



## Gold Coast Professional Schools

# MEETING UP: HOW TO CONDUCT COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

This course is approved by the DBPR Council of Community Association Mangers for 4 hours of continuing education credit in the area of:

**Human Resources (HR) and Additional Instruction (ELE)**

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# INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

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This course is designed to provide students with an understanding of the basic elements required to conduct an effective community association meeting. It provides definitions of commonly used terms, describes the different types of community association meetings, discusses parliamentary procedure, and explores selected meeting related issues that often prove problematic for associations, such as determining the location, selecting the day and time, creating an agenda, understanding quorum requirements, maximizing member participation, conducting the meeting, and recording its results.

It is important to make a distinction between informal meetings that occur all the time and official meetings of an organization that are required to be conducted under formal rules of procedure and occur on a relatively infrequent basis. While such informal meetings can influence decision-making at the formal or official meetings of an organization or association, policy making decisions are reserved for the official meetings, and such meetings are the subject of this course.

This course uses Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised 11th Edition (RONR) as the preferred authority on the conduct of meetings. It is commonly referred to as Robert's Rules of Order or simply Robert's Rules.

Association documents rarely provide guidelines for conducting meetings, and most directors and officers lack experience of running a meeting. However, many association bylaws authorize the use of RONR to conduct meetings. We understand that boards and their presidents usually want a certain amount of flexibility in how they run their meetings. They often rely upon their managers, before and during meetings, to provide assistance on how to effectively chair a meeting.

Therefore, whether RONR is the method authorized by the documents, managers should know and understand its basics, if needed, to properly guide the chair and assembly. Finally, the proper use of RONR, even in a modified form, will enable the board and members to more effectively accomplish association business, respond to dissent and disruption, and ensure that any actions adopted by the board or members cannot, at some future date, be effectively challenged on procedural grounds.

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**CHAPTER****1****DEFINITIONS**

1 Before we proceed into the body of the course, it is necessary to explore some basic  
 2 terminology, some of which many of us take for granted, but are worthy of consideration.  
 3 Let's begin with the most basic term, a meeting. ,What is it and what is its purpose?  
 4

5 According to humorist Dave Barry, "If you had to identify, in one word, the reason why  
 6 the human race has not achieved, and never will achieve, its full potential, that word  
 7 would be 'meetings.'" <sup>1</sup>  
 8

9 The celebrated economist John Galbraith had this to say. "Meetings are indispensable  
 10 when you don't want to do anything."<sup>2</sup>  
 11

12 It's possible that the authors of the above quotations formed their unfavorable opinions  
 13 after attending a dysfunctional community association board meeting. It's more likely,  
 14 however, that they attended business, governmental, or academic meetings in which  
 15 they became frustrated with the behavior of the participants and/or the lack of productive  
 16 outcomes.  
 17

**RONR**

18 So, we understand that not everyone wants to "meet up". Probably including some of the  
 19 CAMs, directors, and others taking this course. But we have not yet defined a meeting.  
 20 So, let's do it now. According to **Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised 11<sup>th</sup> Edition**  
 21 **(RONR)**,<sup>3</sup> a meeting is an event in which a **deliberative** assembly transacts business.  
 22 According to the Merriam-Webster on-line dictionary, to deliberate is to think about or  
 23 discuss something very carefully in order to make a decision. RONR defines an  
 24 assembly as the body of people who assemble, (i.e. come together), **to transact**  
 25 **business at a meeting.**  
 26  
 27  
 28

**Deliberative Assembly**

29 RONR states that a deliberative assembly has the following characteristics:  
 30

- 31 • It is a group of people, having or assuming freedom to act in concert, meeting to  
 32 determine, **in full and free discussion**, courses of action to be taken in the  
 33 name of the entire group.  
 34
- 35 • The group meets in a single room or area or under equivalent conditions of  
 36 opportunity for simultaneous aural (hearing) communications among all  
 37 participants.

1 <https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/d/davebarry403174.html>

2 [http://www.azquotes.com/author/5279-John\\_Kenneth\\_Galbraith/tag/meetings](http://www.azquotes.com/author/5279-John_Kenneth_Galbraith/tag/meetings)

3 Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, commonly referred to as Robert's Rules of Order (or simply Robert's Rules), is the most widely-used manual of parliamentary procedure in America. It governs the meetings of a diverse range of organizations—including church groups, county commissions, homeowners associations, nonprofit associations, professional societies, school boards, and trade unions—that have adopted it as their parliamentary authority.

- 1           • Persons having the right to participate, that is, the members, are ordinarily free to  
 2           act within the assembly according to their own judgment.  
 3           • In any decisions made, the opinion of each member present has equal weight as  
 4           expressed by vote, through which the voting member joins in assuming direct  
 5           personal responsibility for the decision, should his or her vote be on the  
 6           prevailing side.  
 7           • Failure to concur in a decision of the body does not constitute withdrawal from  
 8           the body.  
 9           • If any members are absent, the members present at a regular or properly called  
 10          meeting act for the entire membership, subject only to such limitations as may be  
 11          established by the body's governing rules or by statutes.

12  
 13          Community association meetings have two types of deliberative assemblies, board  
 14          meetings and member meetings. Committee meetings are not considered deliberative  
 15          assemblies by RONR. Although association members who attend board meetings have  
 16          specific statutory rights, RONR would consider them guests, not members of the  
 17          assembly. All members of the association who attend a member meeting are considered  
 18          members of that type of assembly.

## 19           20           21           **Voting Certificates**

22          In an association, each unit or parcel is commonly assigned a single vote in membership  
 23          meetings. To clarify who will exercise that vote in properties with multiple owners, some  
 24          associations require voting certificates, which names a specific person as the sole voting  
 25          representative. If the association does not identify a voting representative, any owner  
 26          may cast a single vote for that unit or parcel.

## 27           28           29           **Weighted Voting**

30          RONR will apply to associations with weighted voting in all regards, except voting at  
 31          member meetings. Weighted voting means that units or parcels are given different votes  
 32          (or weight), based upon size, or percentage ownership.

33	Example:	1 BR	1.0 vote
34		2 BR	1.5 votes
35		3 BR	1.75 votes
36		4 BR	2.0 votes

37           38           39          Weighted voting is always found in the Declaration or bylaws. You must use weighted  
 40          voting if required by your association documents.

## 41           42           43           **RONR Application**

44          RONR can be applied to other gatherings, which, to various degrees, resemble  
 45          deliberative assemblies, but do not possess all the attributes listed above. For this  
 46          course, we will apply RONR's definition of a meeting to all community associations.



## 1 Purpose of Meetings

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First and foremost, a meeting's purpose is to transact business and not to socialize or engage in personal attacks. It is a forum for deliberation, to give serious consideration to, and engage in, full and free discussion on an issue, to even reconsider a previously held position, *to reason together*.

## 8 Parliamentary Procedure

Another term which we need to be familiar with is parliamentary procedure.

Parliamentary procedure is the body of rules, ethics, and customs governing meetings and other operations of clubs, organizations, legislative bodies, and other deliberative assemblies. Parliamentary procedure is based on the principles of allowing the majority to make decisions effectively and efficiently (majority rule), while ensuring fairness towards the minority and giving each member or delegate the right to voice an opinion. Voting determines the will of the assembly.

## 18 Standard Reference Book

A common practice of organizations is to adopt a standard reference book on parliamentary procedure which will function as the **rules of order** for the meetings. The most common standard reference book in use on procedural authority in the United States is RONR. Typically, community association bylaws provide that RONR be used to govern the conduct of all official meetings, and then modify them by adopting **special rules of order** that supersede the adopted authority. RONR requires a two-thirds vote of the assembly to adopt a special rule of order.

## 28 Sources

Our discussion on parliamentary procedure in this course is based on RONR, **Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised In Brief**,<sup>4</sup> and **The Complete Idiot's Guide to Robert's Rules**,<sup>5</sup> which, despite its title, is a lucid and very helpful guide to RONR. This course will employ RONR when discussing the application of parliamentary procedure to association meetings. However, it is important to understand that this course is limited to a discussion of the basics and that the full complexity and intricacies of RONR are far beyond its scope or intent.

RONR is highly structured and formalized and is designed for large assemblies. For assemblies of twelve or less, the use of RONR can be awkward and counterproductive. For smaller groups, typical of board and committee meetings, RONR provides some different rules which will be described, most often in footnotes, in the appropriate sections of the course.

4 Robert III, Henry M., Honeman, Daniel H., Balch, Thomas J., *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised In Brief, Fully Updated 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*, De Capo Press, 2011, Philadelphia

5 Sylvester, PRP, CPP-T, Nancy, *The Complete Idiot's Guide To Robert's Rules Second Edition*, Alpha Books, 2010, New York

**1 Association Documents and Statutes**

2

3

4

5

6

7

It should be noted that, regardless of the adoption of RONR, or any other form of parliamentary authority, such authority is subordinate to the association's governing documents and applicable laws, statutes, and ordinances. In other words, if there is a conflict between the adopted parliamentary authority and the documents or laws, the documents or laws will prevail.

**CHAPTER****2****BASIC CONCEPTS**

1 We will return to a more in-depth discussion of parliamentary procedure later in the  
 2 course. At this point, we will begin with discussion of some of the basic concepts that  
 3 precede the actual meeting.  
 4

**TYPES OF MEETINGS**

5  
 6  
 7 There are three types of official community association meetings: member, board of  
 8 directors, and committee.  
 9

**MEMBER MEETINGS**

10  
 11  
 12 Member meetings are meetings of the members of the association. Community  
 13 associations are required to have one membership meeting per year, the annual  
 14 meeting, for the primary purpose of electing directors. Associations may be required, by  
 15 statute or their governing documents, to hold other member meetings for such purposes  
 16 as recalling directors, adopting a material modification, revising the association's  
 17 documents, terminating the association, or other special purpose.  
 18

**BOARD MEETINGS**

19  
 20  
 21 Board meetings are meetings of the directors, to conduct the routine business of the  
 22 association, in addition to such special functions as adopting the annual budget,  
 23 authorizing special assessments, and/or electing officers. At a board meeting, RONR  
 24 regards members as guests or the "audience."  
 25

26 Associations may differ, based on their governing documents, as to the respective  
 27 authority of the board and the membership. Some documents may grant very limited  
 28 power to its boards and reserve authority to adopt the budget and authorize special  
 29 assessments, as well as other functions, to the members.  
 30

**COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

31  
 32  
 33 Community associations typically have *committees*, which may meet on a regular or  
 34 occasional basis. A committee is a group of people, usually members of the organization  
 35 or association, appointed for a specific function, such as oversight of finances,  
 36 landscaping, elections, security, screening, social events, and grievances or fines.  
 37 RONR does not consider a committee to be a deliberate body.  
 38

39 English actor, Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree, had the following to say about committee  
 40 meetings. "To get something done, a committee should consist of no more than three  
 41 people, two of whom are absent."<sup>6</sup> Like Dave Barry and John Galbraith, Mr. Tree had

6 <http://www.lifesayingsquotes.com/quote/committee-should-consist-three-men-88/>

1 obviously experienced some unproductive meetings, most likely chaired by persons who  
2 have not had the benefit of attending this course.

