



**Knights of  
Columbus®**

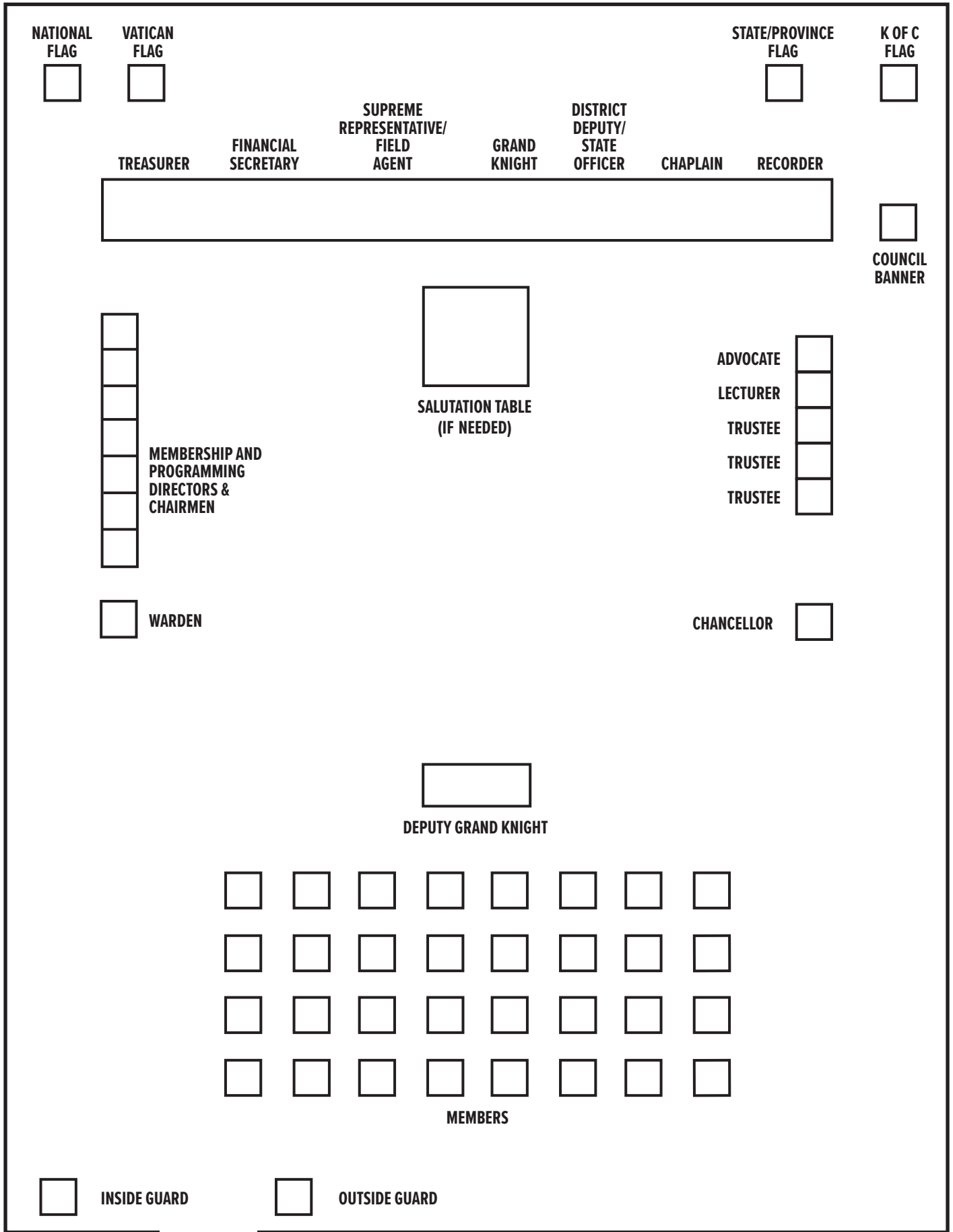
# **The Guidelines for Council Meetings**



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# Council Meeting Chamber Setup



# Introduction

Strong councils hold good meetings that members enjoy. This guidebook shares the best practices for hosting such meetings.

Section 124 of the *Charter, Constitution and Laws of the Knights of Columbus* requires each subordinate council to hold at least two regular meetings each month. One is a **Council meeting** for all members. The purpose of this meeting is to build fraternal spirit, to share information, to strengthen formation in the faith, and to present matters that require the vote of council members.

The other monthly meeting is an **Officers' Planning meeting**. The purpose of this meeting is to plan programs, develop budgets, pay approved bills, prepare motions, discuss new ideas, and deal with other necessary matters. Council officers, directors, and chairpersons are required to attend this meeting. This meeting is open to any council members who wish to attend.

In addition to guidance on running these two types of meetings, this guidebook also contains a section on virtual meetings and the conduct of business by virtual means.



# Overview

The monthly Council meeting should be conducted in a professional manner. Those who attend should feel that their time was well spent. Members will forgive many imperfections; but they will not tolerate their time being wasted. They particularly dislike poorly run meetings.

Hosting a professional meeting does not mean that fellowship should be ignored. Indeed, fellowship is a critical part of our members' experience. Council meetings should be combined with fraternal events like meals or social hours so that members can enjoy the wonderful camaraderie of their brothers. Enjoy a meal or social hour, then get down to business. Or, conversely, get the work done and then socialize.

The Grand Knight is uniquely responsible for the success or failure of council meetings. He should conduct them exactly as he would at work where an ineffective meeting would reflect poorly upon his performance. A Grand Knight should use council meetings to share the council's vision, highlight success, explain the work at hand, and call for votes on important issues. This is where he motivates members to participate in charitable activities and parish/community service.

Successful meetings do not happen by chance. They require significant planning and coordination by the Grand Knight. Dynamic, productive council meetings are extremely satisfying for both the attendees and the host. It is a wonderful feeling for a Grand Knight to witness brother knights responding positively to his well communicated messages and calls to action.

COVID-19 redefined normalcy in many ways. One outcome is the adoption of virtual means for business and daily life. Council operations can now include powerful virtual elements. Face-to-face meetings can be supplemented by digital access for members who cannot attend in person. Member engagement and participation can be enhanced by virtual collaboration.

