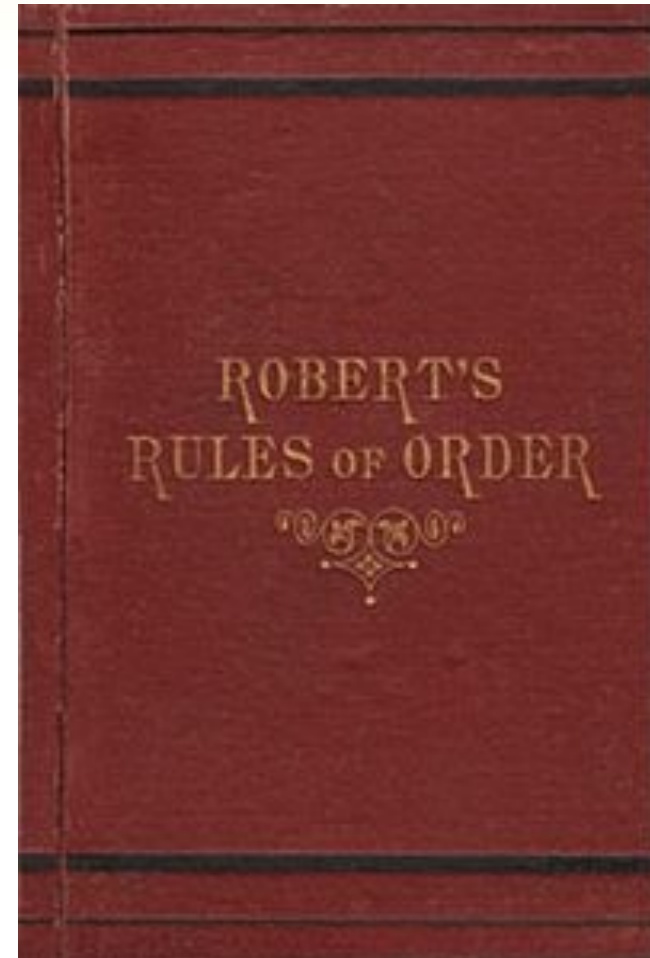


UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA  
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# **Robert's Rules of Order**

# Background

- First edition by Henry Martyn Robert in 1876
- Guide for meetings of deliberative assemblies
- Puts basic rules in place to standardize meetings
- Standing Orders Vs. Roberts Rules



# General Information



- All business for Council must be brought up in the form of a motion:
  - Member must obtain the floor before moving a motion
  - Motions must be moved and seconded
  - Once stated by Speaker, the motion cannot be withdrawn without unanimous consent
  - Late Additions
  - Moving a motion from the floor

# General Information



- Debate
  - Limited to two speaking turns per member, 6 minutes each
    - The time cannot be transferred to another member or to the member's second speaking turn
  - First speaking turn gets preference over second
  - Speaker try to alternate between debate for and against motion
  - Directed through the Speaker
  - Avoid:
    - Addressing members by name
    - Attacking motives of members
    - Comments that are not germane

# General Information



- Voting
  - Typically done by show of hands
    - Exception for nominations or call for division
  - Member can change their vote until results are announced
- Good idea to abstain on matters of direct personal interest
  - May request to have abstention noted
  - Review Bylaw 100(19)
- Straw polls are not in order

# Council Format



- Speaker's Business
  - Attendance
  - Announcements, etc.
- Presentations
  - Written in Standing Orders
  - Restricted to 30 minutes including questions
- Executive and Committee reports
  - Limited to 2 minutes per report.

# Council Format



- Question Period
  - 15 minutes
  - May be extended once if at least 5 members wish
  - May be extended again by 2/3 majority vote
  - Written questions take priority (and will get better answers!)
- Board and Committee business
- General Orders

# Motions - Amend

- “modify the wording of a pending motion before the pending motion itself is acted upon”
- Can only have two layers (no amendment to an amendment of an amendment)
- Must be germane
- “friendly” if unanimous consent





# Motions – Postpone Indefinitely



- “is a motion that the assembly decline to take a position on the main question”
- Disposes of a badly chosen main motion
- Can’t be amended

## Motions – Call to question



- Ends debate and brings about a vote
- Can't be debated or amended
- Needs a 2/3 vote to pass



# Motions – Suspend the rules

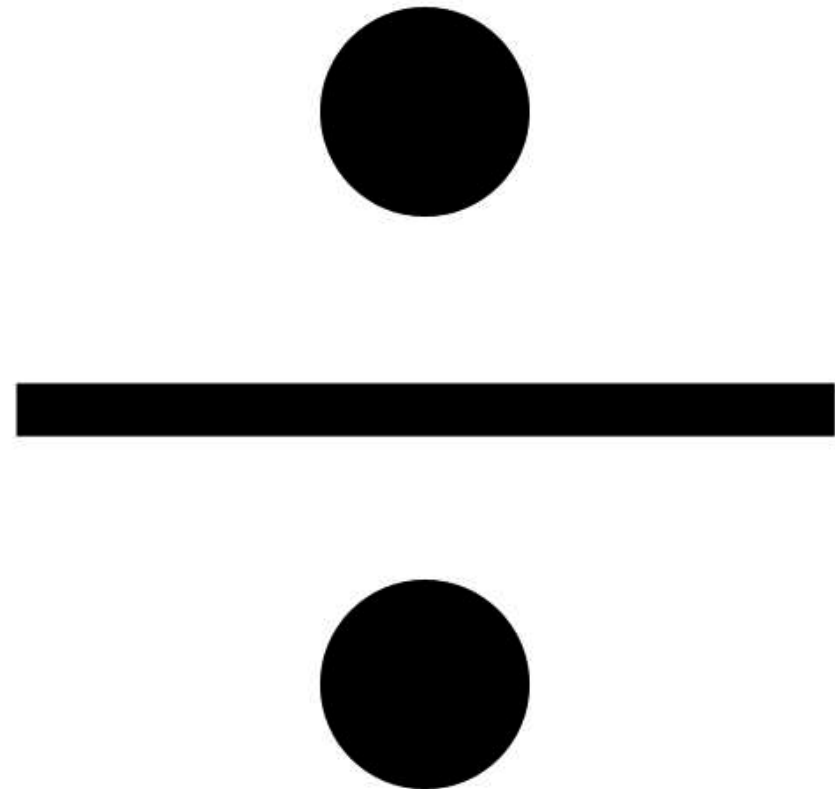


- Suspends a portion of standing orders
- Need 2/3 majority
- Non-debatable or amendable

## Motions – Division of a Motion



- Splits the main motion into a set of smaller motions
- Opposite of omnibus
- Non-debatable, but amendable



# Motions – Division of the House



- Each member votes by saying for, against, or abstain in order
- Each vote goes on official minutes
- Happens if requested by any member

# Motions – Appeal decision of Chair



- Used to reverse a ruling by the Speaker
- Debatable but non-amendable
- Requires only majority vote



# Motions - Reconsider



- Reopens debate on a motion that has already been voted upon
- Can only be brought forward by someone previously on the winning side
- Can only be brought forward at the same meeting

# Points



- Point of Order
  - Used to correct breach of rules
  - Ruled upon by Speaker
  - Can be brought forward at any time
- Point of Personal Privilege
  - Used to register a complaint of a personal nature
  - Can also be used to register a complaint of privilege of the assembly as a whole



# Points



- Point of Parliamentary Inquiry
  - Used to find any answers to questions not answered by the rest of the presentation
- Request for Information
  - Used to request information from a member of Council
  - Not to be used as a form of informal debate (e.g. “is the councilor aware...”)



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**Questions?**