## 3 4 **TYPES OF COMMITTEES**

5  
6 RONR describes **three types of committees**.

- 7  
8 • **Standing committees** are typically charged with a continuing function, such as  
9 those mentioned above.
- 10  
11 • **Special committees** (also referred to as ad-hoc, select, task force, or work group)  
12 are created by the assembly to perform a specific, time limited purpose, such as  
13 overseeing a capital project or a revision to the governing documents.
- 14  
15 • A third type is referred to as **committees of the whole**. Such committees are  
16 typically used by legislative and governmental assemblies and are not pertinent to  
17 this course.

18  
19 Committees are typically advisory but may be empowered by statutes, the documents,  
20 the board, or the members with authority to make binding decisions. For instance,  
21 grievance or fines committees are statutorily empowered to make decisions independent  
22 of the board. If an assembly's bylaws or rules are silent on the method of appointing  
23 committee members, the assembly can determine the method by majority vote or, for  
24 special committees, by vote on the motion creating the committee that includes naming  
25 its members. The power to appoint a committee includes the power to appoint its  
26 chairperson. Associations may determine that the president has the authority, as  
27 described in the bylaws, to appoint committee members, including designating its  
28 chairperson.

29  
30 RONR rules for committees differs to a degree from its rules governing deliberative  
31 assemblies. RONR does not require committee members to be members of the  
32 organization. It restricts attendance to committee members and invited guests, and  
33 requires members to maintain confidentiality regarding the work of the committee.  
34 Committees are to conduct their business in conformance to RONR.

## 35 36 **FLORIDA STATUTES**

37  
38 Florida laws require meetings, regardless of type and regardless of the form of  
39 parliamentary procedure used by the association, to be conducted in conformance with  
40 the respective statute regulating the association. Among other requirements, Florida  
41 statutes require that member, board and committee meetings, with some exceptions, be  
42 open to all members. At a committee meeting, RONR regards members as guests or the  
43 "audience."

## 44 45 **MEETING LOCATION**

46  
47 The Condominium Act requires that an annual meeting be held within 45 miles of the  
48 property of the HOA Act requires that meetings be held in an accessible location, upon  
49 request, to physically handicapped persons who have the right to attend.

1 Unless the governing documents identify a specific location, all meetings can be held,  
2 anywhere the president and board determine necessary and appropriate, regardless of  
3 the distance.

4  
5 Typically, most association meetings take place on the association property, usually in a  
6 clubhouse or another room used for social events. It is important that the meeting room  
7 have sufficient seats and space for the anticipated number of attendees, that the  
8 directors or committee members be visible to the attendees, that chairs be comfortable,  
9 the room be maintained at a comfortable temperature, the room's acoustics function to  
10 allow everyone to hear the discussion or, alternatively, an effective sound system be  
11 employed. Directors or officers who attend via tele- or videoconference must be audible  
12 to the board and audience, typically requiring a speaker phone, cell phone, or computer  
13 that transmits sound clearly and with sufficient volume. Persons with physical handicaps  
14 should be accommodated by ensuring space for wheelchairs and walkers, allowing the  
15 presence of service animals, and permitting hearing impaired persons to be seated near  
16 the chairperson.

17  
18 Much depends on the president and the board, to make the meeting space conducive to  
19 discussion and comfortable for the audience. Some boards provide refreshments to  
20 encourage participation. Other boards, especially those that encounter a hostile  
21 audience at board meetings, may seek to limit participation by creating an uncomfortable  
22 room environment and displaying adversarial behavior to the dissidents. We will discuss  
23 managing dissent later in the course.

24

## 25 **MEETING TIME**

26

27 The dates or range of dates of member meetings, such as the annual meeting or certain  
28 special meetings (such as to recall directors), are described in the association's  
29 governing documents or by statute. In contrast, board meetings are scheduled by the  
30 president or board of directors at their discretion. Sometimes, typically at the  
31 organizational meeting following the election of directors, board meetings are scheduled  
32 a year in advance or for a specific day and time each month, for example the third  
33 Tuesday at 7:00 P.M. (immediately following the annual member meeting). Boards that  
34 cannot agree on a specific date and time or do not believe they are need of monthly or  
35 any regularly scheduled meetings, commonly leave the scheduling of meetings to the  
36 discretion of the president.

37

38 Regardless of whether a board has regularly scheduled monthly meetings or is reluctant  
39 to convene any meeting, sooner or later a meeting will have to occur. A common dispute  
40 among members of community associations, given that the great majority of meetings  
41 are scheduled to occur on weekdays, is the time of the meeting. Retirees typically prefer  
42 daytime meetings which makes it difficult, if not impossible, for working people to attend.  
43 Since many boards are dominated by retirees, members with day time employment,  
44 typically younger persons, many of whom have children, often resent being, in effect,  
45 excluded from participation in decisions affecting their lifestyles, families, and finances.  
46 In well run communities, especially those that manage their finances effectively, such  
47 resentments may remain at the level of minor irritants. However, when issues emerge  
48 over an increase in the annual assessment or a special assessment that divide the  
49 members, minor resentments may develop into feelings of hostility, resulting in  
50 generational and other forms of conflict. At this point, younger members may demand  
51 that meetings be scheduled in the evenings to permit their attendance.

## 1      **MEETING REQUIREMENTS**

2  
3 While there are few specific statutory requirements to convene board meetings,  
4 associations are required to approve an annual budget and to elect officers, which must  
5 be accomplished at board meetings, unless an association's documents require those  
6 functions to be accomplished at a member meetings. Condominiums are required to  
7 approve the amount of their insurance policy deductibles at a board meeting. All  
8 associations must approve loans, implement a fining schedule, or revoke a member's  
9 right to vote or use amenities at a board meeting. Banks typically require a board  
10 resolution to add or delete signatories to the association's accounts. Additionally, boards  
11 are required to perform the functions necessary for the association to be properly  
12 maintained, which frequently require decisions of the directors that can only be made at  
13 board meetings.

## 14      **PRESIDENTIAL POWER**

15  
16  
17 Some boards seek to minimize the number of meetings, often to avoid unpleasantness  
18 or controversy, by giving the president wide latitude to make operational decisions. The  
19 bylaws of many associations describe the president's power in very general terms. For  
20 example, "The president shall be the chief executive officer, shall preside at all meetings  
21 of members and the board of directors, shall have the general powers and duties of  
22 supervision and management of the association which usually pertain to the office, and  
23 shall perform all such duties as required by the board of directors." This type of broad  
24 and general definition essentially leaves it to the board to vote to limit or more strictly  
25 define the president's authority. Some boards are dominated by the president's strong  
26 personality, have great respect for their competency, or simply believe it to be easier and  
27 less stressful to rubber stamp the president's actions. This type of president and board  
28 may prove reluctant to convene board meetings and will essentially govern the  
29 association by executive fiat.<sup>7</sup>

## 30      **OTHER METHODS TO CONVENE MEETINGS**

31  
32  
33 A petition of 20% of the voting interests of a condominium, cooperative, or HOA can  
34 compel the convening of a board or member meeting to discuss a specific issue or  
35 issues. The governing documents may provide for the convening of a meeting to  
36 discuss, and/or act on, a specific agenda item or items, upon authorization of a majority  
37 of the board.

## 38      **MEETING PURPOSE**

39  
40  
41 The primary purpose of a member or board meeting is to create policy to direct  
42 management staff in the performance of their duties and/or to advise members of their  
43 rights and responsibilities. Some meetings are strictly informational in nature or are  
44 convened to provide a forum for the expression of the opinions of members on an issue  
45 or issues. By far, the most common purpose of a meeting is to provide an official forum  
46 for the board or the members to make binding decisions on specific issues relating to the  
47 operation of the association, as well as to keep the directors and members informed of  
48 the condition of the property, the operations of the association, and of events that may  
49 affect the well-being of the community.

---

7      **Executive fiat:** An authoritative decree or order

## 1 NOTICE

2  
3 Community association meetings must be properly noticed in conformance with the  
4 statutes governing each type of association and/or an association's governing  
5 documents. If the meeting is not properly noticed, any policy decisions made by the  
6 board, committee members, or members may become voidable at a later date. Notices  
7 must identify the date, time, location of the meeting, and, for a special members  
8 meeting, its purpose. The list of items to be discussed at a formal meeting is referred to  
9 as the agenda.<sup>8</sup> It should be as specific as possible, for the board and/or members to  
10 know, in advance, the subjects that will be discussed. If the items on the agenda require  
11 information or documents for the board or members to be prepared to discuss them  
12 intelligently, they should be attached to and distributed with the meeting notice. The  
13 meeting notice and attachments are commonly referred to as the meeting package.

14  
15 As meetings are to conduct association business only, we recommend all associations  
16 provide detailed agendas in advance of the meeting – whether statutorily required or not.  
17 An effective meeting must conform to the agenda. No other business should be  
18 discussed, except on an emergency basis. An emergency is a sudden, unexpected, or  
19 impending situation that may cause injury, loss of life, damage to property, and/or  
20 interference with the normal activities of a person or an association, and which requires  
21 immediate attention and remedial action.

## 23 EMERGENCY ITEMS

24  
25 In a condominium or cooperative, an item not included on the notice for a board meeting  
26 may be taken up on an emergency basis by a vote of at least a majority plus one of the  
27 board members. The HOA  
28 Act does not discuss  
29 emergency agenda items.  
30 RONR provides for an item  
31 be added<sup>9</sup> by a vote of 2/3s  
32 of the members of the  
33 assembly. Such  
34 emergency action must be  
35 noticed and ratified at the  
36 next regular meeting.  
37

## 38 AGENDA

39  
40 This is an example of a  
41 proper meeting notice and  
42 agenda (Figure 1).  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49

Villa De Banana Condominium Association  
Notice of Board of Directors Meeting  
Date and Time: Tuesday, September 12, 20XX at 7:00 P.M.  
Location: Clubhouse, 5020 Chiquita Lane, Los Platanos, Florida 55440

### Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Determination of Quorum
3. Minutes of Previous Meeting
4. President's Report
5. Treasurer's Report
6. Manager's Report
7. Committee Reports
  - a. Landscaping
  - b. Social Committee Report
  - c. Fines Committee Report
8. **Unfinished Business**
  - a. Proposals for Clubhouse Roof Repairs
  - b. Proposals for Pool Resurfacing
9. **New Business**
  - a. Proposals for New Security Company
  - b. Review Proposed Plans for New Front Entrance Water Feature
  - c. Proposal for Replacement of Coconut Palm Behind Guardhouse

8 F.S. 720, governing HOAs, does not require an agenda.

9 To a board, committee, or member meeting

## 1      **PROCESS**

2  
3      Once a quorum is established, a meeting begins when it is **called to order** by the  
4      presiding officer, referred to as the chairman, chairperson or chair. The chair will clearly  
5      say, **“The meeting will come to order, and a quorum is present.”** An opening  
6      ceremony may follow, such as the pledge of allegiance. The meeting will then proceed to  
7      a Standard Order of Business or a published agenda. An agenda differs from a Standard  
8      Order of Business in that an agenda is more detailed. While RONR requires that it be  
9      adopted by the assembly at the meeting, community associations will rarely, if ever,  
10     require approval of the agenda at a meeting. Community association agendas are  
11     typically determined by the association president, prior to the meeting, and included in  
12     the notice. The authority of the president to set an agenda commonly derives from the  
13     authority vested in the office as described in the association’s bylaws. The more detailed  
14     the agenda, the more structure and control the chair can achieve.