# Elements of a Successful Council Meeting

## Meeting Preparations

1. Grand Knights should use the Council Meeting Preparation Checklist in Appendix A.
2. A critical part of meeting preparation is telling members when and where the meeting will take place. Details should be announced well in advance. Recognize that some men do not communicate through texts, some never email, and some only make phone calls. Use multiple, parallel communication paths to convey meeting invitations. Consider sending notices one week, three days and twenty-four hours in advance of the meeting.
3. The members' experience will be enhanced by social or fraternal elements hosted in conjunction with the meeting. These should be planned and staged with as much care as the meetings themselves.
4. Guests or dignitaries should be invited at least three weeks in advance and proper protocol arrangements should be made. When dignitaries attend a meeting, be sure to plan time for them to speak.
5. A good meeting starts with a good agenda. Every item should be thoroughly prepared. A standard agenda for council meetings is found in Appendix B. The Grand Knight must know every topic including: what needs to be said about it; who will speak about it; and how much time will be spent on it. Any deviations from the agenda can negatively impact subsequent, important topics.
6. The Grand Knight should not put contentious items on the agenda when guests or new members will be at the meeting. Their first exposure to the Knights should be one of fraternal harmony.
7. A Grand Knight can significantly boost meeting attendance by presenting awards like Knight of the Month, Family of the Month, Certificates of Appreciation, Certificates of Merit, Years of Service, Shining Armor Award, Honorary Life, etc. Let members know in advance that they will receive an award and consider inviting their families to observe.
8. Grand Knights may consider hosting the new combined Exemplification of Charity, Unity, and Fraternity before or after council meetings.
9. Non-Knights and family members may be invited to attend council meetings on occasion to see presentations, accept donations, receive awards, etc. This can build strong ties with family members and other ministries. Grand Knights should always obtain member approval before extending such invitations.
10. Appoint a technology expert to confirm the availability and operability of audiovisual equipment and all technologies that are needed for the meeting. Conduct a dry run to evaluate the quality of what the audience will see and hear.

## Conducting the Meeting

1. The Grand Knight's role during a council meeting is much like that of an orchestra conductor who plans and controls every detail of a performance.
2. The Warden should set up the chamber and stage all ceremonial items like flags, podium, gavel, officer medals, etc. He should also make available ample quantities of masks, gloves and sanitizing supplies as required by church or civil authorities.
3. A technology expert should be assigned to facilitate the participation of virtual attendees.
4. The Guards should welcome and sign in all attendees. Membership cards should be inspected. Only approved guests may remain for the meeting. All should be advised that only council members in good standing are permitted to vote during the meeting. The Warden should present the attendance list to the Recorder for mention in the minutes.
5. New members and guests should be welcomed upon arrival. Grand Knights should formally introduce them to the group shortly after the meeting begins.
6. Good meetings start promptly on time and finish exactly when expected. This is a matter of respecting the valuable time of our brothers. Members should never feel trapped in a meeting that seems to go on forever. If that happens, they won't come to another.
7. In general, a council meeting should not exceed one hour. With the pledge of allegiance, opening prayer, closing prayer, and other routine elements, only about 45 minutes are available for everything else. Grand Knights must be ever mindful of the clock.
8. The Recorder should note the attendance of council officers and mention it in the minutes. There is no need to spend time on a formal roll call.
9. Some Grand Knights find it helpful to use a script during council meetings. A convenient script is provided in Appendix C.
10. Some Grand Knights use presentation tools (like PowerPoint) to keep meetings focused. Such tools can facilitate the timely sharing of information. However, users must be proficient with these tools to avoid moments of confusion. A speaker must avoid facing the screen and reading the content with his back turned to the audience.
11. Reading of minutes during a meeting can be time consuming. Recorders can disseminate minutes in advance by electronic means to all members. Minutes distributed in this manner should be secure and confidential. The use of a password-protected Google Doc or uploading to a password-protected council website is advised. If that is done, Robert's Rules of Order presumes that the membership has taken the opportunity to read them. Therefore, the minutes are not read at the meeting, unless requested by a member, and the Grand Knight simply can ask if any additions or corrections are needed before calling for a vote to approve the minutes.
12. The Grand Knight's Report is an opportunity for the Grand Knight to deliver his vision for the council and to encourage member participation in upcoming programs and volunteer activities. He should focus on key issues and important points for members to know. He should avoid

dwelling on minor details. Ideally, the Grand Knight's Report should take no longer than ten minutes to allow time for remaining agenda items to be adequately covered.

13. During the meeting, the Grand Knight may choose to present short videos and other inspirational materials from the Supreme Council. These videos showcase top programs and motivational stories. Alternatively, such materials may be shown by the Lecturer during his Reflection.
14. Consider having the council Lecturer or guest speakers talk during the social part of the evening, especially if the meeting has a tightly packed agenda. In general, such talks should not be longer than ten minutes during the social or five minutes during the meeting itself.
15. The Supreme Council offers many resources that can be used for the Lecturer's Reflection, including: The Supreme Chaplain's Challenge (published monthly in *Columbia*) and *The Knights of Columbus: An Illustrated History* by Andrew and Maureen Walther.
16. Every presenter at the meeting (for example a committee chairman or program director) must be prepared to give short, pointed presentations. A good rule of thumb is to allow no more than three minutes for any one topic. Appendix D has suggestions on how to prepare a good report.
17. Effective Grand Knights use parliamentary procedures and wield the gavel with impact. They invite discussion only for motions that are properly made and seconded. Discussions on topics other than motions are best done in committee or small group meetings. Good leaders end discussions when the key points are made. They stop repeated mention of the same idea. They call for votes and move to the next agenda item. See the section of this guidebook on Parliamentary Procedure for more information on motions and voting.
18. Unfinished Business is for closing out motions that were carried forward from a previous meeting.
19. In general, New Business is where expected motions are made, seconded and discussed. It is not a forum to discuss random topics that were not considered beforehand by council officers or committees. However, Grand Knights can entertain impromptu motions when needed, especially for crises that require timely actions or for minor matters that do not warrant detailed consideration by the council officers.
20. Good Grand Knights are quick to table motions for which the council leaders are unprepared. The Grand Knight can table such motions for subsequent review and bring them forward as part of Unfinished Business at the next Council meeting.
21. The #1612 – *Protocol Handbook* contains guidance on saluting, how to address officers / dignitaries, and how members should speak during meetings.
22. To honor our founder, Blessed Michael McGivney, it is fitting that he be part of every Knights of Columbus meeting. The closing prayer, which includes intentions for the sick and distressed and any special intentions of the council, should therefore always be either #10502 – *Prayer for the Canonization of Blessed Michael McGivney* or #11118 – *Litany of Blessed Michael McGivney*, both of which can be found in Appendix E. This is especially important as Knights of Columbus continue to pray for the canonization of our Blessed founder.

