

Changes in the 12th Edition of RONR

Citations:

CITE THIS BOOK

with **section and paragraph numbers**
as in the following examples:

RONR (12TH ed.) 12:67
RONR (12th ed.) 12:7(1)(a)
RONR (12th ed.) 35:10-12

Footnotes may be cited as follows:
RONR (12th Ed.) 56:49n1

INDEX USAGE:

Three levels of Index are included in the 12th Edition. Such as:

Disciplinary procedures. § 61-63. *See also*
disciplinary committees; expulsion
from membership; removal from office,
adjourned meeting for, 63:21
agenda for trial, 63:32

CROSS REFERENCES:

Found throughout the text are many more cross references than in previous additions. Example:

“The adoption of an order for the *Previous Question* does not prevent the making of privileged or incidental motions (6) as applicable, and strictly speaking, it does not prevent a special order set for a particular hour (14, 41) from interrupting the pending business (see also 16:10)”

SUPERSEDES PREVIOUS EDITIONS AS OF 8/28/2020 AT 10:05 A.M.:

This Twelfth Edition supersedes all previous editions and is intended automatically to become the parliamentary authority in organizations whose bylaws prescribe “*Robert’s Rules of Order*,” “*Robert’s Rules of Order Revised*,” “*Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised*,” or “the current edition of” any of these titles, or the like, without specifying a particular edition. If the bylaws specifically identify one of the eleven previous editions of the work as parliamentary authority, the bylaws should be amended to prescribe “the current edition of ‘*Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised*’” (see 56:66).

Sections or subsections that have been substantially revised as described in the Preface to the 12th Edition:

1. **Section 14 covering *Postpone to a Certain Time***, to have the motions Standard Descriptive Characteristics 1 and 2 more closely comport with the rules relating to *Point of Order* and *Appeal*, to **avoid unnecessary repetition of the rules found in section 41 dealing with procedures to be followed within postponed items are taken up again**; and to clarify the rules concerning the effect of postponement on motions adhering to the motion postponed and on subsequent debate and methods of voting.
2. **Section 15 covering *Limit or Extend Limits of Debate***, to clarify the varying effects that adoption of the different forms of this motion will have on the making of subsidiary motions, and to **eliminate the distinction between motions that provide only for closing debate and those that also specify when the vote shall be taken**.
3. **Section 17 covering *Lay on the Table***, to rearrange these rules into a **more orderly and logical sequence**.
4. **Section 23 covering *Points of Order***, to clarify and expand upon the rules setting forth remedies for violations that have given rise to **a continuing breach**.
5. **Section 34 covering *Take from the Table***, to clarify the rules that impose **time limits on taking questions from the table** and the rules setting forth the **status of motions taken from the table**.
6. **Section 37 covering *Reconsider***, by the insertion at the beginning of the section of a **summary of the rules relating to reconsideration of votes**, followed by a substantial rearrangement of the order in which the rules of this section are discussed.
7. **The rules relating to the device for filling blanks (12:92-113)**, to provide substantially **greater guidance concerning the proper procedure** to be followed in making, debating, and voting on suggestions.
8. **The rules relating to the office of vice-president (47:23-31)**, for purposes of clarification and in order to **incorporate relevant provisions previously found only scattered elsewhere** throughout the book.
9. **That portion of section 48 which deals with minutes (48:1-15)**, to more clearly present the **various procedures for their approval**; to state **how an assembly may specify the**

inclusion of different information than that prescribed by the book, either for a particular meeting or on a regular basis; to **more clearly identify those occasions when the number of voters on each side of a question is to be recorded**; to provide that **the secretary may include as an attachment committee reports** that the assembly has ordered to be entered in; and to describe how corrections made to previously adopted minutes are recorded.

