

### ***There Are So Many Rules***

The latest edition of *Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised*, is the 11<sup>th</sup> edition: *RONR* (11<sup>th</sup> ed.)

*Parliamentary Tip # 5 ; January, 2012*

#### ***Topic: Ordinary Committees***

A committee, as understood in parliamentary law, is a body of one or more persons, elected or appointed by (or by the direction of) an assembly or society, to consider, investigate, or take action on certain matters or subjects, or to do all these things. Unlike a board it is not itself considered to be a form of assembly. An organization's bylaws/rules designate who appoints committees and who authorizes the appointment of special committees.

There are two types of ordinary committees: *standing* committees and *special* committees. A *standing committee* has a continuing function and is established by name in the organization's bylaws/rules. A *special committee*, also called an ad hoc committee or a task force, is appointed as the need arises to carry out a specific task not assigned to a standing committee. A special committee automatically ceases to exist upon completion of its task.

Note that 1) A special committee cannot be assigned a task or function already assigned to a standing committee; 2) The order in which the standing committees are listed in the bylaws/rules determines the sequence of reporting of the standing committees to the deliberative assembly; and 3) A standing committee of a society reports to the assembly of the society, and not to the executive board or board of directors, unless the bylaws provide otherwise.

*RONR* (11<sup>th</sup> ed.), pp. 489-529

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*Parliamentary Tip #6*, February 2012

#### ***Topic: Five Types of Motions***

- 1) *Privileged Motions* (5) are most urgent. The five privileged motions are in rank order. They concern matters not related to pending business. They relate to the rights or privileges of the organization or individual members rather than to particular items of business e.g., “The time is late, I move we adjourn.”
- 2) *Subsidiary Motions* (7) change or affect how the main motion is handled. They may be applied to another motion for the purpose of modifying it, delaying action on it, handling its consideration, or disposing of it. The seven subsidiary motions are in rank order below the privileged motions. They are voted on before taking any more action on the main motion. e.g., “ I move that the motion before us be amended by striking \_\_\_ and inserting \_\_\_.”
- 3) *Incidental Motions* are questions of procedure that arise out of other motions, e.g., “ I would like to know \_\_\_\_\_.” or “ I need some information about parliamentary procedure \_\_\_\_\_.” They are made in response to a variety of situations that may arise during the consideration of a pending question. They must be resolved before business can continue. They have no rank.
- 4) *Bring Back* or *Restorative Motions*, as the name implies, brings a question *again* before the assembly, “I would like us to *Reconsider* the motion we have \_\_\_\_\_. “ or “I move to amend Standing Rule, \_\_\_\_\_.”
- 5) *Main Motions* (1) introduce a subject to the assembly for its consideration, e.g., “I move that we purchase \_\_\_\_\_.” They can be introduced only when no other business is pending. They yield to privileged, subsidiary, and incidental motions. A main motion ranks last of the 13 ranked motions; they are below the five privileged motions and the seven subsidiary motions.

RONR (11<sup>th</sup> ed.)