# Considerations for In-Person Meetings During Times of Pandemic

When this guidebook was written, the COVID-19 pandemic was in a third spike of new infections. States and cities had tightened and relaxed restrictions, only to tighten them yet again. Throughout these cycles of public health measures, authorities continuously sought to prevent the spread of disease and protect the vulnerable who have pre-existing medical conditions or exceed 60 years of age.

Until COVID-19 is eradicated and no longer a public health concern, Grand Knights must exercise prudential judgement when holding in-person meetings. These meetings may not put members, volunteers, or guests at risk. Physical attendance should not be demanded of any member who is concerned about risks to his health. The following suggestions, which are not all encompassing, should be followed:

- Obey the rules and guidelines of the Center for Disease Control, state, county, city, diocese, and parish.
- Host only essential meetings in-person. Hold non-essential meetings virtually.
- Use entry controls to prohibit attendance by sick members.
- Record the name and contact information of attendees.
- Use personal protective equipment (masks and gloves) required by local authorities.
- Observe social distancing and group size requirements.
- Disinfect surfaces before and after the meeting.
- Use hand sanitizer extensively.
- Do not offer self-serve food or drink.
- Arrange for virtual participation by members who are unable to physically attend.



# Virtual Council Meeting Guidelines

On March 13, 2020, in response to COVID-19, the Knights of Columbus Supreme Council issued guidance strongly recommending that local councils temporarily cease in-person events and continue operations without face-to-face contact. With these emergency restrictions in place, the Supreme Council authorized councils to operate using virtual, electronic methods for meetings and the conduct of regular business. Councils were encouraged to use the technologies that worked best for their members. A series of webinars were conducted to highlight the features, advantages, and disadvantages of these virtual tools and procedures. These webinars remain available online for review at [KofC.Org/Webinar](http://KofC.Org/Webinar).

In general, a virtual meeting follows the same agenda of a regular meeting for content and sequence of events. However, members will likely be seated the whole time, so there is no need to gavel them to sit and stand as done in-person.

The following general practices will enhance the conduct of virtual meetings:

**1. Test the meeting platform in advance**

Before hosting a virtual meeting, test the online meeting platform with council officers.

**2. Setup where Wi-Fi is strong**

Set up the laptop or PC where the wireless router signal is strong. Consider using a hard-wired connection to assure uninterrupted internet access.

**3. Appoint a member to oversee the meeting platform and technology**

Designate a technology expert to operate equipment, assist virtual attendees, manage electronic voting, and other technical issues that arise. This will allow the Grand Knight to focus on running the meeting.

**4. Use headphones**

Use headphones with a microphone or a Bluetooth headset. Built-in computer audio is not optimal.

**5. Mute when not speaking**

To reduce interference and background noise, it is best to have all attendees mute themselves when they are not speaking. Unmute only to speak.

**6. Look at the camera when speaking**

Look directly into the camera when speaking to maintain the attention of those on the other side.

**7. Raise hands and use chat features**

If a member has something to add or ask, he should raise his hand or use the chat feature of the platform. This will draw the presenter's attention without disrupting his remarks by having two or more people speaking at once.

**8. Ask for thumbs up and thumbs down**

When seeking group consensus, the presenter should ask for a thumbs up or a thumbs down from the attendees. This will give him a quick visual answer.

# Elements of a Successful Officers' Planning Meeting

A successful Council meeting is preceded by a good Officers' Planning meeting. Planning meetings are where ideas are suggested, debated, budgeted, accepted or declined. These meetings are for officers, directors, and interested members to apply their collective wisdom and experience to the matters at hand. It is where proposals are clarified, strategies are made, tactics are approved, and funds are lined up. It is where approved or budgeted bills are paid. It is where the subsequent Council meeting agenda is created and agreed upon. It is where everyone gets a say; however, it is critical that officers leave every Planning meeting fully supporting the decisions that were made and the messages that will be delivered to the members.

In sum, Officers' Planning meetings are where many of the details for council activities and programs are determined. As such, these meetings should always have an agenda posted in advance. (See Appendix F for a suggested agenda which Grand Knights can modify, as needed.) That said, the Planning meeting need not have the same formal tone as the typical Council meeting. In fact, many councils employ a more fraternal working atmosphere at these meetings.

# Parliamentary Procedure

Parliamentary procedure is utilized to ensure that meetings are conducted efficiently and that business is handled in a proper manner. In essence, parliamentary procedure is a more formal and structured way for members to come together, discuss and weigh any matters at hand until an agreement is reached.

## Motions

The word “motion” refers to the procedure of bringing items before your council. When a member says, “I move that we give \$50 to buy playground equipment for the school,” he has made a motion. When the motion is discussed, it is often called “the question.”

Business may be presented to your council in two ways:

1. By a simple motion
2. By a resolution

After being presented to your council, both are considered in exactly the same manner.

Simple motions are usually short and presented without much preparation. As a rule, they are not written down before presentation. Wherever possible, however, written form is more satisfactory.

Resolutions are often long and the result of careful thought and planning. They are always written and take some form of the following:

*Whereas*, this community has a large group of boys and girls

*Whereas*, these boys and girls have already had experience in Boys and Girls Club work but are at the present time without leadership and supervision.

*Be it resolved*, that this council take upon itself the responsibility of supplying this leadership and supervision for the coming year, and that the effective carrying out of this matter be left to the Boys and Girls Committee.

Some motions have the “right of way” over others. They are usually classified in four groups: main (or principal) motions, subsidiary motions, incidental motions and privileged motions.

## Main Motions

A main (or principal) motion is one made to bring a particular subject before your council for consideration. It may take the form of a simple motion or a resolution. Such a motion cannot be made when any other question is currently being discussed by your council, and it must give way to all other types of motions. Main motions include:

1. Adopt a motion or resolution
2. Amend the bylaws
3. Rescind or repeal a previous action
4. Ratify or confirm an action taken

Main motions generally are not in order when they conflict with your council’s bylaws (unless there is a motion to amend the bylaws) or conflict with the *Charter, Constitution, and Laws of the Knights of Columbus*.

