



Your **GUIDE** to Robert's Rules of Order

How to take part in committee meetings.

INTRODUCTION

Committee meetings serve several purposes, including:

- ✓ Conducting NABOR business.
- ✓ Making decisions on the actions that the committee will take on issues important to the membership.
- ✓ Providing information to the members on issues and topics of interest. Information can come from such sources as local leaders, staff representatives, guest speakers, etc.

To conduct the committee's business in a democratic, effective and orderly manner, it is important to have a set of rules to follow. NABOR requests that "Robert's Rules of Order" be used to govern our meetings. Following are some guidelines to help you take part in your committee meetings.

HOW TO SPEAK AT A MEETING

If you want to speak at a meeting, you must first be called upon by the Chair—this is called obtaining the floor. If you wish to obtain the floor, raise your hand and the Speaker will add you to a list of people who wish to obtain the floor. Typically, the Speaker will give priority to those who have not yet had a chance to speak, or those to whom direct questions are asked. Keep in mind that even if someone says something that you feel you need to address immediately, you must still wait until the Speaker calls on you, particularly if there are people who haven't had a chance to speak yet. (There are a very small number of exceptions which allow you to interrupt the person who has the floor.)

HOW TO MAKE A MOTION

If you want your committee to do something—to take an action—the first step is to make a **Motion**. Motions can cover a wide range of actions—from routine business matters to major new activities you want your committee to undertake. Getting your idea "on the floor" for discussion happens in three steps:

STEP 1] To make a motion, you must be recognized by the Chair. In most committee meetings that means raising your hand and being called on by the Chair. Then you make your motion. For example, if you want NABOR to start publishing a newsletter you would say, "**I move that NABOR publish a newsletter.**" Or if you think NABOR should have an education committee, you would say, "**I move that we establish an education committee.**"

STEP 2] Before your motion is taken up, there must be a second. Some other person will have to say: "I second the motion." A second to the motion shows that at least two people are interested. If there is no second, the meeting will go on to other business.

STEP 3] The Chair will then ask: "Is there any discussion?" At that point, you or anyone else can speak—but only about the motion on the floor.



HOW TO SPEAK ON A MOTION

Once a motion is on the floor and the Chair calls for discussion, you or anyone else can speak on the motion. You can speak in favor of the motion or you can speak against the motion. The first step is to be recognized by the Chair—usually by raising your hand to signal the Chair that you want to speak. Then wait until the Chair recognizes you. Only the person recognized by the Chair may speak. By having only one person speak at a time, we get a chance to hear what each person has to say. When you speak, keep to the subject being discussed. If the group is talking about a motion regarding raising money for a charity, then you must talk about that topic. If you do not speak to the issue that is on the floor, the Chair will rule that your remarks are “out of order”.

HOW TO OFFER AN AMENDMENT

Sometimes you may think a motion isn't clear, or it could be improved or made more specific. You might want to add to or change part of it. You can do this by offering an Amendment to that motion.

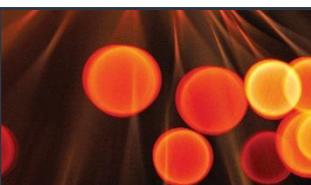
Again, the first step is to get recognized by the Chair. Then (using the newsletter example) you might say, “**I move we amend the motion to publish a newsletter once a month and distribute it to all members.**” Once again, any proposed amendment requires a second. Then the Chair will say: “**Is there any discussion on the amendment?**” At that point, you or anyone else can speak, but only on the amendment just offered.

When it comes to voting, the amendment is voted on first. The Chair will restate the amendment—so everyone is clear about what they are voting on—and then say: “**Those in favor say ‘Aye.’** (Pause.) **Those opposed say ‘No.’**” The amendment must be supported by a majority of members voting, or more than half of those members who vote on the issue. If it passes, the Chair will say: “**We will now resume discussion on the main motion as amended.**” You then go back to discussing and then voting on the main motion, which now includes the amendment. If the amendment is defeated, the Chair will say, “**The amendment was defeated. Is there any further discussion on the main motion?**” Then the main motion is discussed and voted on without the amendment.

The purpose of an amendment is to make the main motion better, not to change it entirely. If you don't like a motion, the best thing to do is defeat it, and then make another motion. Amendments must be “germane,” or in some way involve the same question raised by the motion. If an amendment that is offered is not germane, the Chair should rule that amendment “out of order.”

HOW TO END DEBATE

- If you think the discussion has gone on long enough and want it stopped, here's what you can do: First, get recognized by the Chair and say: “**I move we close debate**” or “**I call the question**” or “**I move the previous question.**” They all mean the same thing: **Let's end the debate.**
- There will have to be a second to your motion. Then the Chair will say: “**We are now voting on whether or not to end debate.**” A vote is conducted, and this vote requires the support of two-thirds of the members present and voting.
- If the motion to end debate is passed, the Chair will say, “**We will now vote on the motion that is on the floor.**” The Chair will restate the motion—so everyone is clear about what they are voting on—and then say: “**Those in favor say ‘Aye.’** (Pause) **Those opposed say ‘No.’**” Here the majority rules. The motion is either passed or defeated.



How to take part in committee meetings.

WHAT TO DO

Below are examples of some common things that may happen during meetings, along with “what to do” when they happen.