## 15 16     **MINUTES**

17  
18     The next item on the agenda is typically the minutes of the preceding meeting. The chair  
19     states **“The secretary will read the minutes.”** After the reading, the chair says, **“Are**  
20     **there any corrections to the minutes?”** Typically, corrections are made without  
21     objections. However, if there is a dispute there can be debate and a vote on the  
22     proposed correction. Finally, the chair says, **“If there are no additional corrections the**  
23     **minutes are approved.”** Reading of the minutes cannot, under any condition except as  
24     described above, be waived. They can be dispensed with temporarily, but must at some  
25     point, be read either later in the meeting or at a subsequent meeting.

26  
27     Alternatively, if a draft of the minutes were distributed in advance of the meeting, the  
28     chair can declare, **“The minutes of the previous meeting has been distributed. Are**  
29     **there any corrections to the minutes?”** If there are no corrections, the chair can  
30     announce: **“Since there are no objections the minutes are approved.”** If there are  
31     corrections, the chair will follow the procedure in the prior paragraph.

## 32 33     **REPORTS**

34  
35     The next item on the agenda is Reports. The chair will ask for each report, often  
36     prepared by a committee, in turn. Usually, reports are informational in nature. However,  
37     reports may also include recommendations for action. These recommendations can be  
38     considered by the assembly, debated, and voted upon, after each report. The methods  
39     of considering, debating, and voting on motions will be discussed in the sections on  
40     motions and debate. Note that association members, by statute, have the right to speak  
41     on any agenda item, including reports, regardless whether a motion is on the floor.

## 42 43     **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

44  
45     Reports are followed by Unfinished Business, sometimes improperly referred to as Old  
46     Business.<sup>10</sup> These are items that were under consideration at a prior meeting but were  
47     not completed prior to adjournment or items that were on the agenda but were not

---

10    Use of the term “old business” does not indicate whether that item was finished. It could, in fact, be an item that was passed or rejected at a prior meeting that the board wants to revisit. It could, in fact, be an item previously approved, or previously defeated. To revisit or reconsider the item would require it to be listed under new business.



1 discussed before the meeting adjourned. The chair will state, “**Under unfinished**  
 2 **business, the first item is the motion relating to... which was pending when the**  
 3 **last meeting adjourned. The question is on the adoption of the motion [stating the**  
 4 **motion].”** If no motion was adopted, the chair will ask, “Is there a motion on this item?”  
 5 Usually, if there is no motion to discuss an item, the chair will call for a motion  
 6 immediately after announcing the item. However, in small assemblies (such as board or  
 7 committee meetings), the chair may proceed to open discussion without a motion.

8  
 9 *No Agenda: Is it Old Business, Unfinished Business, New Business, or Good &*  
 10 *Welfare?*

11  
 12 Joey Drummond, a director, asks, “About five years ago, we painted the building light  
 13 green. Would it not have been better to have painted to gray?”

14  
 15 Sally Lilly, a member, asks, “Why did the board approve getting a Sony 60-inch TV  
 16 last year? Isn’t LG a better brand?”

17  
 18 Milly Muffet, a member, asks, “Are we going to have an annual picnic this 4<sup>th</sup> of July,  
 19 as we did last year?”

20  
 21 Sidney Greenfeld, a new owner, asks, “Are there any plans to restripe the parking lot  
 22 this year?”

## 23 24 **Condominium/Cooperative**

25  
 26 As we earlier noted, condominiums and cooperatives require detailed agendas to be  
 27 posted and/or distributed in advance of meetings, and that only agenda items and  
 28 emergency matters, are permitted to be discussed. Therefore, the chair would simply  
 29 state, “Under new business, the first item on the agenda is ... Is there a motion on the  
 30 item?” To adjourn the meetings, the chair would not inquire as to further business, and  
 31 simply state, “**the business of the board (or committee or members) is complete**  
 32 **and the meeting is adjourned.**”

## 33 34 **MEETINGS FOR HOAs, TIMESHARES, MOBILE HOMES**

35  
 36 HOA, timeshares, and mobile home associations are not required by statute to use a  
 37 detailed agenda. Additionally, their documents may not require the use of some type of  
 38 parliamentary authority, or they may not have adopted a parliamentary method that  
 39 require the use of a detailed agenda. If there is no detailed agenda, the chair proceeds  
 40 to New Business by asking, “**Is there any new business?**” Members desiring to have a  
 41 new item of business considered will stand,<sup>11</sup> then, after being recognized by the chair,  
 42 make a motion.

43  
 44 Before adjourning the meeting, the chair states, “Is there any further business? Since  
 45 there is no further business, this meeting is adjourned.”

## 46 47 **GENERAL GOOD AND WELFARE**

48  
 49 Some associations list General Good and Welfare, also known as Good and Welfare,  
 50 Good of the Order or Open Forum, on the agenda, typically after New Business and

11 If the assembly has twelve members or less, the member is not required to stand, only to raise their hand.

1 before Adjournment. Its purpose is to permit members of the assembly to offer informal  
2 observations regarding the operations of the organization. Community associations  
3 commonly use it at board meetings to give non-director members an opportunity to voice  
4 their grievances, make suggestions, or announcements. **We do not recommend**  
5 **including Good and Welfare on any meeting agenda.**

6  
7 General Good and Welfare often results in extending the duration of the meeting and  
8 sometimes devolves into personal attacks on management, the board, or others. There  
9 should be a routine, formal process for the handling of grievances and suggestions,  
10 outside of meetings, by management. If such issues cannot be resolved during the  
11 normal course of business, only then should the president consider placing them on a  
12 meeting agenda for official action.

13  
14 Members, directors and committee members may have items of personal interest they  
15 wish to promote, that do not benefit the association as a whole. Such items could be  
16 raised during Good and Welfare. Motions can be made and business transacted, if Good  
17 and Welfare is included on the agenda. This can lead to a loss of control by the  
18 assembly if members suggest motions not related to the specific business of the  
19 association.

20  
21 Announcements of items of interest or importance should be provided to the presiding  
22 officer prior to the meeting. They can then exercise their discretion of the  
23 appropriateness of the announcement and, if so determined, decide who should make  
24 the announcement. Perhaps the association wants to have a good news section on its  
25 website, or in its newsletter.

## 26 27 **ADJOURNMENT**

28  
29 The motion to adjourn is used to close the meeting. RONR provides that a member can  
30 make a motion to adjourn at any time, and, if a majority votes in favor, the meeting will  
31 be closed, regardless of whether all agenda items have been addressed. If all agenda  
32 items have been completed, the chair can state, "Since there is no other business, the  
33 meeting is adjourned." Issues relating to adjournment will be more fully discussed in the  
34 section on motions.

## 35 36 **MEETING ATTENDANCE**

37  
38 An official meeting cannot occur without the presence of a quorum. A quorum, for a  
39 community association **member** meeting, is the minimum number or percentage of  
40 voting interests that must be present to make the proceedings of that meeting valid and  
41 to transact business.

## 42 43 **OFFICERS NEEDED**

44  
45 In addition to a quorum, official meetings must have a presiding officer, usually the  
46 association president or committee chairperson, to ensure that the meeting operates in  
47 conformance with the association's designated form of parliamentary procedure and  
48 applicable statutes. It must also have a secretary, or someone who functions as such, to  
49 record the actions adopted by the assembly.

## 1 **VOTING INTEREST**

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## **VOTING INTEREST**

A voting interest is the voting power of a single unit or parcel as defined by the governing documents. In other words, the association may have weighted voting in which different units have a higher or lower voting power than others, typically determined by the type or square footage of the unit.

## **QUORUM**

### **Member meetings**

The minimum number or percentage required for a quorum is usually described in the association's bylaws. If not described in the documents, the minimum percentage required for a quorum is described in the statute regulating each type of association. For condominiums and cooperatives, it is a majority, for HOAs 30% TVI. For condominiums and HOAs, if the bylaws require a lower percentage, that percentage applies. For cooperatives, if the bylaws require a different percentage, that percentage applies. For timeshares, it's 15% TVI, unless the articles of incorporation or the bylaws require a higher percentage. For mobile home associations, it is 30% TVI, unless the bylaws state a different percentage.

### **Board and Committee Meetings**

For all types of associations, the quorum requirement for board and committee meetings is a simple majority unless the governing documents state otherwise.

## **ELECTION OF DIRECTORS**

### **CONDOMINIUMS/COOPERATIVES**

Condominiums and cooperatives do not require a quorum to elect directors at the annual meeting. The statutes define a separate election process, which we will not address in this course.

### **Presence of Quorum**

It is important to understand that the quorum must be present at all times during the meeting for business to be transacted. However, there is a RONR rule that the continued presence of a quorum is presumed, unless the chair, or a member, notices that a quorum is no longer present.

### **Actions Without a Quorum**

There are four types of actions that an assembly can take without a quorum. They are:

1. Set the time for another meeting (requires a motion **to fix the time to which to adjourn**)<sup>12</sup>
2. End the meeting (requires a motion **to adjourn**)

---

<sup>12</sup> This motion does not adjourn the current meeting. It simply sets the time for the continuation of the current meeting.

- 1 3. Take a short break (requires a motion **to recess**)
- 2 4. Take action to obtain a quorum (basically search for members and bring them to the
- 3 meeting).
- 4

## 5 **Poor Attendance**

6  
7 Board and committee meetings are often poorly attended by members for a variety of  
8 reasons. For some, as previously mentioned, the time of the meeting is inconvenient.  
9 Others may experience the meetings as unproductive, hostile, and unpleasant. Some  
10 members may believe that the current board is doing a good job and their presence is  
11 unnecessary. Others may complain that the meetings seem to go on forever. Perhaps  
12 others are unhappy with the selection of cookies and other refreshments.