Some of the more important points of revision include the following:

10. Refinement of the rules governing the **sending of notice** (the “call”) of regular meetings, including the conditions under which notice is required to be send (9:2-4).
11. Clarification of what the **obligation of secrecy** of an executive session does and does not entail, and how the secrecy may be lifted (9:26-27).
12. Clarification of the circumstances in which the assembly may adopt **an incidental main motion that conflicts with a provision of the bylaws in the nature of a rule of order** (10:26(1)n1).
13. Clarification that the prohibition against making a **motion to Amend that raises a question already decided applies only during the session** at which the decision was made (12:13, 12:25, 12:48, 12:63, 12:65, 12:74, 12:90).
14. Recognition of circumstances in which **use of electronic devices** such as voting keypads can fulfill a requirement that voting be by ballot (48:42).
15. New provisions regarding **debate on nominations** (46:27-29)
16. More detailed provisions governing the **completion of an election** and its relation to filling a vacancy in officer (46:44-45).
17. **Clarification of procedures for making minutes of a board available to others** who are not board members (49:k17-19).
18. Recognition that, when the bylaws specify the number of years in a term of office, the **actual term of office may be more or less** than a while number of calendar days (56:27).
19. Requirement that a **bylaws revision is in order only when prepared by a committee** authorized to draft it (57:5).

20. Clarification of the procedure to be followed for **presentation and adoption of convention standing rules** (59:30-34).
21. Expanded explanation of the procedure for making an enforcing points of order and appeals in the subsection **Remedies for Abuse of Authority by the Chair** in a Meeting (62:2-7).
22. Inclusion of an **appendix** containing sample **rules for electronic meetings**.

Additional changes not described in the Preface of the 12th Edition:

23. Clarification of the nature of the **chair's discretion to permit brief consultation** not amounting to debate regarding modification or withdrawal of a motion before it is stated (4:22, 4:24).
24. Clarification of **when a negative vote is intrinsically irrelevant** (4:35).
25. Clarification of the circumstances in which **reading of a resolution, motion, or paper may be omitted** (4:37n11).
26. Provision that a **motion to count a vote** may itself be voted on not only by voice but also by an uncounted rising vote or show of hands (4:53, 45:14).
27. **Removal of statement that approval of minutes** (as opposed to their correction) is **normally handled by unanimous consent** in light of rule that a vote is never properly taken on approval of the minutes, **which instead are declared adopted when there are no further corrections** (4:61).
28. Clarification that a **motion to Adjourn when no other motion is pending sometimes in fact is a privileged rather than a main motion**, instead of a main motion that has privileged characteristics (6:13n).
29. Provision that if **a matter is required to be attended to at the annual meeting, it may go over to a later session** by any of the means by which a matter may be temporarily disposed of (9:23).
30. Provision regarding **authority to exclude nonmembers** from a meeting without going into executive session (9:25).

31. Clarification that a **committee not expressly established by the bylaws may be authorized to hold electronic meetings by an instruction** adopted subsequent to its establishment, in addition to other ways listed in the previous edition (9:35).
32. Procedures for authorizing the introduction of a main motion **proposing action outside the scope** of the organization's object as defined in the corporate charter, constitution, or bylaws (10:26(2), 26:3).
33. Recognition that a **special rule of order**, not just the bylaws, **may create a requirement of previous notice** for certain main motions (10:45).
34. **Recognition that action taken by individuals to carry out decisions made without a valid meeting**, such as at an unauthorized electronic meeting, or by approval obtained separately from board members, is **subject to ratification** (10:54).
35. Recognition that the **ability to give previous notice of a motion in the call of a meeting** depends on whether there is a duty or practice of issuing such a call (10:51).
36. Relocation of principal treatment of the rules dealing with **a series of amendments offered in one motion** and conforming amendments from Division of a Question to Amend (12:14–15, 12:47).
37. Detailed **clarification of SDCs 1 and 2 for Commit or Refer** (13:7(1–2)).
38. Ability of **Commit to be adopted by a majority vote** even when it includes instructions **varying rules** otherwise applicable to committee meetings (13:8(d)).
39. Clarification of the rules applying to **the appointment of persons who are not members of the assembly** or society to a committee (13:15).
40. Clarification of the rules governing **motions adhering to a motion referred to a committee** (13:19).
41. Addition of **detailed coverage of the freedom of action of a committee** to which a motion is referred, and of the assembly considering the report of such a committee, as well as of debate and voting by the assembly on referred questions when they are reported by the committee (13:20–21).