- ✓ **The meeting gets confusing and you are not sure what is going on.**
 - Stand up and state: **“I rise for a point of information.”** The Chair will then ask you what you want to know and you can ask the Chair your question.
- ✓ **You think a member is not speaking to the motion on the floor.**
 - Stand up and say: **“I rise on a point of order.”** The Chair will then ask for your point and, once you have stated your concern, the Chair must rule on whether the person’s remarks are or are not “out of order.”
- ✓ **You think the Chair has made a ruling that is wrong, and the error is serious enough that it should be corrected.**
 - Stand up and say: **“I would like to appeal the ruling of the Chair.”** The question of whether to uphold the ruling of the Chair or agree with your appeal is then put to a vote by the members. The members make the final decision by majority vote.
- ✓ **You believe that more information or time is needed for the group to make a good decision on the motion being discussed, and you want to postpone the decision.**
 - There are a couple things you can do. First, you can move to postpone the motion. After being recognized by the Chair, say: **“I move that we postpone this matter to _____.”** If there is a second, the Chair will call for a discussion and vote on postponing the entire issue.
 - A second option is to refer the motion to a committee. Get recognition from the Chair and say (again using the example of the publication of a newsletter): **“I move we refer the motion to the Communications Committee.”** This also requires a second BUT a motion to refer can be debated and amendments can be offered.

WHAT TO REMEMBER

Here are some important things to remember about participating in committee meetings:

1. You have the right to express your opinion on the issues being discussed at your committee meetings.
2. You also have the responsibility to respect the right of other members to voice their opinions.
3. If you follow those guidelines, you and your fellow members will make good, informed decisions that benefit NABOR and its members, AND you will help make your meetings a place where participation and involvement truly are valued and encouraged.



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Robert's Rules of Order | Chart of Motions and Procedures

MOTIONS IN NO ORDER OF PRECEDENCE

Introduce only when nothing else is pending before the group.

Purpose	You Say	Can Interrupt	Requires a Second	Debatable	Can be Amended	Vote Required
Enforce the rules	Point of order	Yes	No	No	No	None
Submit the matter to the group	I appeal the decision of the Chair	Yes	Yes	Varies	No	Majority
Suspend the rules	I move to suspend the rules	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
Divide the motion	I move to divide the question	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
Demand rising vote	I call for a division	Yes	No	No	No	None
Ask a question about parliamentary procedure	Parliamentary inquiry	Yes	No	No	No	None
Request for information	Point of information	Yes	No	No	No	None



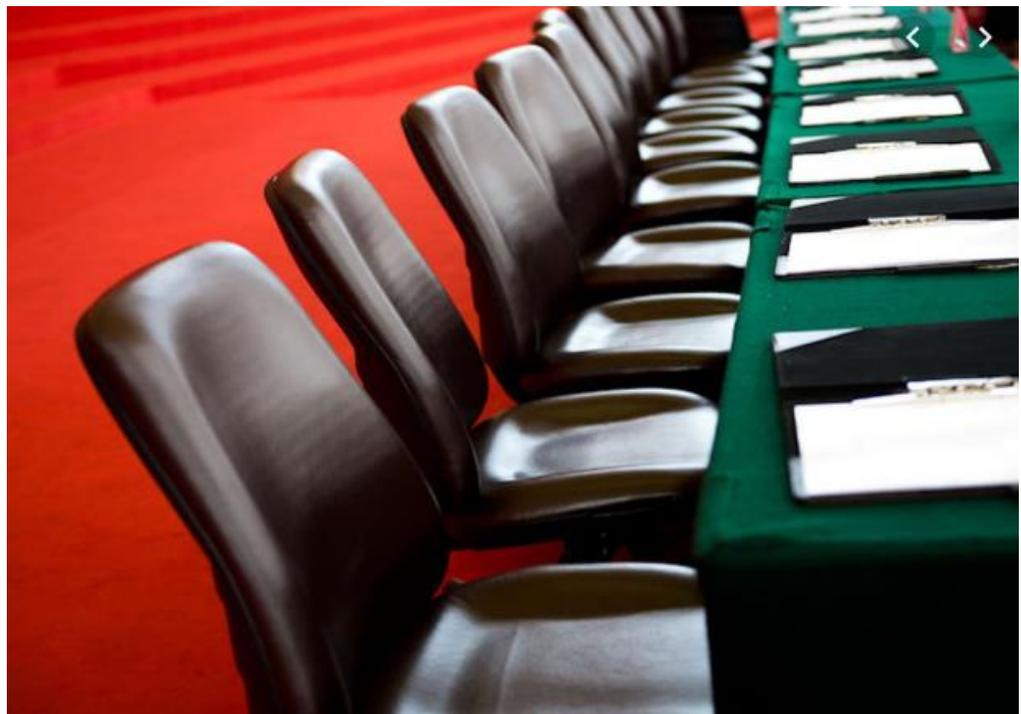
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NO ORDER OF PRECEDENCE

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Purpose	You Say	Can Interrupt	Requires a Second	Debatable	Can be Amended	Vote Required
Take the matter from the table	I move to take from the table	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Cancel a previous action	I move to rescind	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3; or Majority with notice
Reconsider a motion*	I move to reconsider the vote	No	Yes	Yes, if motion it applies to is debatable	No	Majority

*can be made by someone who voted for the prevailing side in the previous vote on the motion.



Robert's Rules of Order

The Naples Area Board of REALTORS® (NABOR®) is an established organization (Chartered in 1949) whose members have a positive and progressive impact on the Naples Community. NABOR® is a local board of REALTORS® and real estate professionals with a legacy of nearly 60 years serving 6,000 plus members. NABOR® is a member of the Florida Realtors and the National Association of REALTORS®, which is the largest association in the United States with more than 1.3 million members and over 1,400 local board of REALTORS nationwide. NABOR® is structured to provide programs services to its membership through various committees and the NABOR® Board of Directors, all of whose members are non-paid volunteers.

The term REALTOR® is a registered collective membership mark which identifies a real estate professional who is a member of the National Association of REALTORS® and who subscribe to its strict Code of Ethics.

