

# Roberts Rules of Order

## A Basic Primer

The Voters Meeting will be conducted according to Roberts Rules of Order, as described in this summary.

### CALL TO ORDER

This occurs at the beginning of the meeting, once quorum has been attained. A quorum for a Voters Assembly at St. John's is 35 members.

### MOTIONS

Decisions are made at meetings by voting on propositions put forward by members. Such propositions are called *motions*. Any person who is eligible to vote at a meeting may make a motion. This is how to make a motion and what happens next:

- In order to be recognized by the Chair, raise your hand.
- When recognized by the Chair, speak your motion in a clear and concise manner. (Do not give a speech or explanation first. That comes later.)
- Use this form: "I move that we . . . ."
- The Chair will ask for a *second*. If there is a second, the matter proceeds. If there is not a second, the motion dies.
- If there is a second, the Chair will ask for *discussion*.
  - As the person who made the motion, you may speak first.
  - The Chair will recognize others who wish to speak. Members must raise their hands.
  - As the mover, you may not speak again until all others have had a chance to speak.
- When discussion has completed, the Chair will ask for a *vote*.

### AMENDMENTS

It is possible to suggest a change to the motion that is being discussed. This is done by making a motion to *amend* the motion under discussion.

- Follow the same procedure outlined above for making a motion.
- If the mover and seconder of the original motion consent to the amendment, the amendment is deemed "friendly" and it does not require a second and is not subject to debate.

- If an amendment is not deemed friendly, it does require a second.
- The motion to amend is then debated and voted on upon before the debate resumes on the original motion.

### **MOTION TO CALL THE QUESTION**

This is a motion to cease discussion and proceed to the vote on the motion under consideration.

- This motion is made as described above: “I move to call the question.”
- The motion requires a seconder.
- This motion is not debatable.
- The motion must pass by a two-thirds vote to cease debate.

### **VOTING**

Voting on motions normally requires a simple majority. Voting is normally done by a show of hands, however, anyone eligible to vote has the right to demand a vote by ballot. Voting by secret ballot normally occurs only when an election to fill a position is required, and the assembly does not desire to conduct the election by a show of hands.

### **IMPORTANT NOTES**

- **Raise your hand if you wish to speak.** The Chair will take note and ask you to speak at the appropriate time.
- **Only speak to the topic or motion at hand only.** The Chair will guide the meeting to stick to the agenda as closely as possible, and to keep discussion to the matter at hand.
- **If you wish to make a suggestion regarding the motion on the floor, form it in terms of an amendment.** Your amendment will need seconding, after which it will become the current item on the floor.
- **Try not to repeat points other people have already made** unless you have something new to add to the point.

### **MOTION TO ADJOURN**

A motion to end the meeting; requires a second and is not debatable.