

14.03 Board Rules of Order

DLANC Board Rules of Order (Adopted April 8, 2008)

Rules of Order exist to facilitate the decision-making process at meetings. They ensure that discussion is clear, and that the rights of both the majority and the minority are protected. Below are some of the basic rules that help a meeting run more smoothly and keep discussion on track. The rules, however, are not meant to disrupt or hold-up a meeting, and may be suspended by a majority vote of the Board if a member is using them for those purposes.

A. PRESIDENT – BOARD MEETINGS

Each meeting of the Board of Directors is facilitated or guided by a chair, who shall be the DLANC President or a designated DLANC officer, in the event that the President is not in attendance. The chair of a General Meeting shall not vote except in case of a tie. S/he is responsible for ensuring that the meeting runs smoothly and fairly. The chair at general meetings leads the discussion and helps facilitate discussion among members. The chair does not make motions at General or Special meetings, and does not vote, except in the event, after a vote has been taken, that his/her vote would be the vote decider. After discussion of motions among members, the chair supervises the vote or agreement on consensus.

B. COMMITTEES & COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Standing committees are the regular, consistently operating committees of the general body. Special or ad-hoc committees may be developed for a shorter-term purpose which has a definite end. The structure of committee meetings is more informal. The committee chair may take part in the discussion and voting at the committee level. Committees are advisory to the Board of Directors; any recommendation or motion from a committee for action by DLANC requires ratification by the Board of Directors.

C. MAIN MOTION

The basis for debate is a formal motion. The motion is put forward or 'moved' by a voting member of the Board to focus discussion. Each motion must have a mover and a seconder to show that it has at least a minimum of support from the Board. If there is no second for a motion, the motion dies and no discussion takes place. Once a motion has been seconded and put 'on the floor' for debate, debate must focus on the substance of the motion. All other discussion is out of order and should not be allowed except for discussion after a motion to amend has been made and seconded. A main motion may not be introduced if there is any other motion on the floor. The mover must state the motion or write it out and hand it to the chair for reading if necessary so that everyone is clear on what is being discussed. For a main motion to be adopted, unless otherwise specified in the Bylaws, a simple majority vote in favor of the motion is required.

D. ORDER FOR MAIN MOTIONS & DISCUSSION

Once a motion is introduced and seconded, the chair will maintain a speaker's list to allow for discussion in an orderly manner. The maker of the motion is first to speak on behalf of the motion. The order is up to the chair, including the amount of time to speak. A member may yield their time or position on the floor to another member. At the end of the discussion, the maker of the motion is given an opportunity to speak

again as the last speaker before a vote is taken on the motion. A new motion cannot be introduced until the present motion under discussion is amended, adopted, tabled or defeated.

E. AMENDMENTS

At any time, a person who has the floor during discussion of a main motion can introduce an amendment to the main motion being debated. A “friendly amendment” may be made to a main motion, only if the maker of the main motion, and the seconder of the main motion are agreeable to the revision. Otherwise, a motion must be made, seconded and adopted to make an amendment to the main motion. An amendment is a motion that alters, adds to, or subtracts from the main motion. Amendments to motions must have a direct bearing on the original motion, and may not include new subject areas. Amendments must also be moved and seconded. Once an amendment has been moved and seconded, debate is held on the amendment only – not on the main motion. If further revision of a main motion is necessary, it is best to ask the maker to withdraw the motion and begin with a new main motion. For an amendment to be adopted, a simple majority vote in favor of the amendment is required. Once an amendment has either been adopted, defeated, or withdrawn, discussion reverts back to the main motion, taking into account whether the motion has been altered due to an approved amendment. Complex or lengthy amendments should be written out for the chair to be able to read back to the membership.

F. POINT OF ORDER

If a member feels that the rules of order are being broken, s/he can immediately raise a 'point of order', and state what rule has been broken or not enforced by the chair. A point of order can interrupt a speaker. It cannot be used as an opportunity to get around the speakers' list - it can only be used to ask the chair to enforce the rules. The chair decides if the point is valid or not, and proceeds accordingly.

G. POINT OF PRIVILEGE

A point of privilege can interrupt the speaker. A member who feels her/his right or privileges have been infringed on may bring up this point by stating their problem. Privilege refers to anything regarding the comfort or accessibility of the member (i.e. too much noise, etc.), or to the right of the member not to be insulted, misquoted, or deliberately misinterpreted. Again, the chair decides if the point is valid or not and proceeds accordingly.