42. Additional examples of **nonstandard forms that are treated as motions for the Previous Question**, and treatment of the previously standard form “I demand the previous question” as a nonstandard form (16:6, 16:20).
43. Clearer presentation of the **rules dealing with reconsideration of a vote while the Previous Question is in effect** (16:17).
44. Improvements to the **Form and Example for the Previous Question** to illustrate the chair’s announcement of which pending motions it applies to in all cases (16:22–23).
45. Recognition as **a fundamental principle of parliamentary law that only a two-thirds vote can rightfully suppress a main question** without allowing free debate (17:15).
46. Clarification of the procedures for **when the time for a special order arrives** (18:8, 41:54).
47. Revises **form and example for going into executive session** by raising a question of privilege (19:16–17).
48. Clarification that **nothing in a corporate charter can be suspended** unless the charter or applicable law so provides (2:7, 25:2(2)n5, 25:7).
49. Clarification that a motion to **“dispense with the regular order of business and proceed to”** a certain subject is **a nonstandard way of moving to suspend the rules** (25:12).
50. Elimination of statement of **rationales** for votes required to **suspend rules of order and standing rules** (25:14–15).
51. New provisions relating to **offering a series of amendments to something previously adopted**, such as existing bylaws, in one motion (27:5, 35:5, 57:3).
52. Clarification that **a motion to consider as a whole is governed by the standard descriptive characteristics of the motion to Consider by Paragraph or Seriatim** rather than all of the rules governing the latter motion (28:5).
53. Explicit recognition that **incidental motions relating to voting and the polls** include those ordering **a recapitulation of a roll-call vote or a recount** (30:1).

54. Clarification that **motions relating to voting and the polls are incidental motions**, rather than incidental main motions, **when a vote has just been announced** (30:2).
55. Addition to the **summary of the order** in which different suggested methods of nominating are voted on, **to include nominations by petition** (31:3).
56. Declaration that even if nominations have been called for or closed at a previous session, **the chair calls for further nominations at a later session at which the election is held** (31:6, 46:6, 46:18).
57. Clarification that while **a member may act contrary to the opinion of the chair** in response to a parliamentary inquiry in order to set up an appeal from an adverse ruling on that action, that **does not mean that the action itself is one the member has a “right” to do** (33:5).
58. Clarification that even when listed on a convention program, **events outside business meetings are not themselves orders of the day**, and hence are not subject to a Call for the Orders of the Day (18:3n1, 41:2n2).
59. Recognition that in addition to being corrected before their approval, **draft minutes may be referred to a committee, or their approval may be postponed** to a certain time (41:11n3). Also, a motion to **“dispense with the reading of the minutes”** can be made at any time while the minutes are actually pending for approval regardless of whether the minutes have already been read or corrected in some respect (48:11).
60. Provision that **a member is entitled to preference in recognition for a purpose for which one who had been assigned the floor might be interrupted**, including to give previous notice of a motion or to move to Reconsider or Reconsider and Enter on the Minutes if there may be no other opportunity (42:7).
61. Provision that a **member seeking to make a motion for which previous notice has been given has preference** in recognition when no question is pending (42:13(3)(f)).
62. Clarification of the circumstances in which **explanations and requests are allowable when no motion is pending or when an undebatable motion is pending** (43:31–32 and Standard Descriptive Characteristic 5 for relevant motions throughout Chapters VI–IX).
63. Clarification that **when determining a voting result is based on the number of members present, the negative vote is not taken** (44:9(a)).