## Subsidiary Motions

A subsidiary motion is used to modify the main motion or to resolve it in some way other than by direct vote. It must be decided before the main motion and it is considered after privileged and incidental motions.

These subsidiary motions are listed here in their order of importance to the main motion, but must be considered in the reverse order. Thus, in reverse, a motion “to lay on the table” comes before all others, while a motion “to amend” takes precedence only over a motion “to postpone indefinitely.”

The subsidiary motions are:

1. To postpone indefinitely
  - The purpose of this motion is to halt the main motion for the duration of the council meeting without taking a direct vote on it. This motion cannot be made when another has the floor. It needs a second, can be debated, is not amendable, and requires a majority vote to pass.
  - Example: “I move to postpone donating \$400 to the school indefinitely.”
2. To amend
  - The purpose of this motion is to change the pending motion before it is acted upon. This motion cannot be made when another has the floor. It needs a second, is debatable if the motion to be amended is debatable, is amendable, and requires a majority vote to pass.
  - Example: “I move to amend the motion by inserting “St. Mary’s” before the word “school.”
3. To refer to committee (commit or refer)
  - The purpose of this motion is to have a small group investigate a proposal. This motion cannot be made when another has the floor. It needs a second, is amendable and debatable, and requires a majority vote to pass.
  - Example: “I move to refer the motion of donating \$400 to St. Mary’s School to the finance committee, to investigate if that amount will meet the school’s needs.”
4. To postpone to a certain time
  - The purpose of this motion is to put off or delay a decision. This motion cannot be made when another has the floor. It needs a second, is debatable and amendable, and requires a majority vote to pass in most cases.
  - Example: “I move to postpone the motion of donating \$400 to St. Mary’s School until the next council meeting.”
5. To limit or extend debate
  - The purpose of this motion is to limit or extend the length of debate or the number of times a member can speak in debate. This motion cannot be made when another has the floor. It needs a second, is not debatable, is amendable and requires a two-thirds vote to pass.
  - Example: “I move to limit debate to five minutes per member.”
6. To move the previous question (to close debate)
  - The purpose of this motion is to close debate and immediately take the vote. This motion cannot be made when another has the floor. It needs a second, is not amendable or debatable, and requires a two-thirds vote to pass.
  - Example: “I move the previous question.”
7. To lay on the table
  - The purpose of this motion is to set aside the main motion temporarily. It needs a second, is not amendable or debatable, and requires a majority vote to pass.
  - Example: “I move to lay the motion on the table.”

# Privileged Motions

A privileged motion is one relating to the well-being of your council or any of its members. Because of its importance to individual members, it takes precedence over all other questions.

These privileged motions are also listed in their order of importance to the main motion, but must be taken up in the reverse order. Thus, a motion “to fix time to adjourn” must be considered first, followed by a motion “to adjourn” and then a motion “to take a recess.”

The subsidiary motions are:

1. Orders of the day
  - The purpose of this motion is to make your council conform to the agenda, or to take up a general or special order. This motion can be made when another has the floor. It does not need a second, and is not amendable or debatable.  
No vote is taken unless the members want to set aside the orders of the day, which takes a two-thirds vote to pass.
  - Example: “I call for the orders of the day.”
2. Questions of privilege
  - The purpose of this motion is to permit a member to make a request relating to the rights and privileges of your council or an individual member and to consider it immediately because of its urgency. This motion can be made when another has the floor, but courtesy demands that the question of privilege wait until the member has finished speaking. It does not require a second, is not debatable or amendable, and requires the grand knight rule on the request. (Note: If the question of privilege is raised by the member in the form of a formal motion, only then does it need a second, is debatable and amendable, and can be reconsidered. It also must be adopted by a majority vote.)
  - Example: “Worthy grand knight, I rise to a question of privilege concerning the council and ask that the member speak into the microphone because it is difficult to hear in the back of the room.”
3. To recess
  - The purpose of this motion is to take a short intermission and then resume business where your council left off. This motion cannot be made when another has the floor. It needs a second and is not debatable or amendable. It requires a majority vote to pass.
  - Example: “I move to take a 20 minute recess.”
4. To adjourn
  - The purpose of this motion is to end the council meeting immediately. This motion cannot be proposed when another has the floor. It needs a second and is not amendable or debatable. It requires a majority vote to pass.
  - Example: “I move to adjourn.”
5. To fix time to adjourn (when a question is pending)
  - The purpose of this motion is to set the time to adjourn the meeting. This motion cannot be made when another has the floor. It needs a second, is not debatable, but is amendable. It requires a majority vote to pass.
  - Example: “I move that we adjourn this meeting at 8:30.”

## Incidental Motions

An incidental motion is one that comes up while other motions are being considered and must be disposed of before the main motion or a subsidiary motion can be acted upon. The incidental motions include, but are not limited to:

1. Point of Order
  - The purpose of this motion is to correct a breach in the rules. This motion can be made when another has the floor. It does not require a second, is not debatable unless the grand knight submits the question to the council members, and is not amendable. The grand knight rules on the point, unless the grand knight submits the point to a majority vote of the council members present.
  - Example: "I rise to a point of order."
2. Appeal from the Decision of the Chair
  - The purpose of this motion is to disagree with the grand knight's ruling and let the members decide the disagreement by a majority vote. The motion must be made at the time a ruling was made. It needs a second, is not amendable and can be debated.
  - Example: "I appeal the decision of the chair."
3. To suspend the rules
  - The purpose of this motion is to set aside a rule of your council (except bylaws, fundamental principles of parliamentary law, or rules that protect absent members or basic rights of the individual). This motion cannot be made when another has the floor. It needs a second; is not debatable or amendable; and requires two-thirds vote to suspend a parliamentary order, or a majority vote to suspend a standing rule.
  - Example: "I move to suspend the rules and take up new business before old business."
4. Objection to consideration of a question
  - The purpose of this motion is to prevent the main motion from being considered. It can generally be made when another has the floor. It does not need a second, is not debatable or amendable and requires a two-thirds vote.
  - Example: "I object to consideration of the question."
5. To withdraw a motion
  - The purpose of this motion is to withdraw a pending motion on the floor without taking a vote. can generally be made when another has the floor. It does not need a second, is not debatable or amendable and simply needs the general consent of the council to pass. If there is objection, the grand knight may put the request to a majority vote.
  - Example: "I ask for permission to withdraw the motion of donating \$400 to the school."