## 13 14 **MEMBER RESPONSIBILITY**

15  
16 Ultimately, it is the association members, not the president, board, or staff, who are  
17 responsible for the effective operation of the association. Community associations  
18 govern their communities, which are similar to municipalities, with some important  
19 differences. They are, in effect small villages, where the members agree to give up  
20 certain liberties in exchange for the benefits of joint and communal ownership of  
21 property. Members therefore have a responsibility to stay informed of the actions of their  
22 governing body, the board, and participate by attending and speaking on matters that  
23 are under discussion at association meetings. Members are also responsible to vote at  
24 annual meetings and elections, as well as on any items that require a vote of the  
25 membership.

## 26 27 **COMPLAINTS**

28  
29 Complaining to others about the actions of the board or about particular board members  
30 is common in community associations. Many persons with grievances believe that if they  
31 complain enough, someone else will act to remedy the source of their unhappiness.  
32 Others appear to believe that the more they complain, the longer their creator will let  
33 them live. Both assumptions are unlikely to occur. Members, through their participation,  
34 can affect policy decisions, and even change the composition of the policy making body,  
35 the board.

36  
37 So, why should you go? Because you, as a member, are responsible for the well-being  
38 of your community and you can, by playing by the rules of engagement, make a  
39 difference.

**CHAPTER****3****RULES OF  
ENGAGEMENT**

1 The rules of engagement described in this course, as previously stated, are derived from  
 2 RONR. RONR is highly structured, formal, and, at times, complex. An association may  
 3 choose to adopt a more informal and looser structure to suit its individual needs. RONR  
 4 allows an assembly to modify its provisions, with some exceptions, by a two-thirds vote  
 5 of an assembly, such as the board of directors or the membership at a properly noticed  
 6 meeting. This course will conform, to a substantial degree, to the content of RONR, with  
 7 the understanding that associations should modify it to best meet its needs.  
 8

**MOTIONS**

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 10  
 11 RONR has several charts and tables, some of which provide detailed information on  
 12 types of motions, when one motion supersedes another, which motions must be  
 13 seconded and debatable, and other pertinent details. There are also summaries of  
 14 RONR requirements, including motions, by SparkNotes and BarCharts. These quick  
 15 references may be helpful during a meeting.

16 The primary purpose of community association meetings is to make decisions. To begin  
 17 the process of decision making, a member offers a proposal by making a motion. A  
 18 motion is a formal proposal that the assembly take a specific action. No discussion or  
 19 debate should be permitted before a motion is made. An exception to this rule must be  
 20 made for owners who desire to speak on an agenda item for which a motion has not  
 21 been made, pursuant to statutes. The motion that introduces a proposal is referred to as  
 22 a **main motion**. The assembly is required to complete discussion on a specific main  
 23 motion before it can consider another one.  
 24

**PROCESS**

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 26  
 27 To make a motion, a member should stand<sup>13</sup> and address the chair using his or her title  
 28 such as **Mr. President** or **Madame Chairperson**. The chair then recognizes the  
 29 member as the next speaker by speaking his or her name or other designation. Once the  
 30 chair has recognized the member, the member is said to **have the floor**. When finished,  
 31 the speaker has **yielded the floor**.  
 32

33 Once a member has the floor, he or she simply says, **"I move that ..."** and clearly  
 34 states the motion. For example, "I move that the proposal submitted by Acme Roofing  
 35 Company to repair the clubhouse roof be accepted." Once the motion has been stated, it  
 36 must be **seconded** to be considered.<sup>14</sup> To second a motion, a member simply calls out  
 37 **"Second."** The member seconding the motion does not have to be recognized by the  
 38 chair. Once made and seconded, the chair **"states the question"** on the motion by  
 39 saying, **"It is moved and seconded that"** and then repeats the exact words of the  
 40 motion.

13 See footnote 11.

14 If the assembly has twelve members or less, motions are not required to be seconded. However, we strongly recommend that all motions are seconded.

## 1      **Is the Motion in Order?**

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The chair, prior to restating a motion, must determine that the motion is **in order**, that it is not a violation of the standing rules. If the motion is not in order, the chair says, “The chair rules that the motion is not in order because ...” The chair must also ensure that the motion is clearly understood by the members. If unclear, the chair can help to reword the motion. Usually, the chair rewords the motion, asking the maker if that was their intent.

## 10     **On the Floor**

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Once the main motion is stated by the chair, it is considered pending or “on the floor”. It is then open for debate on whether to adopt or pass the motion. Normally, the chair asks the maker of the motion whether they desire to speak on the motion, or “take the floor.” The speaker, regardless of whether they are the maker of the motion, presents their reason(s) for the motion to be adopted or rejected. Each member desiring to speak, seeks the chair’s attention, and upon being granted the floor presents their arguments.

## 19     **How Long Can I Speak?**

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For associations that use RONR, and have more than twelve directors in attendance, those directors can speak for up to ten minutes at a board meeting on each agenda item, a maximum of two times. If the association has twelve or less board members, each director can speak for up to ten minutes on each agenda item and there is no limit on the number of times a director may speak on the item. The same rule applies to all members at a membership meeting.

## 28     **Florida Statutes v RONR**

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Florida statutes provide that members of an association may speak a *minimum of three minutes* on any agenda item, at any official association meeting. The statutes do not impose a maximum limit on speakers. This includes members speaking at board and committee meetings – although RONR regards members as “guests,” the statutes permit them to speak a *minimum of 3 minutes on every agenda item*. An association that uses RONR, imposes a *maximum limit* on the duration directors at board meetings and all members at member meetings (as well as the number of speaking opportunities). Community associations have the option to adopt or modify rules (including the method in which RONR is applied) to limit directors and members speaking time and frequency, as long as they do not violate the state’s mandated three-minute minimum rule as applied to members. We recommend that association adopt a rule of a maximum of 3 minutes for any member, director, or officer to speak on an agenda item, unless they are giving a report.

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**Example:** The treasurer is reviewing the financials at a board meeting. He should be given adequate time to do so. That may take 5 minutes or more. A member has a question on the report? His question and comments could, under the association rules, be limited to a maximum of 3 minutes.

## 1 **Reduce or Expand**

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It should be noted that RONR does provide a means, during a meeting, in which the speakers' right to address the assembly can be reduced or expanded from the two ten minutes' maximum. However, it requires a motion and a two-thirds affirmative vote of the assembly for such a proposal to be adopted.

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## 9 **Secondary Motions**

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Members have the right, during debate, to make other motions relating to a pending motion, or to interrupt its consideration. These are referred to as **secondary motions**, the most common of which is to amend the main motion. Secondary motions are detailed later.

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## 16 **CLOSING DEBATE**

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Once members no longer seek recognition to speak, the chair may ask: **Are you ready for the question? or Is there any further debate?** If members no longer seek the floor, the chair states, **"The question is on the adoption of the motion ..."** and repeats the exact wording of the motion. The chair should inform the assembly of the voting requirement, whether the motion requires a majority or other number or percentage of the vote to pass.

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## 25 **ABSTENTIONS**

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RONR provides that abstentions, members who are present but do not vote, are simply not counted. The Condominium Act permits board member abstentions for any reason, but the Cooperative Act and the HOA Act restrict abstentions only to those directors who declare a financial conflict of interest. Any abstention of a condominium board member is not counted towards a vote, nor are abstentions by directors of cooperatives and HOAs if their abstention is based on a financial conflict. However, if a cooperative or HOA director's abstention is not based on a financial conflict, they are considered to have voted with the majority, and their vote is recorded as such in the minutes, with an explanation. Abstentions of a condominium member is also recorded as such in the minutes.

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## 38 **VOTING**

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The most common type of voting is the voice vote. The chair simply says, "Those in favor of the motion, say aye." Members in support call out "aye." The chair, then says, "Those opposed say no." Members opposed call out "no." The chair then determines the number of members in support or opposition and announces the result. Other methods of voting will be discussed later. The announcement of the results of the vote includes a statement reporting which side "has it", such as "The ayes have it and the motion is adopted.", or "The no's have it and the motion is lost." and a description of the effect of the vote, if needed.





- 1 A member of a community association board might make this motion if a decision  
 2 must be made within a certain time, for example twenty-four hours, but the meeting  
 3 has run late and the directors are tired. The director could then move to fix the time  
 4 to which to adjourn to 10 A.M. the next morning. In effect, the motion, if approved,  
 5 would permit the meeting to continue to the next day without requiring a second  
 6 notice. Florida statutes may require that a second notice be posted regarding the  
 7 continuation of the meeting.  
 8
- 9 2. **Adjourn:** This is used to end the meeting. It requires a second and a majority vote,  
 10 is amendable, but not debatable.
  - 11
  - 12 3. **Recess:** This is used to obtain a brief intermission from the current meeting. It  
 13 requires a second and a majority vote and is amendable (only as to the duration of  
 14 the recess) but the amendment is not debatable.
  - 15
  - 16 4. **Questions of privilege:** This motion is either an urgent request or it raises an issue  
 17 regarding the rights of a member (question of personal privilege) or the assembly  
 18 (question of privilege). It is amendable and requires a majority vote as well as a  
 19 second. It is not debatable as to whether the question of privilege can be made, but  
 20 once a motion is made and seconded, the motion is debatable. For example, a  
 21 member may raise a question of privilege and then make a motion to move the  
 22 meeting to another location because the air conditioning is not working properly. That  
 23 motion is subject to debate.  
 24
  - 25 5. **Call for the order of the day:** This motion is used to require the assembly to follow  
 26 the order of business (the agenda) as listed or to give another item priority (referred  
 27 to as taking up a special order), thus moving it ahead of other items that precede it  
 28 on the agenda. If the chair agrees to follow the order, no vote is needed. It requires a  
 29 two-thirds vote to deviate from the established order of business. It does not require  
 30 a second.

31

32 **Example:** A member states “since a representative of Ball of Twine Roofers  
 33 is present, I move to deviate from the orders of the day and  
 34 discuss clubhouse roof repair immediately after the minutes rather  
 35 than in its assigned order.”  
 36

## 37 **SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS**

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39 *Subsidiary motions* function to improve or dispose of main motions. Improving a main  
 40 motion means to achieve the best form possible before it is voted upon. There are seven  
 41 subsidiary motions.

- 42
- 43 1. **Lay on the table:** This permits the assembly, for a valid reason, to suspend  
 44 discussion of a pending motion until the majority determines to resume its  
 45 consideration. This is often referred to “tabling” a motion. It requires a second and a  
 46 majority vote and is not debatable or amendable. If the organization meets at least  
 47 once a quarter, the motion remains on the table until taken off or until the next  
 48 meeting. If the assembly meets less than quarterly, the motion cannot be postponed  
 49 beyond the current meeting.

