# Parliamentary Procedure 101

Organizations are like legislative assemblies in they all meet to decide on actions to be taken and to accomplish these actions, some rules need to be established by parliamentary authorities.

ACB’s adopted parliamentary authority is the current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR). Robert’s Rules is comprised of a set of codes and rules of ethics that helps groups hold orderly meetings that allow the majority to rule while allowing minority voices to be heard. At the beginning of each convention, ACB adopts its own set of Convention Standing Rules by a majority vote of the members present.

A main motion is when a member seeks to have the organization take some sort of action, and the motion must be seconded by another member to be acted on by the organization. An example is if someone makes a motion about a chair, “I move that the club purchase a chair for the secretary” this motion will need to be seconded to move forward.

At convention when the resolution and constitution and bylaws committees introduces a main motion, no seconded is required. This is because the motion comes from a committee of more than one person, so it has already been seconded.

Once the main motion is on the floor for debate, then an amendment or referral to a committee (called a subsidiary motion) may be made on the main motion.

The subsidiary motion needs a second, and then the amendment or motion to refer is open to debate. Continuing with the previous example, if someone would like the chair to be red, the subsidiary motion to amend would be “I move to amend by inserting the word red before the word chair”.

The subsidiary motions can change or affect how to handle the main motion so the subsidiary motion will need to be voted on before voting on the main motion.

If the subsidiary motion is amended, then it is voted on the main motion as amended. As in the example above it would then be voted on as a red chair. If it is not amended; then it is voted on as the proposed original main motion unless there is another amendment made or it is referred to committee for further consideration and reported back as instructed.

Below is basic information needed to understand what’s going on when taking part in the debate using:

1. Point of Order,
2. Parliamentary Inquiry, and
3. Request for Information or also called Point of Information.

A Point of Order is called for when a member thinks the rules of the assembly are being violated. They may interrupt a person speaking if the point genuinely requires attention at such a time. A Point of Order must be timely except when it is of a continuing nature. The member rises and calls “Point of order”. The chair then asks the member to state their point of order and the member then reports their point of order to the chair who rules whether the point of order is well taken or is not well taken.

A Parliamentary Inquiry is a question directed to the presiding officer to obtain information on a matter of parliamentary law or the rules, but not related to a violation of the rules themselves. The member seeks the chair’s recognition, and after being recognized addresses the chair: Mr. or Madam President, I rise to a parliamentary inquiry. The Chair responds for the member to state their inquiry, and the member asks their question.

Request for Information (Point of Information)

Is a request for information relevant to the business at hand, but not related to parliamentary procedure.

It is treated like a parliamentary inquiry as the Member addresses the chair, Mr. or Madam President, I have a request for information or A Point of Information, please. The chair asks that the member state the question and the member then asks their question. Members are not allowed to carry on discussion directly with one another and all remarks are directed by members through the chair.

Members will want to take advantage of the Zoom informational meetings for review and information on the proposed items for Convention.

The most important thing to remember is this document is a starting point aimed at helping members engage in parliamentary procedure. If, after reading this document, you still have questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact members of the ACB Voting Taskforce.