## Making a Motion

The following procedure is generally recognized as good form in making a motion.

1. A member obtains the floor through the following steps:
  - Stands. (Except in very small or informal meetings, the grand knight should also stand.)
  - Addresses the grand knight as “Worthy Grand Knight” and renders the salute. (Representing the tree of the Cross, the member makes a vertical motion, with his arm and vertically open hand, from top to bottom).
2. Grand knight recognizes the speaker by announcing his name and rendering the salute in return. (Representing the arms of the Cross, the grand knight makes a horizontal motion, with his arm and horizontally open hand, from left to right). The speaker may not present the motion until recognized by the grand knight.
3. Member states the motion carefully. This is usually done by saying “I move that \_\_\_\_\_” or “I move the adoption of the following resolution.” It is best to have the motion prepared in written form before the meeting.
4. If the motion requires a second, it must be seconded before it can be discussed. If it does not receive a second, it is lost. Any eligible member, other than the one who made the motion, may second it. Those seconding may remain seated, stating simply, “I second the motion.”
5. Grand knight repeats the motion in full. Typically, this statement is along the lines of the following: “The motion has been made and seconded that\_\_\_\_\_. Is there any discussion?”
6. The motion is then open for discussion. To participate, members must follow the aforementioned procedure (Step 1) to obtain the floor:
  - Address the chair as “Worthy Grand Knight” and render the salute
  - Receive recognition by the grand knight, who announces the speaker’s name and renders the salute in return
7. After a motion and a second to move the previous question, the vote is taken. In the spirit of charity, full discussion should be encouraged before your council accepts a motion to move the previous question. A good grand knight encourages as much discussion as possible. In this way, the facts and merits of the question are brought to light and members can vote more intelligently. Thorough discussion helps your council meetings feel more inclusive and satisfying to attendees. The person who makes the motion is usually given the opportunity to open and close the discussion.

## Amending a Motion

An amendment to a motion is made to change or modify the previous motion which is under consideration. An amendment, like the main motion, must be seconded. It is also debatable so long as the motion to be amended is debatable, and it is amendable. An amendment may do one of four things:

1. Add one or more words or sentences to the motion under consideration.
2. Strike out one or more words or sentences from the motion under consideration.
3. Substitute another motion for the one being considered.
4. Substitute words or replace wording under consideration.

The proper form for making an amendment is either of the following:

- “I move to amend the motion to read \_\_\_\_\_.”
- “I move to amend the motion by \_\_\_\_\_.”

The amendment to a motion, if seconded, must be voted upon before the original motion. If the amendment is agreed upon, the original motion will be revised and voted on accordingly. If the amendment is lost, the motion is voted upon as originally stated.

In case of an amendment to an amendment, the most recent amendment is always voted upon first. If it is carried, the preceding amendment is then voted upon as amended.

## Ways of Voting

When the discussion is over, the grand knight repeats the motion either verbally or by asking the recorder to repeat the motion. He then puts it to a vote. The following four voting methods are commonly used:

1. Voting by Acclamation: “Aye” or “Nay.” This is probably the most commonly used method of voting. However, it has both advantages and disadvantages:
  - Advantages:
    - a) It is the quickest method.
    - b) For unimportant questions or where there is no doubt about the wishes of the majority, it is very satisfactory.
  - Disadvantages:
    - a) The minority group may produce enough sound to “drown out” the majority.
    - b) The grand knight has an ability to favor the outcome if the vote is close.
    - c) The side voting first (which must always be the affirmative) has a decided psychological advantage. For example, if a member that intends to vote “nay” senses that the majority of his council is going to vote the other way, he may change his vote at the last second or abstain from voting.
2. Voting by Standing or Raising the Hand: This method overcomes the first two disadvantages of voting by acclamation (“Aye” or “Nay”), as the majority and the minority are clearly identified from the floor and the chair. This method is advisable for all important matters where the following two methods are not used, and where the result of the voter would otherwise be uncertain.

3. Voting by Roll Call: Sometimes also called “Yeas and Nays.” Roll call gives every member the chance to have his vote on record. Legislative bodies, therefore, use it frequently.
4. Voting by Ballot: This takes more time. Slips of paper are first passed around to the members, who write the name of the person they prefer, or “yes” or “no” on their slip. To make voting by ballot quicker, tellers may be selected to collect and count ballots.
  - Advantages:
    - a) Offers discretion. No one person need influence the vote of another.
    - b) Offers accuracy. Every member present has a chance to vote and get a fair decision.
    - c) The decision is not known until all ballots are cast.

## The Grand Knight’s Vote

The grand knight is the conductor of the debate and should, in most cases, remain as impartial to either side as possible. However, should he choose to vote, please note the following:

- If the grand knight’s vote causes a tie, a motion is then lost.
- If a vote is a tie without the vote of the grand knight, he has the option to cast his vote and thus carry or deny the motion.

Please note, when voting by ballot the grand knight must vote in the same way as the other members, and therefore has no ability to break ties.

## Electing Officers

Council officers should always be chosen by ballot. There are three popular methods of suggesting candidates:

1. Nominations from the floor with a choice by ballot. This method is satisfactory and speedy.
2. An “informal” ballot to indicate choice, followed by an election via “formal” ballot. This method is least likely to offend any of the candidates.
3. Suggestions by a nominating committee: a “slate” with one or two names for each office. This method permits some knowledge of the qualifications of the candidate for the respective office.

In all cases, balloting should continue until a majority vote has been received by one of the candidates.

## Records

Good records are valuable reports of what is done in Council meetings.

The minutes of the meetings are kept by the recorder. He can use #1403 – *Recorder's Minute Book* or another form of record if preferred.

The minutes of the Council meetings should contain a complete record of what transpired. They include every motion, whether lost or carried, and the names of the members who made and seconded them. Details of discussions are not necessary, but records should indicate the number of votes on either side if the votes were counted. No personal opinions or comments should be included.