- 1        2. **Previous question:**<sup>16</sup> This is used to immediately stop debate, prevent any new  
2        amendments, and immediately vote on the motion. It is not debatable or amendable  
3        and requires a second and approval by two-thirds of the assembly.  
4
- 5        3. **Limit or extend limits of debate:** This is used to increase or decrease the number  
6        of times and/or the duration a member can speak, or to limit the length of debate, on  
7        a pending motion and subsequent subsidiary motions. The motion is not debatable,  
8        but is amendable. However, the amendment is not debatable. It requires a second  
9        and approval by two-thirds of the assembly.  
10
- 11       4. **Postpone to a certain time:** This is used when an assembly requires more time, or  
12       a more convenient time, to come to a decision on a pending motion. If the body  
13       meets at least quarterly, the question cannot be postponed beyond the next meeting.  
14       If it meets less frequently than quarterly, it cannot be postponed beyond the current  
15       session. The motion requires second and a majority vote and is debatable and  
16       amendable.  
17
- 18       5. **Commit or refer:** This is used to refer the main motion to a committee. It is  
19       debatable, amendable, and requires a second and a majority vote.  
20
- 21       6. **Amend:** This is used to improve the main motion to make it acceptable to the  
22       assembly. It is debatable, amendable, requires a second, and a majority vote (even if  
23       the main motion requires a two-thirds vote). There can only be one main motion, one  
24       primary amendment (amends the main motion), and one secondary amendment  
25       (amends the primary amendment) on the floor at the same time. For example, if the  
26       main motion is “to repaint the interior of the clubhouse,” the primary amendment  
27       could be “to repaint the interior of the clubhouse *fuchsia*”, the secondary amendment  
28       might be “to repaint the interior of the clubhouse *fuchsia* using semi-gloss paint.”  
29

30       A member of an assembly may, after a main motion is made and seconded, desire to  
31       change the wording, and within limits, the meaning of the motion. He or she, once  
32       recognized by the chair, would say “*I move to amend by*” and then identify the exact  
33       words or paragraphs he or she desires to insert, strike (delete), or both insert and  
34       strike. If the amendment is adopted, the main motion, as amended, is subject to  
35       additional debate and amendments (referred to as secondary amendments). The  
36       final action would be a vote on the main motion as amended.  
37

38       Amendments must be germane to the main motion. For example, if the main motion  
39       was to accept the proposal from Acme Roofing Company to repair the clubhouse  
40       roof, a germane amendment would be to insert the words “if they are, upon  
41       investigation by the manager, an equal opportunity employer.” However, a motion to  
42       amend by adding the words “and to substitute Oreos for gingerbread cookies to  
43       reduce conflict at the holiday party” would be out of order since it is not related to the  
44       main motion.

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16    Numbers 2 and 3 apply to board members speaking at board meetings. Florida statutes provide minimum limits that can be applied to members speaking at any association meeting, regardless of RONR provisions to the contrary.

- 1       7. **Postpone indefinitely:** This is used to, in effect, to get rid of or “kill” the main motion  
2       for the duration of the session without having to vote on it. It is debatable and  
3       requires a second and a majority vote, but it is not amendable. Members use it when  
4       they do not want to go on record as opposed to an issue but want it defeated.  
5

## 6       **INCIDENTAL MOTIONS**

7

8       Incidental motions commonly relate to issues involving the procedures of a meeting and  
9       not to the main motion. Some of the most frequently used incidental motions are:

- 10
- 11       1. **Point of order:** Point of order is used when a member believes that the chair is  
12       failing to follow the rules. The member must raise the point of order **at the time** a  
13       rule is being violated. The only exception is an on-going violation, such as a  
14       continuous breach of the governing documents, which allows for a point of order be  
15       raised at any time. It requires the chair to make a ruling. If the chair is uncertain, he  
16       or she may ask the assembly to make the decision. If that occurs, the issue becomes  
17       debatable, but not amendable or appealable (see Appeal below). It does not require  
18       a second.  
19
- 20       2. **Appeal from the decision of the chair (Appeal):** The appeal is used when a  
21       member disagrees with the chair’s ruling on a point of order or any other issue. It  
22       must be made immediately upon the chair’s ruling (unless another appeal is  
23       pending). This motion requires a second, is debatable (unless the immediately  
24       pending question is undebatable), and is not amendable.  
25
- 26       3. **Objection to the consideration of a question:** This is used when a member wants  
27       to avoid discussion of an original main motion because he or she believes it would  
28       be harmful to the assembly or organization. The motion must be made before any  
29       discussion begins on the main motion. It does not require a second, is not debatable  
30       or amendable, and requires a two-thirds negative vote following the chair’s inquiry of  
31       “Shall the question be considered?”  
32

33               **Example:**       Melissa, a director, states, “I object to the consideration of the  
34                                       motion to eliminate the card room in the clubhouse. I believe that it  
35                                       will be detrimental to our many older residents, who play cards  
36                                       daily.”  
37

- 38       4. **Suspend the rules:** This applies to standing rules, business procedures, and the  
39       priority of business, but not the organization’s constitution, bylaws, or fundamental  
40       principles of parliamentary law (rules that protect the basic rights of members). The  
41       motion must address one specific rule, not all rules. It requires a second, is not  
42       debatable or amendable. If it relates to a parliamentary rule of order, it requires a  
43       two-thirds vote. If it relates to guidelines regarding a method in which business is  
44       conducted, it requires a majority vote.  
45

46               **Example:**       Joaquin, a director, states, “I move to suspend the rules and take  
47                                       up the issue of resurfacing the parking lot, scheduled for later on  
48                                       the agenda.”

- 1        5. **Division of the assembly:** This is used when a member disagrees with a voice or a  
 2 show of hands vote. It must be made after the vote and before another motion is  
 3 made. Once the member says “Division” the chair must conduct a standing vote. It  
 4 does not require a second, is not debatable or amendable, and is not voted on. The  
 5 chair has the option of whether to count the standing vote. Sometimes the size of an  
 6 assembly could require an extremely lengthy period to count all the votes, and the  
 7 motion could be used as a delaying tactic.  
 8
- 9        6. **Division of the question:** This is used when a motion includes more than one  
 10 different action and a member determines that he or she is in favor of one but not  
 11 another. It is usually handled by general or universal consent.<sup>17</sup> The motion requires  
 12 a second, is not debatable, is amendable as to the method of dividing the motion,  
 13 and requires a majority vote. If it is passed and the question is divided, each part is  
 14 treated as a separate motion.  
 15
- 16                **Example:**        Sofia, a director, states, “Division. I request that the questions be  
 17 separated in two motions. The motion ‘To accept the proposal  
 18 from Acme Roofing Company to repair the clubhouse roof and to  
 19 substitute Oreos for gingerbread cookies at the holiday party’  
 20 discusses two different actions.”  
 21
- 22        7. **Motions relating to methods of voting and the polls:** This is used by a member  
 23 who desires to have a vote on a question other than by voice, show of hands, or  
 24 division, or to close or reopen the polls. These motions must be seconded, are not  
 25 debatable or amendable, and require a majority vote, unless it’s a motion to close the  
 26 polls<sup>18</sup> which requires a two-thirds vote. The chair is not required to count the votes,  
 27 unless the assembly passes a motion to take a standing counted vote.  
 28
- 29        8. **Motions relating to nominations:** RONR is mainly superseded by the association  
 30 related statutes and discussion of these motions is, for the most part, unnecessary.  
 31
- 32        9. **Requests and Inquiries:** There are several types but we discuss three of the most  
 33 common:  
 34        a. **Parliamentary inquiry:** This is used by a member to ask the chair for an  
 35 explanation of parliamentary procedure or the organization’s rules as they relate  
 36 to the business being discussed. A motion is not required and it is not debatable  
 37 or amendable.  
 38        b. **Point of information:** This is used by a member to ask a non-parliamentary  
 39 related question about the business at hand. A motion is not required and it is not  
 40 debatable or amendable.

---

17 A method of voting without taking a formal vote. The chair simply asks if there are no objections, and if none, the motion passes.

18 Only applicable to voting by ballot.

- 1           c. **Withdrawal of a motion:** This is used by the maker of a motion to remove it  
 2           from consideration. If the maker of the motion makes the motion to withdraw the  
 3           question before the chair states the motion and places it before the assembly to  
 4           debate, it will be withdrawn without a vote. Once the chair states the motion and  
 5           places it before the assembly, it is treated as a request for unanimous consent.<sup>19</sup>  
 6           If unanimous consent is not achieved, and someone, other than the maker of the  
 7           motion, makes the motion to consent to the withdrawal, a second is unnecessary.  
 8           If the maker of the original motion makes the motion, it requires a majority vote to  
 9           pass.

## 11           **MOTIONS TO RETURN A QUESTION TO THE ASSEMBLY**

- 12
- 13           1. **Rescind:** Rescind is used to revoke an action passed at a previous meeting. It  
 14           requires a second, is debatable, and amendable. It requires a majority vote to pass,  
 15           if previous notice is given (as is required by community associations). It cannot be  
 16           used after an action has been taken as result of the adopted motion.
- 17
- 18           2. **Amend something previously adopted:** This requires a second, a majority vote (if  
 19           previously noticed), and is debatable and amendable. It also requires a statement in  
 20           the motion as to how the member wants the adopted motion to be changed. It differs  
 21           from a motion to amend in that it occurs at a subsequent meeting from the adopted  
 22           motion and it is a main motion, not a secondary motion.
- 23
- 24           3. **Take from the table:** This is used to bring a motion that was laid on the table  
 25           (tabled) back to the assembly. The motion must be made prior to the adjournment of  
 26           the same meeting where the motion to lay on the table was adopted or before the  
 27           end of the next regularly scheduled meeting within a quarterly time interval. It  
 28           requires a second, is not debatable or amendable, and it needs a majority vote.
- 29
- 30           4. **Reconsider:** This is used to return a motion that has been voted upon to the floor. It  
 31           essentially revokes the vote, and the original motion is once again debated and  
 32           voted upon. If the motion passed, a motion to reconsider can only be made by a  
 33           member who voted in favor. If it failed, the motion can only be made by a member  
 34           who voted against. The motion can only be made on the day the original motion was  
 35           made (except during a convention or when meeting for consecutive days when the  
 36           motion can be made on the next day). There are some motions that cannot be  
 37           reconsidered (see RONR 11<sup>th</sup> Edition, pages 318 – 319). The motion is debatable if  
 38           the motion being reconsidered was debatable. It is not amendable and it requires a  
 39           majority vote.
- 40

## 41           **A MORASS<sup>20</sup> OF MOTIONS**

42

43           Different motions can be pending at any given time. There could be the main motion, a  
 44           primary amendment to the main motion, a secondary amendment to amend the primary  
 45           motion, and others. It can become very confusing. But don't worry, Robert has thought  
 46           everything through and has a method to help the chair manage this morass of motions. It  
 47           even has a name, *precedence* (pronounced pre-SEED-ens). Precedence of motions  
 48           provides a means to determine when a motion is out of order with respect to a pending

19 Unanimous or general consent occurs when the chair asks if there are any objections and none are expressed. The motion passes without a vote.

