



EDITORS
RÉVISEURS
CANADA

**Rules of Order Guide
for the
Editors' Association of Canada
Annual General Meetings**

Adapted from (and used with permission):
“Rules of Order Guide For the CIPP Annual General Meeting”
Civic Institute of Professional Personnel

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Introduction

This guide will help members and the chair by having, at hand, the rules most likely to be needed at an annual general meeting (AGM).

The Editors' Association of Canada (Editors Canada) bylaw states that meetings will be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order (section 3.09). Various policies and procedures/guidelines may also come into play at an AGM.

While many association members are friends or colleagues, the AGM is a formal meeting. In order to have a successful meeting, the business of the AGM is conducted through **motions**.

Motions are propositions put to the membership for consideration. The *Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act* requires that all substantive motions must be on the agenda that goes out to members in the call to meeting notice (21 to 35 days before the AGM, as required by our bylaw [3.01]).

The meeting follows the agenda that goes out to members. Only the following items can be added on the day of the meeting:

- thanking a member or committee,
- awarding a surprise honour, or
- nominating a director to sit on the national executive council.

These are the sequential steps for motions.

1. A motion requires a mover and then another member to second the motion.
2. It is then stated by the chair and must be dealt with by the assembly.
3. The motion is debated before it is voted on.
4. The motion is adopted or defeated by a vote of the members at the meeting.

How are motions presented and decided upon?

This is the order the steps go in.

- 1. Obtain the floor (the right to speak).**
 - a. Line up at a microphone to raise an issue
 - b. Wait until the last speaker has finished
 - c. Wait until the chair recognizes you.



- 2. Make your motion.**
 - a. State your name
 - b. Speak in a clear concise manner
 - c. Always state your motion in the affirmative. Say, “I move that we...” rather than, “I move that we do not...”
 - d. The mover does not speak to the motion when making the motion.
 - e. Avoid personal comments and stay on your subject.

- 3. Wait for someone to second your motion.**
 - a. Another member will state their name and second your motion, **or**
 - b. the chair will call for a second.

- 4. If there is no second, your motion does not proceed and the chair moves to the next speaker.**

- 5. Before the chair states the motion, members may suggest modification of the motion.**
 - a. The mover can modify the motion as they please, or even withdraw the motion without the consent of the seconder.
 - b. If the mover modifies, the seconder can withdraw the second.

- 6. The chair states the motion.**
 - a. The chair will say, “It has been moved and seconded that...”, placing the motion before the membership for consideration and action.
 - b. Once a motion is presented to the membership by the chair, it is the property of the assembly and cannot be changed or withdrawn without the consent of the members.

- 7. The membership either debates the motion or, if there is no debate, moves to a vote.**



8. Speaking to the motions.

- a. The member moving the motion is the first to speak to the motion.
- b. Each person may speak twice on any debatable motion. You cannot save time or transfer it to anyone else.
- c. If the chair wishes to speak to the motion, they must relinquish the chair until the motion is decided by the membership.

9. The vote

- a. When there are no further speakers or debate is ended, the chair puts the motion to the membership in the form of a “show of hands” vote.
- b. Most motions require a simple majority to be adopted.
- c. The chair announces the outcome of the vote and moves to the next issue.
- d. Note that if there is a tie, the chair of the meeting, in addition to an original vote, will have a second or casting vote (bylaw, section 3.10)

Some other common types of motions

Amendments

While a motion is on the floor, no other motion may be proposed.

- An amendment to the motion, however, may be made so long as the motion is not altered in substance.
- Amendments must follow the rules of motions and must be voted on in order before new amendments may be proposed.

Note: If the chair believes an amendment (or any other motion) is uncontroversial, it is proper for the chair to ask if there is “any objection” to adopting the amendment.

- If no objection is made, the chair may declare the amendment adopted.
- However, even if one member objects, the amendment is subject to debate and vote like any other, regardless of whether its proposer calls it “friendly”, and regardless of whether the maker of the original motion endorses its adoption.



Point of Order

An individual may raise a point of order if they think business is proceeding incorrectly. The chair rules on the point. This point may also be used if a member seeks clarification on a specific ruling.

Point of Privilege

This point may be raised if a member feels there is something interfering with their ability to participate as a member of the assembly (pertains to noise, personal comfort, etc.). For example, a member may use this point and interrupt the speaker to ask that the microphone volume be raised or the heat turned up.

Point of Information

This point may be used to ask for information from the speaker. “I would like to ask [the speaker] a question.”

Appeal

This point may be used where a member disagrees with a ruling by the chair.

- Such appeals must be made immediately after the ruling in question.
- The chair then presents the rationale for their decision.
- If two members (mover and seconder) appeal a decision of the chair following the explanation, the membership will vote on the decision of the chair.
- A two-thirds majority is required to overturn a ruling of the chair.

Calling the Question (“Previous Question”)

If debate has gone on longer than you feel is warranted, you may “call the question,” at which time the chair must immediately ask those assembled to vote on whether or not debate should continue.

- The motion to call the question is itself not debatable.
- The vote on the motion is taken immediately.
- If **two-thirds** of those voting agree that discussion should end, debate is closed.
- Then, and only then, will the vote be taken on the question itself.



- To “call the question,” you must first be recognized by the chair and obtain the floor, in the usual fashion.
- **It is not in order** to interrupt a speaker with cries of “Question” or “Call the question.” Even if no one is speaking, it is still necessary to seek the recognition of the chair.

Custom

No matter how long an established custom has been observed, it cannot conflict with a written rule. If such a conflict is pointed out, the written rule must be followed.

Sources:

- “Rules of Order Guide For the CIPP Annual General Meeting”
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- *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised In Brief*