## Committees

Committees generally consist of an odd number of members (usually three or five), chosen for the purpose of investigating a specific matter or carrying out a particular piece of work.

Committees offer two great advantages. First, they allow more time and greater opportunity for consideration of a question. Second, they are a means of delegating responsibility in your council.

A committee is subject to the same rules of order as your council, except that it can act with greater freedom.

Committees are formed by the grand knight, who appoints committee members.

# Appendix A:

## Council Meeting Preparation Checklist

- Securely distribute the prior meeting minutes to all members for advance review.**
- Notify members about the meeting.**
  - Share details by text, email, social media, and phone. Consider sending notices at one week, three days, and 24 hours in advance.
- Plan the social or fraternal elements.**
  - Arrange for food and drinks.
  - Follow rules for social distancing, sanitization, and food handling.
- Plan for guests.**
  - Obtain council approval to invite non-Knights as guests.
  - Formally invite guests at least three weeks in advance.
  - Assign someone to greet and escort guests to the Grand Knight.
  - Observe protocol for dignitaries and allow time for them to speak.
- Prepare awards, especially for Knight and Family of the Month.**
  - Give recipients advance notice.
  - Consider inviting their families to attend.
- Determine agenda topics and allocate time for each.**
  - Review the content with presenters.
  - Avoid contentious items if guests will be present.
  - Do not exceed one hour of planned material.
- Organize presentation materials.**
  - If using presentation software, prepare the slide deck and view it beforehand.
- Familiarize yourself with the meeting script.**
- Appoint a technology expert to set up and run all electronic equipment and virtual elements of the meeting.**
  - Verify strong internet connectivity and test the platform for virtual attendees.
  - Assemble all necessary equipment in advance.
  - Determine optimal arrangements for lighting and sound.
- Direct the Warden to inventory and stage necessary equipment.**
  - This includes podium, tables, chairs, flags, banners, gavel, attendance sheet, medals of office, etc.
  - Also provide personal protective equipment (masks, gloves) and sanitizing supplies.
- Assemble necessary reference materials.**
  - This includes #10318- *The Guidelines of Conducting Council Meetings*, #1612- *Protocol Handbook*, #5093- *Leadership Resources, Charter, Constitution, and Laws of the Knights of Columbus*, Council Bylaws, programs materials, etc.



# Appendix B:

## Council Meeting Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Opening Prayer
3. Pledge of Allegiance (USA) or Patriotic Display of Loyalty
4. Approve Minutes of Prior Meeting
5. Chaplain's Message
6. Grand Knight's Report
7. Financial Report
8. Membership Report
  - Balloting of Candidates for Admission or Transfer
9. Other Reports
  - Programs
  - Committees
  - Fourth Degree
  - Insurance Agent
  - District Deputy
  - Other
10. Unfinished Business (*motions carried over from previous meetings*)
11. New Business (*new motions*)
  - Bills Not Previously Approved
12. Good of the Order
  - Awards (*Family and Knight of the Month, etc.*)
13. Lecturer's Reflection (*optional*)
14. Grand Knight's Summary
15. Closing Prayer (*including intentions for sick or distressed members*): Prayer for Canonization of Blessed Michael McGivney or Litany of Blessed Michael McGivney
16. Adjournment





# Appendix C:

## Grand Knight Script for Council Meeting

### 1. Call to Order

☞ Brothers, we are about to open this council meeting. All persons who are not Knights or honored guests shall please retire from the chamber. The doors shall now be closed, and the guards assume their positions.

### 2. Opening Prayer

☞☞☞ Brothers and guests, let us invoke the Divine blessing as our Chaplain leads us in the Lord's Prayer.

### 3. Pledge of Allegiance (USA)

Brothers and guests, please join me in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

☞

### 4. Approve Minutes of Prior Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were transmitted to all members.

Are any corrections or additions required?

I seek a motion to approve the minutes.

The minutes are approved. ☞

### 5. Chaplain's Message

Worthy Chaplain, please enlighten us with your message.

### 6. Grand Knight's Report

### 7. Financial Report

Worthy Treasurer, please report the council's financial status.

### 8. Membership Report

Worthy Membership Director, please give us your report and present applications for new members and transfers.

*(Call for a motion, discussion, and vote on admissions and transfers.)*


The applications are approved. ☞

## 9. Other Reports

*(The following reports are made as needed.)*

- Worthy (\_\_\_\_\_) Program Director, please report on upcoming events.
- Worthy (\_\_\_\_\_) Program Director, please report on upcoming events.
- Worthy (\_\_\_\_\_) Committee Chairman, please give us your report.
- Worthy (\_\_\_\_\_) Committee Chairman, please give us your report.
- Worthy Fourth Degree Representative, please give us your report.
- (\_\_\_\_\_), please give us your report.

*(The following reports are made if the Insurance Agent and/or District Deputy are present.)*

- Worthy Insurance Agent, please give us your report.
-  Worthy District Deputy, please give us your report. \*

## 10. Unfinished Business (motions carried over from previous meetings)

The following motion was tabled at a prior meeting. I now reopen it for discussion and vote:

The 'ayes' have it. The motion is carried. 

The 'nays' have it. The motion is lost. 

## 11. New Business (new motions)

Worthy Financial Secretary, please present any bills not previously approved for payment.

I seek a motion to pay the bills.

The motion is carried. The bills are approved to be paid.

I will now entertain new motions. *(Allow expected motions to be made and discussed, then voted upon)*

The motion is carried. 

The motion is lost. 

## 12. Good of the Order

We will now recognize the outstanding accomplishments of our members:

- Family of the Month Award
- Knight of the Month Award
- Other Awards




## 13. Lecturer's Reflection (optional)

Let us now listen to the Worthy Lecturer's Reflection. *(If not done during social time)*

## 14. Grand Knight's Summary

## 15. Closing Prayer











Before proceeding to the closing prayer, let me ask: Does any brother know of a member of this council, or brother of the Order, who is sick or in distress?

   Worthy Chaplain, please lead us in the Prayer for Canonization of Blessed Michael McGivney *(or Litany of Blessed Michael McGivney)* as we pray for the distressed and close this meeting.