20 A complicated or confused situation

1 motion or motions. It also determines the order of voting on pending motions. It is based  
 2 on the following list of motions (1 being the highest and 14 the lowest):  
 3

4 1. Fix the time to Which to Adjourn	Privileged	Undeatable
5 2. Adjourn	Privileged	Undeatable
6 3. Recess	Privileged	Undeatable
7 4. Raise a Question of Privilege	Privileged	Undeatable
8 5. Call for the Orders of the Day	Privileged	Undeatable
9 6. Lay on the Table	Subsidiary	Undeatable
10 7. Previous Question	Subsidiary	Undeatable
11 8. Limit or Extend Limits of Debate	Subsidiary	Undeatable
12 9. Postpone to a Certain Time	Subsidiary	Debatable
13 10. Commit or Refer to a Committee	Subsidiary	Debatable
14 11. Amend (secondary) <sup>1</sup>	Subsidiary	Debatable
15 12. Amend (primary)	Subsidiary	Debatable
16 13. Postpone Indefinitely	Subsidiary	Debatable
17 14. Main Motion		Debatable

18  
 19  
 20 The simple rule is that, when a motion or motions on the list is pending, any motion  
 21 above it on the list is in order, and any motion below it on the list is out of order. For  
 22 example, if there are the following motions on the floor:

- 23  
 24 A. I move to obtain bids for a new NFPA 1 compliant fire-life safety system (main  
 25 motion - 14)  
 26 B. I move to amend the motion by adding to it the words “not to exceed \$250,000.”  
 27 (primary amendment - 12)  
 28 C. I move to amend the wording of the proposed amendment by changing “not to  
 29 exceed \$250,000 to not to exceed \$300,000.” (secondary amendment - 11)  
 30 D. I move to limit debate on the question to thirty minutes. (8)  
 31 E. I move to refer the question to a committee. (10)  
 32

33 Motions A through D are in order, but motion E (10) must be ruled out of order by the  
 34 chair because it is lower on the list than motion D (8).  
 35

36 Let’s assume that motion D fails. The chair then returns for debate on motion C. If  
 37 motion C (the secondary amendment - \$300,000) is adopted, it effectively amends  
 38 (changes) motion B (the primary amendment - \$250,000) to the wording of motion C (the  
 39 limit is now \$300,000 instead of \$250,000). The chair then directs the assembly to  
 40 debate, and ultimately, vote on the main motion that has been amended (but not yet  
 41 adopted). It now reads, “I move to change the wording of the proposed amendment to,  
 42 “not to exceed \$300,000.”  
 43

44 However, if motion C (secondary amendment - \$300,000) fails, the chair will then direct  
 45 the assembly to consider, and ultimately, vote on motion B (primary amendment -  
 46 \$250,000). That motion reads, “I move to add to the wording of the main motion not to  
 47 exceed \$250,000.”  
 48

49 If motion B (primary amendment - \$250,000) is adopted, the main motion has been  
 50 successfully amended (but not yet adopted). The chair will then direct the assembly to  
 51 consider, and ultimately, vote on the main motion, as amended.

1 However, if motion B (primary amendment - \$250,000) fails, the chair will then direct the  
2 assembly to debate, and ultimately, vote on the original, and un-amended, main motion.  
3

4 Basically, the chair is directing the assembly to consider the last motion made and  
5 determined to be in order, and then to work through the preceding pending motions in  
6 reverse. Students may want to visualize the process as descending a ladder from the  
7 top down, where the bottom rung is the main motion, and each successive pending  
8 motion occupies the rung above. In effect, the motions are ascending the ladder (from  
9 the bottom up), and the order of debate and vote on the motions is descending the  
10 ladder (from the top down).  
11

## 12 **DEBATE**

13  
14 RONR provides that the person who has made the motion generally has the right to  
15 speak first on the issue. Members who have spoken on an agenda item but have not  
16 used all their allocated time, may speak again on the same item. However, members  
17 who have not spoken on the item must be recognized to speak before those members  
18 who have previously spoken. Additionally, if the chair knows the position of members on  
19 a specific item, he or she should alternate speakers in favor and opposed to the motion.  
20

21 Speakers are required to speak to the motion; in other words, they must stick to the  
22 subject. Their comments must be *germane*, meaning, in effect, that they must provide  
23 reasons for whether the motion should or should not be adopted.  
24

## 25 **PERSONAL ATTACKS**

26  
27 Debate must be about issues and never about personalities. Personal attacks tend to  
28 intimidate others from participating and result in unnecessary antipathy among members  
29 that linger long after the debate has ended. Most damaging is that they interfere with the  
30 vigorous debate on the issues, which is the core purpose of a deliberative body.  
31

32 A speaker may criticize an opponents' reasoning for supporting or opposing a motion but  
33 may not engage in a personal attack on the speaker's character, or motives. It is not  
34 permissible to say in debate that a speaker's statement is false. Instead, a phrase such  
35 as "there is convincing evidence that the speaker is mistaken" is acceptable. Speakers  
36 should always be treated with courtesy.  
37

## 38 **FORMAL PATTERNS OF SPEECH**

39  
40 To minimize the risk of debate becoming personal, RONR requires certain formal  
41 patterns of speech. The most important of these is that members address the chair and  
42 do not speak directly to the other members. For example, the speaker might say,  
43 "Madame Chairperson, the last speaker's argument opposing the motion is  
44 unreasonable because ..." Even questions that would properly be answered by another  
45 member are required to be addressed to the chair. For example, the member might  
46 state, "Madame President, would the treasurer describe the expenditures for the recent  
47 renovation of the lobby." Additionally, RONR discourages the use of names by speakers,  
48 preferring the use of titles or such references as to the "previous speaker."

1        This high degree of formality is foreign to the great majority of Florida community  
2        association residents, especially considering that the members may be close friends or  
3        neighbors. However, an argument can be made that maintaining a degree of such  
4        formality can promote greater control for the chair, which can be helpful in preventing the  
5        unruly and uncivil behavior that is all too common in many associations.



**CHAPTER****4****MEETING MINUTES**

1 RONR defines minutes as, “The official records of the proceedings of a deliberative  
2 body.”<sup>21</sup> It states, “The minutes should contain mainly a record of what was *done* at a  
3 meeting not what was *said* by the members.” Florida community association statutes  
4 require that minutes be taken and preserved (usually for seven years) for all official  
5 meetings.<sup>22</sup> In effect, resolutions and motions passed at a meeting, that are not recorded  
6 in the form of minutes, did not officially happen, and there is no authorization to  
7 implement such actions.

8  
9 RONR recommends that, after minutes are corrected, if necessary, and approved by the  
10 assembly, they should be signed by the secretary, and the word “approved” and date of  
11 approval included. Once signed, they should be entered into the minute’s book, typically  
12 a three-ringed binder that includes all the minutes of the organization.  
13

**INCLUDE IN THE MINUTES**

14  
15  
16 RONR recommends that the minutes include the:

- 17
- 18 • Date, time, and place of the meeting
- 19 • Type of meeting (board, special purpose, membership, committee, etc.)
- 20 • Names of the presiding officer and secretary
- 21 • Establishment of a quorum<sup>23</sup>
- 22 • Action taken on the previous meeting’s minutes
- 23 • Exact wording of each main motion, as voted on, and whether it passed or failed, as  
24 well as the vote, if counted, and, if a roll call vote, the record of each person’s vote<sup>24</sup>
- 25 • Points of order and appeals, including the reason for the ruling by the chair
- 26 • Name and subject of guest speakers
- 27 • Name of the reporting member and committee, providing a committee report
- 28 • Hour of adjournment.

29  
30 We recommend that the minutes include the name of the maker and seconder of each  
31 motion, whether it passed or failed, and the name of the manager and other staff  
32 present, as well as any guest speakers (such as the accountant or attorney; bidders  
33 making presentations, etc.)

---

21 RONR does not consider committees to be deliberative assemblies and, instead of minutes, requires a “brief memorandum in the nature of minutes for the use of the committee.” State statutes, however, require minutes.

22 We recommend that minutes be preserved for the life of the association. They provide an historical reference for future boards and members. It tells an association where it has been, and helps them plan for where it will go.

23 If minutes are being taken at a board or committee meeting, we recommend that the names of the members be listed in the minutes. However, if it’s a membership meeting, we suggest that the roll (indicating who was present in person and who was present by proxy) be attached to the minutes.

24 Florida statutes require that the minutes reflect how each director voted at a board meeting. The statutes also state that the same rules apply to committees.

## 1       **EXCLUDE FROM THE MINUTES**

2  
3       RONR recommends that the following **not** be included in the minutes:

- 4  
5       • Judgmental phrases. such as “an *excellent* report was given by...”  
6       • Discussion of what was said at the meeting  
7       • Withdrawn motions  
8       • Name of person seconding a motion (Note: Required by DBPR)  
9       • Flowery language  
10       • Detailed description of reports.

## 11 12       **WITHDRAWN MOTIONS**

13  
14       Withdrawn motions are sometimes the source of confusion at subsequent meetings  
15       when directors or members question whether a motion had been previously discussed.  
16       To avoid such misunderstandings, it is recommended that associations record withdrawn  
17       motions in the minutes.

18  
19       Arbitration decisions have interpreted the Condominium and Cooperative Acts to require  
20       the names of persons seconding motions to be recorded in the minutes. We recommend  
21       all associations include the maker and the seconder of motion, plus the names of  
22       anyone who proposes amendments.

## 23 24       **ATTACHMENTS TO MINUTES**

25  
26       RONR recommends that the following be attached to the minutes:

- 27  
28       • Committee reports  
29       • Officers’ and committee reports  
30       • Written motions  
31       • Tellers’<sup>25</sup> reports  
32       • Correspondence.

33  
34       Community associations are likely to be comfortable with much of the above, with some  
35       exceptions. It is recommended that the meeting package, which includes the agenda,  
36       the manager’s report as well as contracts and proposals to be acted upon, be included  
37       as attachments to the minutes.<sup>26</sup> If the officers, especially the president and treasurer,  
38       committee chairs, guest speakers, or the manager, do not provide written reports, a  
39       summary of their verbal reports should be included in the minutes. Once again,  
40       associations can modify RONR to meet their specific needs and conform to statutory  
41       requirements.

---

25   Persons elected or appointed to count votes

26   Arbitration decisions interpreting the Condominium and Cooperative Acts require this information to be attached to the minutes.

