

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE
Grand, District, Local Lodge
Ritual for Local Lodges - Introductory Section – July 2018

These rules and procedures shall be followed in all work within the Order and on all questions and discussions that may come up within the Order. In complicated cases, if these rules are not sufficient, *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, shall be followed and used as a guide for Grand, District and Local Lodges.

All motions submitted to the Grand, District and Local Lodges which proposed to amend, repeal or rescind any part in the Constitution and its Bylaws, or in the bylaws of District and Local Lodges previously adopted, shall require two thirds (2/3) of votes cast in order to be adopted.

The Chairman (Presiding officer) shall maintain order and decorum during the meeting of the lodge, announce result of votes taken, and shall not have anything to say on an impending question while chairman, except when ruling on a "point of order," or when an appeal is made to the Lodge on his/her ruling.

The Chairman is not permitted to vote on any question before the lodge, except in the event of a tie, when he/she will cast the deciding vote. He/she is permitted to vote in the balloting of new members, and at the time of election of officers of the lodge.

The regular 'Order of Business' shall be followed closely. A part, however, can be temporarily suspended by a majority vote of the members, if the question before the lodge does not require an immediate decision.

All motions presented by an individual must be duly seconded before the Chairman can put the question to the lodge. A motion made by direction of a board or duly appointed committee does not need a second. A short explanation is permitted when a motion is duly presented but no debate on the question shall be permitted until the Chairman has declared the question open for discussion.

A motion can be withdrawn by the member who presented it before the Chairman states the motion. After the motion is stated by the Chairman withdrawing the motion by the presenter requires permission from the lodge through a majority vote.

If a motion or resolution has been voted upon and accepted by the lodge, a motion to "reconsider" shall be in order at the same, or next following, meeting provided such motion to "reconsider" is presented and seconded by members who voted with the majority on the "original motion."

Each member shall, during all debates, have the right to express his/her opinion, but must first ask for "the privilege of the floor" and be recognized by the Chairman. If two or more members rise at the same time for "the privilege of the floor," it is the duty of the Chairman to decide in which order the members shall have the privilege to speak first. A speaker must keep "within" the question and shall be limited to two minutes, unless the lodge, through a majority vote, extends the time allowance. Derogatory or abusive language is not allowed.

No member shall be allowed to speak more than once on the same question until all other members who have requested the "privilege of the floor" have spoken, and never more than twice on the same question without special vote by the lodge.

A member shall not be allowed to interrupt a speaker, except to rise to a point of order, which must be stated concisely, after which the Chairman shall immediately, without any discussion from other members, rule on the point presented. (For other occasions where one may interrupt a speaker, see *Robert's Rules Newly Revised*.)

A member who is "called to order" or is speaking when a "point of order" is raised, shall immediately sit down and wait a decision from the Chairman.

Whenever a motion before the lodge appears to have been sufficiently discussed and no further requests for the floor have been made, the Chairman shall put the motion to a vote and announce the result of the vote taken.

If, during debate, a member rises and moves for the "previous question," debate shall immediately stop on the "original motion" and vote, after a second, will be taken on the motion "previous question." If vote on "previous question" (which is to stop debate) is carried, the lodge will then proceed to vote on the "original motion." All members who had requested "privilege of the floor" before the motion for "previous question" was put shall be entitled to speak before the vote. If not carried, debate on the "original motion" continues.

If an amendment is duly presented to a motion before the lodge, such amendment shall be acted on first when voting, and if accepted, the original motion as modified by the amendment shall be voted upon.

If an amendment to an amendment is duly presented, the last amendment shall be voted on first and, if carried, the first amendment shall be put to vote as modified by the second amendment. If the amendment to an amendment is not carried, the first amendment will be put to vote as in the paragraph above. No more than two amendments can be added to the same motion.

After a question has been declared open for discussion, only one of the following motions shall be in order:

- To lay on table until next meeting,
- To lay on table for an indefinite period,
- To submit question to a committee,
- To present a privileged motion.

(For other similar permitted motions, see *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*.)

A motion to adjourn is out of order in a meeting of a society that has a prescribed "Order of Business." If it is found necessary to hasten the closing of a meeting, a motion to suspend the Order of Business can be presented and, if carried by a majority vote of the members present, the Chairman shall immediately declare the meeting closed.

Any member, who feels dissatisfied with a decision made by the Chair, shall have the privilege to "appeal" such decision to the lodge. When an appeal is made, the Chairman shall concisely state his/her position and reason for decision or ruling, after which the Vice Chairman shall immediately put the following question to the lodge, "Shall the Chairman be sustained in his/her decision?" and shall announce result of vote taken. No other member shall be allowed to speak and no other motion entertained until the appeal has been decided.

Any question that has been "laid on the table" until a specified meeting shall be automatically taken from table at the specified meeting; no motion is necessary to bring the question before the lodge for action.

Applications for membership shall be acted upon immediately after they have been presented to the lodge.

During Initiation Ceremonies, all members are expected to sit at attention, with no whispering or conversation between members, thus creating a good impression for the candidates being initiated.

Standing and special committees are expected to make reports at all meetings of the lodge.

The "Good of the Order" includes any matter that is of general interest and benefit to the lodge or the Vasa Order of America. During the "Good of the Order" no motion shall be in order, except one to "to return to new business." Serving of refreshments, dancing or other forms of entertainment should not be permitted during "The Good of the Order."