## 16. Adjournment

I declare this meeting adjourned 

### Gavel Protocol:

- |   |                |
|---|----------------|
|    | All Sit        |
|     | Officers Stand |
|      | All Stand      |
|     | All Kneel      |

\* As a sign of respect, it is customary for the Grand Knight to gavel the council to rise when the District Deputy stands to give his report. After members have extended this courtesy, the Grand Knight may gavel the assembly to sit if the speaker has not already asked everyone to be seated.



## Appendix D: How to Prepare a Good Report

Numerous topics must be covered in a one-hour council meeting. One issue cannot be given so much time that other important issues are excluded or given inadequate attention. So, it is incumbent upon anyone making a report to be ever mindful of the clock.

In general, a presenter should take no more than three minutes to give his report. With careful preparation, this is ample time to convey the necessary information. A crisp, focused report respects not only the Grand Knight who carefully prepared the meeting agenda, but also the other presenters who limited their reports to fit the allotted times.

Often, people who are not accustomed to public speaking at council meetings will speak much longer than the audience is willing to listen. Instead of focusing only on the key points and main take away items, they dwell at length on lesser details as if they were delivering an academic paper. They fail to note when the audience has lost interest, and they drone on while members look at their smart phones and other distractions.

A good presenter respects the valuable time of the audience. A good report is short and simple. Key elements include:

- The five W's: Who, What, When, Where, Why.
- Results if reporting completion of a project.
- Status if giving an update on a project.
- Clear requests for needed support.
- Recommendations for further actions.

It is unnecessary to drag the audience through the thought process and intermediate steps taken to reach the conclusions. The speaker should tell the audience what they need to know, answer their questions, and sit down.

Some speakers find it helpful to write down their intended remarks. Then they cut it in half and reorganize. Then they cut it in half yet again and again. This forces them to eliminate all superfluous information. In time it becomes second nature to focus on only the most important matter.



# Appendix E:

## Prayers to Blessed Michael McGivney

### Prayer for the Canonization of Blessed Michael McGivney

God, our Father, protector of the poor and defender of the widow and orphan, you called your priest, Blessed Michael McGivney, to be an apostle of Christian family life and to lead the young to the generous service of their neighbor. Through the example of his life and virtue, may we follow your Son, Jesus Christ, more closely, fulfilling his commandment of charity and building up his Body which is the Church. Let the inspiration of your servant prompt us to greater confidence in your love so that we may continue his work of caring for the needy and the outcast. We humbly ask that you glorify Blessed Michael McGivney on earth according to the design of your holy will. Through his intercession, grant the favor I now present (*here make your request*).

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### Litany of Blessed Michael McGivney

Lord, have mercy on us.

*Christ, have mercy on us.*

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, hear us.

*Christ, graciously hear us.*

God, the Father of heaven,  
*have mercy on us.*

God, the Son, Redeemer of the world,  
*have mercy on us.*

God, the Holy Spirit,  
*have mercy on us.*

Holy Trinity, One God,  
*have mercy on us.*

Holy Mary, Mother of God, *pray for us.*

Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, ...

Our Lady of Guadalupe, Star of the New Evangelization,

St. Joseph, Spouse of Mary and Guardian of the Redeemer,

St. Michael the Archangel,

Blessed Michael McGivney, *pray for us.*

Humble Servant of God, ...

Faithful Disciple of Jesus,

Son of the Immaculate Heart,

Obedient Son of the Church,

Exemplary Priest of Purity,

Zealous Priest of Christ,



Gentle Shepherd of Souls,  
Devoted Parish Priest,  
Wise Counselor,  
Teacher of the Faith,  
Servant to All,  
Protector of the Poor,  
Defender of the Widow and Orphan,  
Friend of the Lonely and Suffering,  
Companion to the Imprisoned,  
Comforter of the Sick and Dying,

Apostle of Christian Family Life,  
Father to the Young,  
Advocate of Workers,  
Evangelizer of Those Gone Astray,  
Champion of the Gospel of Life,

Guardian of the Laity,  
Pastor of Immigrants,  
Exemplar of Charity,  
Model of Unity,  
Builder of Catholic Fraternity,  
Instructor of Christian Patriotism,  
Founder of the Knights of Columbus,

Blessed Michael, humble in service, *pray for us.*  
Blessed Michael, devoted to the Sacred Heart, ...  
Blessed Michael, pure in heart,  
Blessed Michael, faithful in priestly duties,  
Blessed Michael, strong in suffering,  
Blessed Michael, peaceful in dying,  
Blessed Michael, conformed to Christ crucified,

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,  
*spare us, O Lord!*

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,  
*graciously hear us, O Lord!*

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,  
*have mercy on us!*

**V/** Pray for us, Blessed Michael McGivney,

**R/** *That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.*

Let us pray. God, our Father, inspired by the heroic example of the life and virtue of your priest, Blessed Michael McGivney, may we follow your Son, Jesus Christ, more closely, fulfilling His commandment of charity and building up His Body, which is the Church. Let the inspiration of your servant prompt us to greater confidence in your love so that we may continue his work of caring for the needy and outcast.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

# Appendix F:

## Officers' Planning Meeting Agenda

1. Opening Prayer
2. Grand Knight's Report
  - Overview of Council Issues
  - Review Correspondence
  - Review Schedule
  - Agenda for Next Council Meeting
  - Unfinished Business
  - New Business
3. Officers' Reports
  - Chaplain
  - Deputy Grand Knight
  - Chancellor
  - Recorder
    - Minutes
  - Financial Secretary
    - Council Standing
    - Reports
    - Receipts
    - Bills
    - Supplies
  - Treasurer
    - Accounts Status
  - Lecturer
    - Proposed Reflections
  - Advocate
  - Warden
    - Equipment
  - Trustees
    - Audits
  - Others as Needed
4. Membership Report
  - Candidates
  - Exemplifications
5. Program Reports
  - Faith
  - Family
  - Community
  - Life
  - Committees
  - New ideas from members in attendance
6. Good of the Order
  - Prayers for Members
  - Upcoming awards for members, other
7. Closing Prayer (Prayer for the Canonization of Blessed Michael McGivney or Litany of Blessed Michael McGivney)





# Appendix G: Parliamentary Terms

**Adjourn** To close the meeting.

**Amend** To change a motion by means of another motion.

**Amendment** A change made in a previous motion. Such an amendment is debatable and may be reconsidered.

**Appeal from decision of the chair** An incidental motion. Any member disagreeing with the grand knight's decision may thus put the matter to a vote of your council. This is in order, even though another member has the floor. The member rises, saying, "I appeal from the decision of the chair." If the appeal is seconded, the grand knight must say, "Shall the decision of the chair be sustained?" It cannot be amended but may be reconsidered. A tie vote sustains the chair.