**CHAPTER****5****THE CAM'S ROLE**

---

1 The answer, of course, is, it depends on the board. From setting up the room, to  
2 supplying the refreshments, preparing and distributing the meeting package, presenting  
3 the manager's report, taking the minutes, acting as parliamentarian,<sup>27</sup> even chairing the  
4 meeting (yes, it happens), the CAM can be called on to do almost anything or nothing  
5 (sit here and be quiet).  
6

7 Commonly, the manager is the most knowledgeable person in the meeting regarding the  
8 contents of the agenda and best equipped to answer questions. They may also be the  
9 best informed on parliamentary procedure. If that is the case, the manager will often sit  
10 next to the chair, especially an inexperienced one, and provide guidance throughout the  
11 meeting (usually as inconspicuously as possible). RONR provides for the hiring of an  
12 executive secretary or executive director whose role is to implement the day to day  
13 business of the organization and whose specific duties are described in the bylaws. A  
14 CAM is typically in charge of implementing the operations of a community association,  
15 and serves, in effect, as its executive secretary and/or director, as described by RONR.  
16 Although community association bylaws typically do not provide a description of the  
17 duties of a manager or management company, F.S. 607 and 617 provide authority for  
18 corporations to enter into contracts and to exercise all powers necessary or convenient  
19 to effect any or all of the purposes for which the corporation is organized. It can be  
20 reasonably argued that such authority provides the board with sufficient authority to hire  
21 a CAM and to include a job description defining their role at association meetings.  
22

23 Ideally, it is best for the CAM to maintain a low profile at meetings, and speak only as  
24 necessary or when called upon by the chair. It is especially important for managers who  
25 find themselves in the middle of conflict between the board and a dissident group of  
26 members, not to appear to align themselves with one side or the other at a meeting or  
27 other encounter. Of course, as we all know, the ideal situation rarely occurs. Not  
28 infrequently, the CAM is placed in circumstances in meetings and other situations, where  
29 he or she cannot easily retain an appearance of detachment from the surrounding  
30 conflict. Regardless of the level of difficulty, the manager is best served by doing their  
31 best to project a professional and non-partisan image, despite whatever interior thoughts  
32 or feelings they may be experiencing.

---

27 A person with some knowledge of parliamentary procedure who is used as a resource during a meeting. There are professional, certified parliamentarians who advise organizations and deliberative assemblies for a fee. The highest certifications of parliamentarians are the Professional Registered Parliamentarian, or PRP (issued by the National Association of Parliamentarians) and the Certified Professional Parliamentarian, or CPP, or the Certified Professional Parliamentarian Teacher, or CPP-T (both issued by the American Institute of Parliamentarians).

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**CHAPTER****6****SCENARIOS****SCENARIO 1: WHO'S ROBERT?**

Ricky Goldberg has just been elected president of the Los Perdidos HOA. Ricky is a nice guy who doesn't like conflict. He only agreed to accept the position because his wife, Lola, argued that, since everyone liked him, the meetings would be happy occasions where persons would reason together and good things would get done. Although Ricky wasn't completely convinced by Lola's logic, his understanding of what made his marriage work was essentially "whatever Lola wants, Lola gets."

At the board meeting, Ricky notices that it's 9:15 and the meeting time on the notice is 9:00 A.M. He announces, "It's time to get started and bangs the gavel on the table." The manager, Ivan Smirnoff, informs Ricky that only three board members are present and four are required for a quorum. Ricky responds by saying, "I'm an informal kind of guy, and since I'm the president, we're going to do things my way." He then says that he has read the minutes of the previous meeting and they look good. This surprises the treasurer, Bonnie MacLeod, who asks, "How would you know if the minutes are correct since you didn't attend the last meeting?" Ricky asks her if she's okay with the minutes and she offers two minor corrections which Ricky accepts. At this point the three missing directors show up.

The president then announces that he has been told that past meetings have gone on way too long, and, since there is a Heat game on tonight, he intends to break the record for the shortest board meeting ever held at Los Perdidos. He then moves on to the president's report, informing the audience, "Everything is hunky-dory." Bonnie then begins to discuss the financial report and Ricky interrupts her asking, "Are the bills getting paid?" She says that they are, and Ricky immediately calls for the manager's report. Ivan begins to speak, but before he finishes the first sentence, Ricky says, "I already know what you're going to say. You're going to tell us how much work you've been doing and all the things that we need to worry about. Thank you for your comprehensive report and it's time to move on to more important subjects."

The vice president, Bubba Viento, makes a motion, "Shoddy Roofing & Associates should be given \$50,000 from the reserve account to repair the clubhouse roof." Benny Rubin shouts out from the audience, "I used that company and they did a terrible job on my roof and failed to honor the warranty. My roof now has more leaks than the Titanic." From the row behind him, Lenny Biaggio responds in a loud voice, "Shoddy Roofing is a good company and, if you had paid them, they would have finished the job." Benny yells back, "You support those bums since the owner is your brother-in-law." Lenny's wife Letitia responds by hitting Benny with her purse and shouting, "My brother is a good boy and would never do anything wrong." The room now erupts into chaos with supporters of Lenny and Benny trading threats and insults.

Ricky turns to Ivan, and with a deep sigh exclaims, "What do I do now?" Ivan replies that the association's documents require that meetings be run according to Robert's Rules of Order. He explains that the use of Robert's Rules would enable Ricky to regain control of

1 the meeting. Ricky looks at Ivan, and says, “Who is Robert? Is he at the meeting and  
2 would he be willing to lend me his rules?” Ivan, taken aback, responds with a blank  
3 stare. Ricky, totally lost, says, “Better yet, if Robert is so smart, let’s get him to run the  
4 meeting.” He then notices Lola in the audience trying to be inconspicuous. Ricky then  
5 remarks, “Maybe Lola and Robert can run the meeting together because I’m out of  
6 here.” He pounds the gavel and the room quiets down. He then announces that he  
7 doesn’t feel well and is turning over the chair to Vice President Bubba.  
8

## 9 **ROBERT IS ...**

10  
11 Henry Martyn Robert (May 2, 1837 – May 11, 1923)  
12 was an American soldier, engineer, and author. In  
13 1876, Robert published the first edition of his manual  
14 of parliamentary procedure, Robert’s Rules of Order,  
15 which remains today the most common  
16 parliamentary authority in the United States. He  
17 wrote the manual in response to his poor  
18 performance in leading a church meeting that  
19 erupted into open conflict because of abolitionist  
20 concerns at the First Baptist Church, in New  
21 Bedford, Massachusetts. He resolved that he would  
22 learn about parliamentary procedure before  
23 attending another meeting.  
24  
25  
26



Henry Martyn Robert

## 1       **SCENARIO 2: ROBERT RULES**

2  
3       Juan Guerra woke up angry. He had also gone to sleep angry. In fact, he realized, as he  
4       drank his coffee, that he was angry a lot these days, despite living in Villa de Banana, a  
5       beautiful condominium in an upscale section of town, having a beautiful, intelligent wife,  
6       Esmeralda, and being financially secure in his retirement. But Juan realizes that all was  
7       not well in paradise, and the more he thinks about it the clearer he becomes that the  
8       source of his unhappiness is that rotten, scurvy new president, Rene Dubois, and the  
9       idiotic board of directors who had defeated him and his allies in the last election. After all  
10      he had done for his community in the five years he had served as president, they had  
11      abandoned him. Yes, he understood that perhaps the association's financials were not in  
12      the best of shape considering the cash flow problems and failure to pay some vendors.  
13      So what if the pool was shut down for a few weeks during the summer by the Health  
14      Department, or that some cars were damaged by driving over potholes in the parking lot,  
15      or that a few owners had been struck by concrete chunks falling from deteriorated  
16      balconies. These were minor things compared to the money he had saved the owners  
17      by keeping maintenance fees low and not approving any special assessments. And now  
18      the new board was planning to pass a special assessment. Juan has been depressed  
19      and purposeless since he had lost the election. But now his anger has taken control and  
20      he has become a man with a mission, to defeat the totally unnecessary and unjust  
21      assessment that would be voted upon at the board meeting scheduled for next Monday  
22      night. Juan immediately gets busy contacting his allies, mainly members who didn't use  
23      the recreational facilities very often, who live on fixed incomes and would have difficulty  
24      paying higher maintenance fees or a special assessment. They would be fully prepared  
25      to make it impossible for the board to pass their wicked tax increase at the next board  
26      meeting.

27  
28      At the board meeting, the president, Rene Dubois, raps the gavel and calls the meeting  
29      to order. During the next hour and a half, the board approves the minutes of the last  
30      meeting, hears reports, and concludes unfinished business. Rene then announces that  
31      the next agenda item is the special assessment to cover the current deficit and the  
32      anticipated revenue shortfall. The treasurer, Loretta Antonelli, raises her hand and upon  
33      being recognized by Rene, says, "I move to adopt a special assessment in the amount  
34      of \$1,200,500 to cover the current deficit of \$775,500 and the anticipated additional  
35      shortfall in revenue for the current fiscal year of \$425,000." Rene repeats the motion and  
36      asks if there is any discussion on the motion from the board. Juan immediately  
37      announces in a loud voice that he has a right to speak. Rene responds by informing  
38      Juan that the rules of the association provide that board members speak first, and when  
39      they are done, the members can exercise their right to speak. Juan, reluctantly, sits  
40      down, as his supporters voice their displeasure with boos and catcalls.<sup>28</sup> Rene informs  
41      the audience that such verbal displays are not permitted and that they will, individually,  
42      get their opportunity to voice their opinions.

43  
44      The directors complete their discussion on the motion and the chair announces that the  
45      board will now hear from the members. Rene reminds the audience that the rules  
46      provide a maximum of three minutes speaking time for each member on the special  
47      assessment. He also informs them that, to obtain the floor, the member must raise their  
48      hand, be recognized by the chair, and stand to speak. The first hand he sees is that of  
49      Juan's wife Esmeralda, waving furiously. He recognizes her, by stating her name, and  
50      she rises to her feet. Before she can speak, however, the manager, Felicia Mae  
51      Robinson, interrupts and informs the chair that Esmeralda is not on the roster of owners,

---

28   A shrill whistle or shout of disapproval, typically one made at a public meeting or performance

1 and that Juan is the sole owner of his unit. Upon review of the roster, Rene rules that,  
 2 since Esmeralda is not an owner, she does not have the right to speak to the assembly.  
 3 Juan, infuriated, shouts out that Esmeralda was always permitted to speak before the  
 4 new board was elected, that Rene is conducting himself like a dictator, and that the first  
 5 amendment of the U.S. Constitution gives Esmeralda the right to express her opinion.  
 6 Rene immediately directs him to sit down and warns him against further disruptions.  
 7 Juan takes his seat and gets ready for the next round.

8

9 Joanne Murphy, one of Juan’s allies, raises her hand, and is recognized. Joanne states,  
 10 “Adopting the special assessment would be discriminatory against the elderly because  
 11 they can’t afford it.” Her remarks are greeted by cheers from some members of the  
 12 audience. The chair warns them that any further outbursts will result in the offenders  
 13 being ejected from the meeting room. He thanks Joanne for her comments and  
 14 recognizes Louis Miller. Louis stands and says, “The special assessment is necessary  
 15 for the association to be able to pay its bills.” Juan shouts out, “You want us to lose our  
 16 homes so you and your rich friends can buy them for next to nothing, you cheap  
 17 chiseler.” Rene directs Juan to leave the room, stating that he is taking this action  
 18 because Juan continues to disrupt the meeting. He asks the sergeant-at-arms,<sup>29</sup>  
 19 Eduardo Mas Grande, to escort Juan outside. Juan, reluctantly, and under protest,  
 20 departs.