64. More precise definition of **the period during which interruption of voting is not permitted** (45:6).
65. Provision that **the right of a member to change a vote does not apply when the vote is taken by ballot or another method providing secrecy** (45:8).
66. More precise applications of the principle that **when a vote is to be or has been taken by ballot, no action that would force disclosure of a member's views or vote** is in order (45:20–21, 45:42)
67. Clarification of the **meaning of voting by secret ballot** (45:18, 45:23).
68. Clarification that **whether nominations for multiple offices are completed before balloting** for any, or nominations are made for each office followed by separate balloting for that office, is determined, if the organization has no governing rule, either by custom or by a Motion Relating to Nominations (46:19).
69. Clarification that **when a candidate who is not present is elected** to more than one office on a single ballot, the **debatable question which office to assign to the candidate is decided by a majority vote taken by ballot** (46:31(1)).
70. Clarification of the procedure when **votes are cast in one section of a ballot** for multiple positions on a board or committee (46:33–34).
71. Recommendation that when bylaws provide for election by **mail ballot**, they should **provide for a method of selection if there is a tie** (46:36).
72. Clarification of procedure for **invited temporary presiding officer** (including professional presiding officer) (47:13).
73. Clarification that **one who is ex officio an officer of the board** is counted in the board's **quorum** (49:8).
74. Establishment of **standard for president's judgment** when consulted by officers whose papers are requested by a committee (50:19).
75. Clarification of **provisions for calling committee meetings** (50:21–22).

76. Provision that **instructions by a parent assembly** that the **small board rules not apply** to a particular committee are **adopted by majority vote** (50:26).
77. Provision that in otherwise appropriate circumstances the **chair may assume a motion without a requirement that the assembly is accustomed to that method** (51:12).
78. Clarification that a **motion to “receive” a report** that has already been read is not in order (51:15).
79. Clarification of the **procedure for a motion to receive a report** (51:28).
80. Statement that a **motion to rise in committee of the whole** requires a **second** (52:9).
81. Clarification that in a quasi committee of the whole, adoption of motions that would be in order in a real committee of the whole **do not automatically put an end to proceedings in quasi committee of the whole** (52:22).
82. Provision that the vote required for the **amendment or rescission of standing rules of a mass meeting** is that required for standing rules of a convention (53:8).
83. Clarification that the requirement that **bylaws of a subordinate unit conform to those of a superior body** prevents conflicting provisions but does not necessarily require inclusion of correlative provisions (56:7).
84. Recommendation that when **assemblies meet only once a year**, the bylaws should **specify a minimum number of days in advance for notice** of proposed bylaws amendments (56:53).
85. Clarification, with respect to **Principle of Interpretation 6**, that **failure to mention evidently improper things in a prohibition or limitation does not mean those evidently improper things are thereby permitted** (56:68(6)).
86. Provision of key SDCs for a **motion to rearrange the order in which bylaw amendments are to be considered** (57:6).
87. **Removal** of the prior rule that **when notice has been given of a bylaw amendment it becomes a general order** for the meeting at which it is to be considered (57:14).

88. Addition to the **list of basic convention-related provisions that should be in bylaws** for a convention of specifications regarding when, how, and to whom the call of the convention is sent (58:6).
89. Clarification that the **base number a majority of which constitutes the quorum of a convention is those actually registered at the convention as in attendance** (as opposed to including those who may have pre-registered but did not actually attend) (59:26).
90. A list of **Fundamental Principles of Parliamentary Law** are found in the Index reference to this topic:

fundamental principles of parliamentary law, 25:9

- a. One person, one vote, 23:8, 25:9, 45:2, 46:43
- b. One question at a tie, xxxiii, 5:4, 25:9, 23:6(d), 23:8
- c. Point of Order regarding violations, 25:1, 25:9
- d. Suspending the Rules involving, 25:1, 25:9
- e. Two-thirds vote needed to suppress Question without debate, 17:15
- f. Vote limited to members present, 23:8, 25:9, 45:56, 46:49