**Ballot** A method of voting in which members submit their votes in writing. This approach is often used when secrecy of members' votes is preferred.

**Debatable** The discussion of a motion or question. Discussion must always follow the accepted rules of order.

**Division of the house** If any member of your council is dissatisfied with the result of the vote as announced by the grand knight, he may call for a "division of the house" or "division of the council" or just "division." The grand knight says, "A division is called for; those in favor of the motion will rise." The grand knight then appoints "tellers" to count those standing. Announcing the number, the grand knight says, "Those opposed will rise." They are also counted by the teller and the grand knight announces the result.

**Fix time to which to adjourn** This is a privileged motion which takes precedence over all others.

**Lay on the table** A subsidiary motion, the purpose of which is to postpone consideration to a more convenient time. This is often considered a polite way of defeating a motion, with the assumption that it is to lie on the table permanently. If carried, a motion to "lay on the table" usually takes with it everything concerned with the question. It is not debatable and cannot be amended.

**Majority** A total which is a number greater than half the votes cast.

**Meeting** The time a council remains together without adjournment. A call-to-order after an adjournment constitutes another meeting.

**Minutes** The written records of the proceedings of the meetings, as kept by the recorder.

**Motion** The accepted name applied to the procedure of getting a matter before your council.

**Move to the previous question** A subsidiary motion. Its object is to bring the question which is under consideration before your council for vote without further debate. It cannot be debated and cannot be amended. It requires a two-thirds vote for its adoption.

**New Business** Matters which have not been formally discussed before, but are brought up for the first time.

**Nomination** Suggesting the name of a person for an office, to be used at the time of election. It is not a motion and requires no second.

**Objection to consideration of a question** An incidental motion. The object of this motion is to avoid consideration of a question which is irrelevant or otherwise improper. Such an objection may be made to any principal motion, but only when it is first introduced and before it is debated. It can be made when another member has the floor and does not require a second. It cannot be debated or amended. The grand knight may decide the point or may put the question, "Will the council consider it?" If decided in the negative by a two-thirds vote, the matter is dismissed.

**Obtain the floor** Securing the right to speak, either to make or discuss a motion.

**Order of the day** A privileged motion. This commonly refers to the order in which your council has decided to take up its matters of business. To change this order of business after the time for consideration of each question is once set, a vote of your council is required.

**Plurality** The action receiving the greatest number of votes. A plurality is not necessarily the majority, although it may be.

**Point of order** An incidental motion made to correct disorder in the proceeding or in the deportment of members. Any member may obtain the floor and say, "I rise to a point of order." The member then states the point, and the grand knight decides whether it is well-taken. It does not require a second and cannot be debated, except that the grand knight may ask for the opinions of others before giving his decision. It cannot be amended, but it may be reconsidered.

**Question** The motion before your council is called "the question." When members wish to close the discussion and put the matter to a vote, they may call "question-question."

**Questions of privilege** This is a privileged request concerned with the health of members. The form of the request is "Worthy grand knight, I rise to a question of privilege." The grand knight then says, "The brother will state his question of privilege." The grand knight then decides on the merits of the case. Although another member may have the floor, the question is in order and requires no second. It is debatable, may be amended and may be reconsidered.

**Quorum** A sufficient number of members present at a meeting to transact business. This number is usually a majority unless otherwise specified in the bylaws.

**Recess** A privileged motion used to secure a resting period or intermission without adjourning the meeting. If the time to resume the meeting is named in the motion to take a recess, it cannot be amended or debated. However, if the time is not named, it may be debated or amended.

**Reconsider** Whereby a decision once made and which later seems wrong, may be corrected or changed. It must be made by some persons who originally voted on the affirmative side of the question. It cannot be amended or reconsidered. If carried, the original question is again put before your council. It usually takes the order of a principal motion.

**Refer to a committee** This is often called to "commit" or "refer" or "recommit," and it is a subsidiary motion. The usual form of the motion is to "refer the matter to a committee." It is advised to name the committee in the motion if it is a standing one or if a new committee should be formed. Such a motion is debatable and may be amended by altering the committee or by giving it more specific instruction.

**Reports** The (preferably written) records or findings of officers or committees that are submitted for consideration and approval at a meeting of a council.

**Rescind** A motion to nullify a former action of the council when it is too late to reconsider the action. It may come up at any meeting as a new motion and has no privileges. If sentiment is exceedingly strong, a motion may be made to “strike from the records” the rescinded action. If carried, the recorder writes across the material in the records “stricken from the records by order of the council, (date).”

**Resolution** A formal form of principal motion.

**Robert’s Rules of Order** A comprehensive manual of rules of order for deliberative assemblies. This is a standard and authoritative source. It should be consulted regarding many detailed points.

**Second** An indication that at least a second person approves of the motion.

**Special committee** A committee chosen for some particular purpose. When its object is attained, the special committee is usually discontinued automatically. However, when a special committee has not completed its work, it may ask permission of the council to “sit again.”

**Standing committee** A committee appointed for a long period of time, often a year. Such committees are frequently named in the bylaws.

**Standing vote** A method of voting whereby members indicate their choice by standing.

**Suspend the rules** An incidental motion used in urgent cases to save time. It is usually resorted to only by unanimous consent. It cannot be amended or reconsidered.

**Unanimous consent** Sometimes referred to as "Acclamation." A ballot cast by the recorder for a candidate when he is the only person nominated for a particular office and no one objects to him for that office. The usual form is for the grand knight to instruct the recorder to “cast a unanimous ballot” for the candidate being considered for the certain office. However, if anyone objects, the balloting must be done in the usual way.

**Unfinished business** Motions that have not yet been decided and have been left over from preceding meetings.

**Withdraw a motion** An incidental motion permitting a previous motion to be withdrawn. It is not debatable and cannot be amended, but may be reconsidered. However, a motion may be withdrawn by the person who made it with the consent of the person who seconded it and the grand knight if done before decision or amendment.

**Yeas and nays** A method of voting sometimes called “voting by roll call.”





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