21

22 Unexpectedly, Ruthie Gribble, a board member, jumps up and screams at Rene “you  
 23 have become a tyrant and are denying an association member his statutory right to  
 24 speak.” Rene turns to Felicia, the manager, who had been appointed parliamentarian at  
 25 an earlier meeting, and asks for an interpretation of Robert’s Rules regarding the chair’s  
 26 authority to expel a disruptive person. Felicia informs the chair that RONR makes a  
 27 distinction between members and non-members of a deliberative body. Since the  
 28 deliberative body in question is a board meeting, the only members present are the  
 29 directors, and association members who are not directors are, in effect, guests with  
 30 certain statutory rights. Felicia concludes that RONR provides the presiding officer with  
 31 the authority to exclude a non-member for being disorderly. He also informs Rene that  
 32 different rules apply to disorderly members.<sup>30</sup>

33

34 Rene responds to Ruthie that “his ruling stands and she is out of order for speaking  
 35 without first being recognized by the chair and for her insulting remarks.” He additionally  
 36 warns her to conform to the rules of order. Ruthie angrily exclaims that she does not  
 37 accept the chair’s ruling nor Felicia’s interpretation “... because she’s only a CAM and  
 38 what could she possibly know”. The chair, once again rules Ruthie out of order, advises  
 39 her that if she has a concern about a possible violation of the rights of a member or the  
 40 assembly she can raise a question of privilege, and repeats his earlier warning. Ruthie  
 41 responds that the only thing she is going to raise is one of her fingers, which she  
 42 proceeds to do.

43

44 Rene requests a copy of RONR from Felicia and reviews the section on “Breaches of  
 45 Order by Members in a Meeting.”<sup>31</sup> He informs the directors, “A member can be  
 46 penalized in one of three ways, by a majority vote of the board. They are requiring the  
 47 member to apologize, censuring<sup>32</sup> the member, or expelling the member from the room  
 48 for the remainder of the meeting or until they apologize.” Action by the board must follow

29 A position in some organizations whose job is to preserve order at the meeting, following the direction of the presiding officer

30 RONR pages 644 - 645

31 RONR pages 645 - 648

32 Express severe disapproval of someone, typically in a formal statement



1 the chair “naming an offender,” which amounts to preferring charges, and should only  
2 occur after several warnings.

3

4 Ruthie, realizing that she faces the possibility of being placed in an embarrassing  
5 position, raises her hand, and upon being recognized, proceeds to apologize to the chair  
6 and the board for her inappropriate speech and actions. Rene responds by accepting  
7 Ruthie’s apology.

8

9 Rene then proceeds to recognize other speakers on the motion until all have been  
10 heard. He then calls for a vote on the motion, which is approved by a majority vote.

11

12 \*\*\*\*\*

13

14

As a CAM, what are your thoughts on the conduct of the meetings in the two scenarios?

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## MEETING UP COURSE QUIZ

1. RONR defines a meeting as:
  - a. An event in which a body of people assemble to voice their disagreements
  - b. An event in which a group of persons gather to enjoy each other's company
  - c. An event in which a deliberative assembly transacts business
  - d. An event in which members debate issues of importance

*Ref: Definitions: RONR*

2. A deliberative assembly has all of the following characteristics except:
  - a. A group of people having freedom to act together, in full and free discussion, to determine courses of action to be taken in the name of the entire group
  - b. The members, are ordinarily free to act within the assembly according to their own judgment
  - c. The opinion of each member present has equal weight as expressed by vote
  - d. Failure to concur in a decision of the body constitutes withdrawal from the body

*Ref: Definitions: Deliberative Assembly*

3. Parliamentary procedure is all of the following except:
  - a. The method used by the British houses of parliament to ensure loyalty to the ruling monarch.
  - b. The body of rules, ethics, and customs governing meetings and other operations of deliberative assemblies.
  - c. Based on the principles of allowing the majority to make decisions effectively and efficiently (majority rule), while ensuring fairness towards the minority and giving each member or delegate the right to voice an opinion.
  - d. Based on the principle that voting determines the will of the assembly.

*Ref: Definitions: Parliamentary Procedure*

4. According to RONR all of the following are true of committees except:
  - a. There are three types of committees, standing, special, and committees of the whole.
  - b. Only members of the organization can be appointed to a committee.
  - c. Committees are not considered deliberative assemblies.
  - d. Committee members are appointed based upon the bylaws or, if silent, by vote of the assembly.

*Ref: Basic Concepts, Types of Meetings, Committee*

5. All of the following is true of Florida condominium, cooperative and HOA meetings except:
  - a. The dates or range of dates of member meetings, such as the annual meeting or certain special meetings, are described in the association's governing documents or by statute.
  - b. Boards of directors are required to convene sufficient board meetings to properly operate the association.
  - c. HOAs are required to approve the amount of their insurance policy coverage at a board meeting.
  - d. A petition of 20% of the voting interests, can compel the convening of a board or member meeting to discuss a specific issue or issues.

*Ref: Basic Concepts, Meeting Time*

6. All of the following is true regarding effective community association meetings except:
  - a. Discussion is restricted to agenda items except for topics that are deemed important by a majority of the board.
  - b. Meetings are noticed in advance in conformance with Florida statutes.
  - c. Relevant information and documents are attached to the notice.
  - d. The agenda includes a specific list of business items requiring the attention of the assembly.

*Ref: Basic Concepts, Notice*

7. A proper agenda includes all of the following except:
- Call to order
  - Minutes of preceding meeting
  - Old business
  - New business
- Ref: Basic Concepts, Agenda*
8. All of the following is true of a quorum except:
- A quorum must be present at all times for business to be transacted at an official meeting.
  - A quorum, for a community association member meeting, is the minimum number or percentage of voting interests that must be present to make the proceedings of that meeting valid and to transact business.
  - An assembly cannot take any valid action without the presence of a quorum.
  - The continued presence of a quorum at an official meeting is presumed, unless the chair, or a member, notices that a quorum is no longer present.
- Ref: Basic Concepts, Meeting Attendance*
9. All of the following is true of motions except:
- A motion is a formal proposal that the assembly take a specific action.
  - No discussion or debate should be permitted before a motion is made.
  - The motion that introduces a proposal is referred to as a main motion.
  - Once the presiding officer has recognized the member, the member is said to have the chair.

*Ref: Rules of Engagement, Motions*

10. All of the following is true of the rights of members of an assembly to speak except:
- Florida statutes limit members to speak a maximum of five minutes on each agenda item.
  - RONR provides that members of assemblies that exceed twelve members can speak up to ten minutes on each agenda item a maximum of two times.
  - RONR provides that members of assemblies with twelve or fewer members can speak up to ten minutes on each agenda item and there is no limit on the number of times a member may speak on the item.
  - Florida statutes require that members be permitted to speak a minimum of three minutes on each agenda item.

*Ref: Rules of Engagement, How Long Can I Speak?*

11. All of the following is true of the chair's or presiding officer's right to participate in debate and to vote except:
- For assemblies that exceed twelve members, RONR does not permit the chair to participate in debate, unless they give up the chair until the issue is decided.
  - For assemblies that have twelve or fewer members, RONR permits the chair to participate in debate.
  - RONR provides that the chair can only vote if their vote will affect the outcome of an issue or if a voice vote is taken.
  - Florida statutes provide that the chair has the same rights as any other member and director to participate in debate and to vote.

*Ref: Rules of Engagement, Continuing with the Agenda*

12. The following is true of secondary motions:
- It is any motion that is of less importance than a main motion.
  - The three types of subsidiary motions are advantaged, subsidized, and integral.
  - The three types of subsidiary motions are privileged, subsidiary, and incremental.
  - It is any motion that is made while a main motion is pending.

*Ref: Rules of Engagement, Secondary Motions*

13. All of the following are true of privileged motions except:
- They relate to the members and organization, not to the main motion or any matter of business.
  - They bring an urgent matter to the attention of the assembly.
  - They are debatable.
  - They can interrupt anything under consideration.

*Ref: Rules of Engagement, Secondary Motions, Privileged Motions*

14. All of the following are true of subsidiary motions except:
- They function to improve or dispose of main motions.
  - To move the previous question is a subsidiary motion used to answer an earlier inquiry by a member
  - There are seven subsidiary motions
  - To amend a motion is a subsidiary motion that must be germane to the main motion

*Ref: Rules of Engagement, Secondary Motions, Subsidiary Motions*

15. All of the following are incidental motions except:
- Point of order
  - Appeal from the decision of the chair
  - Suspend the rules
  - Postpone indefinitely

*Ref: Rules of Engagement, Secondary Motions, Incidental Motions*

16. Among motions to return a question to the assembly are all except which of the following?
- Reconsider
  - Amend something previously adopted
  - Rescind
  - Withdrawal of a motion

*Ref: Rules of Engagement, Motions to Return a Question to the Assembly*

17. All of the following is true of precedence of motions except:
- The main motion occupies the highest level of precedence.
  - It guides the chair to determine when a motion is out of order with respect to a pending motion or motions.
  - It guides the chair to determine the proper order of voting on pending motions.
  - It is based on a list of thirteen or fourteen motions in descending order of precedence.

*Ref: Rules of Engagement, A Morass of Motions*

18. RONR rules of debate include all of the following except:
- Speakers should refer to members by name and not by title or other references such as the previous speaker.
  - Speakers must address the chair and not speak directly to other members.
  - Debate must be about issues and never about personalities.
  - A member may criticize an opponents' reasoning for supporting or opposing a motion but may not engage in a personal attack on the speaker's character, or motives.

*Ref: Rules of Engagement, Debate, Personal Attacks, Formal Patterns of Speech*

19. RONR rules regarding minutes include all of the following except:
- a. Once approved by the assembly, the minutes should be signed by the secretary, and the word “approved” and date of approval included.
  - b. Judgmental phrases or wording should not be included.
  - c. Discussion or what was said at the meeting should be included in the minutes.
  - d. Exact wording of each main motion, as voted on, and whether it passed or failed, as well as the vote, if counted, and, if a roll call vote, the record of each person’s vote.
- Ref: Meeting Minutes*

20. A CAM’s conduct at meetings should be based upon all of the following factors except:
- a. The requirements of the board of directors
  - b. Retaining professionalism by refusing to perform clerical tasks such as taking minutes
  - c. Maintaining the appearance of neutrality during disagreements between members
  - d. Understanding the parliamentary procedure approved by the association
- Ref: The CAM’s Role*