H. POINT OF INFORMATION

A point of information is a QUESTION. A member may interrupt the speaker to ask her/his question, but the speaker who has the floor has the privilege to refuse the question. The chair will ask the speaker if s/he wishes to entertain a question at that time. A point of information is not an opportunity to bring forward information, jump the speakers' list, or generally disrupt the proceedings.

I. TABLE

Debate may end in several ways. If a member feels that a decision on a motion needs to be postponed for some reason, then s/he can move to 'table' the motion. A member may not move to table a motion at the end of a speech, only at the beginning of the time they are recognized by the chair. A specified time may be put on the tabling or the motion may be left “on the table” indefinitely. The only debate allowed on a motion to table is as to the length of tabling. A motion to table requires a simple majority in favor of the motion.

J. CALLING THE QUESTION

If a member feels that further debate is unproductive, s/he may 'call the question', requesting the debate be ended. This can be done by any speaker who has the floor at any time in the discussion. The chair recognizes the "call" and asks if there are any objections, at which time anyone may say "objection". If there is no objection, the meeting proceeds to the main motion vote without further discussion. If there is objection, then the members vote on whether to end debate or continue. This vote requires a two-thirds (2/3) majority to be approved, and is non-debatable. If the 'call' is approved, a vote on the main motion is immediately taken without any further debate.

K. TAKING THE VOTE / ANNOUNCING RESULTS

Votes are conducted by the chair and can be taken either verbally "All in favor say 'aye'... All opposed say 'nay'"; or by show of hands; or written by secret vote, if such discretion is required and the members agree to conduct a secret ballot. Motions are decided in one of three ways and the result should be clearly announced after the vote by the chair. The result of a vote on a motion can be one of three things. Motions are either adopted/approved (majority says yes), defeated (majority says no), or tied, at which time the chair votes to break the tie. Motions which receive a vote are not "passed", or "lost" or "won". A passed motion is one for which the subject is tabled before a vote is called. A lost motion is a motion which obtains no second.

L. ADJOURN

This motion takes precedence over all others, except to 'fix the time to adjourn', to which it yields. It is not debatable and it cannot be amended. A motion to adjourn cannot be made when another has the floor, nor after a question has been put and the assembly is engaged in voting.

RULES OF ORDER – Quick Guide – Adopted on April 8, 2008

How are Motions Presented?

1. Obtaining the floor

- a. Wait until the last speaker has finished
- b. Raise your hand to alert the chair that you wish to speak
- c. Wait until the chair recognizes you

2. Make Your Motion

- a. Speak in a clear and concise manner and state a motion affirmatively.
- b. Say, "I move that we ..." rather than, "I move that we do not ...".
- c. Avoid personalities and stay on your subject. While making the motion is not the time to give discussion in support of your motion. You will have a chance to speak during discussion, and as maker of the motion will get the last word before the vote.

3. Wait for Someone to Second Your Motion

- a. Another member will second your motion or the chair will call for a second.
- b. If there is no second to your motion it is lost.

4. The Chair States Your Motion If Necessary

- a. The chair will say, "it has been moved and seconded that we ..." Thus placing your motion before the membership for consideration and action.
- b. The membership then either debates your motion, or move directly to a vote.
- c. Once your motion is presented to the membership by the chair it becomes "assembly property", and cannot be changed by you without the consent of the members.

5. Discussing / Debating Your Motion

- a. The time for you to speak in favor of your motion is after it is presented and seconded.
- b. The mover is always allowed to speak first, and then in order according to the chair.
- c. All comments and debate should be directed to the chair.
- d. Keep to the time limit for speaking that has been established.
- e. The chair may call upon the mover or another speaker to answer a question if one comes to the floor.
- f. The mover may speak again as the last speaker after other speakers are finished to summarize or reiterate a point of choice. It is not mandatory that the mover speak again, it is his/her prerogative.

6. Putting the Question to the Membership

- a. The chair states the motion, including all approved amendments, and asks, "Are you ready to vote on the question/motion?"
- b. If there is no more discussion, a vote is taken and the results announced by the chair.