

1 **Parliamentary Procedure Basics**

(RONR = *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, 12th edition)

2 **PURPOSE.** The purpose of parliamentary procedure is to carry out the wishes of the
3 assembly in an orderly manner, to expedite business, and to insure fairness to all
4 – the majority, the minority, individual members, absentees, and the organization
5 as a whole. (RONR p.xlix)

6 **AGENDA.** The chair will attempt to follow the printed agenda as closely as possible.

7 **MOTIONS.** A main motion (or overture or resolution) is how business is brought to
8 the assembly. Secondary motions normally take precedence over main motions
9 and generally help the assembly resolve a main motion.

10 **SECONDING A MOTION.** “A *second* merely implies that the *seconder* agrees that the
11 motion *should come before the meeting* and not that he necessarily favors the
12 motion.” (RONR p. 4:11) A motion “made by direction of a ...committee of the
13 assembly requires no second from the floor...” (RONR p. 4:11) While the proposed
14 Standing Rules require that nominations from the floor be seconded, normally a
15 second is not needed. (RONR p. 46.6)

16 **DEBATE.** One person speaks at a time and one motion is debated at a time. Unused
17 time does not transfer.

18 **SECONDARY MOTIONS.** Listed below are some common secondary motions:

19 A. **AMEND.** A *primary* amendment proposes to improve a main motion or make it
20 more likely to be adopted. A *secondary* amendment proposes to amend a
21 primary amendment. A *tertiary* amendment is not permitted. (In other words,
22 amending an amendment is permitted, but beyond that is not.) To propose an
23 amendment, a voting delegate may say, “*I move to amend by ...*”

- 24 1. “*...striking...*” simple words, a sentence, a paragraph, or several
25 paragraphs.
- 26 2. “*...inserting...*” (in front of or within the motion) or “*...adding...*” (at the
27 end of the motion) simple words, a sentence, a paragraph, or several
28 paragraphs.
- 29 3. “*...striking and inserting...*” simple words within a motion. Use
30 “*...substituting...*” for a sentence, a paragraph, or several paragraphs.

31 B. **REQUEST FOR INFORMATION** need not be seconded and is in order any time
32 except during a vote. A delegate may call out without recognition, “Mr.
33 Chairman, I have a *request for information*,” and wait to be recognized. (A
34 *request for information* replaces *point of information* in some earlier editions of
35 RONR; the earlier phrasing was too often misused to *provide* rather than to
36 *request information*.)

37 C. **PREVIOUS QUESTION.** (CALL THE QUESTION) Voting delegates may *move the*
38 *previous question* on any pending motion. Wait in line and say after recognition
39 (name, church, location), “*I move the previous question.*” (“*I call the question.*”)
40 It must be seconded, is not debatable and requires a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote. If *the previous*
41 *question* is adopted, debate stops and a vote is taken on the pending motion.

42 D. **POINT OF ORDER** is in order anytime rules may have been broken, need not
43 be seconded, and ordinarily must be made at the time of an infraction. A voting



44 delegate may call out without recognition, “Mr. Chairman, *point of order!*” and
45 wait to be recognized.

46 E. **CALL FOR ORDERS OF THE DAY.** If the time has arrived for an agenda item,
47 a voting delegate may call out without recognition, “Mr. Chairman, I *call for*
48 *orders of the day!*” Orders of the day must be adhered to unless the assembly
49 sets them aside with a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote.

50 **UNANIMOUS CONSENT.** “In cases where there seems to be no opposition...time can
51 often be saved by using...*unanimous consent*” without the formality a motion.
52 (RONR p. 4:58) The chair states “If there is no objection to...,” followed by the
53 proposed action, and then pauses. If no member objects, the action is decided. If
54 any member objects by calling out, “I object!” the chair must state the motion and
55 put it to a vote.

56 **MINUTES.** Minutes are “the official record of the proceedings” of the convention.
57 (RONR p. 48.1) The Board of Directors is scheduled to approve the minutes of the
58 convention at its June meeting.

