

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY

A Community of Volunteers Serving Veterans, Military, and their Families

Using Parliamentary Procedure at ALA Meetings


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Governing Documents

- Federal and State Laws
- Articles of Incorporation
- National/Dept ALA Governing Documents
- Constitution and/or Bylaws
- Rules of Order
 - Special Rules of Order
 - Parliamentary Authority
- Standing Rules
- Custom



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Federal and State Laws

- Internal Revenue Code
- State Nonprofit Corporation Laws
 - Common issues:
 - Quorum requirements
 - Notice requirements
 - Powers and duties of boards of directors
 - Proxy voting
 - Electronic meetings and communications

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Articles of Incorporation

- Information required to incorporate under state law and in some cases federal law
- May be amended, but not suspended

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National/Dept ALA Governing Documents

- Required to conform mandates, not suggestions
- May adopt a provision of 'automatic' amendment to governing documents when National ALA governing documents are amended

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Constitution and/or Bylaws

- State the purpose of the organization, qualifications for membership and establish the framework for governance
- Define the rights, responsibilities and duties of the members, leaders and governing bodies
- Grant the authority and powers necessary for leaders and governing bodies to conduct the business of the association
- Serves as a 'contract' with the members
- Cannot be suspended

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Rules of Order

Adopted Parliamentary Authority

- Should be designated in the bylaws
- Helps members decide what to do when the group has no written rules
- May suspend one or more rules contained in the parliamentary authority by a 2/3 vote only within a meeting and if not in conflict with governing documents

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Rules of Order

Special Rules of Order

- Supersede any rules in the parliamentary authority
- Adoption requires one of the following:
 - Previous notice and a 2/3 vote
 - A vote of a majority of the entire membership
- May be suspended within a meeting by a 2/3 vote

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Standing Rules

- Relate to the details of administration for the organization
- Adoption requires a majority vote
- To amend or rescind requires:
 - 2/3 vote with no notice - or
 - A Majority vote with previous notice - or
 - vote of a majority of the entire membership
- May be suspended by a majority vote if applicable only within the current business meeting

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Custom

- Procedures and rules that aren't written
- Widely known and followed by 'seasoned' members
- Customs must yield to conflicts in governing documents
- May be a roadblock for assimilating new members

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Keys to Efficient Meetings

- Plan a yearly calendar
- Provide a positive meeting environment
- Streamline the meeting with agenda preparation
- Follow the agenda
- Start the meeting on time
- Use parliamentary procedure

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Agenda

- Opening ceremonies
- Approval of August 20th minutes
- Treasurer's report
- Membership Committee Chair's report
 - Recommendations for action
 - Approve dates for membership event
- Community Service Chair's report
 - Recommendations for action
 - Approve proposal to sponsor local youth center
- New Business
- Closing

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Methods of Voting

- Unanimous consent
- Voice vote
- Rising vote
- Show of hands or voting cards
- Counted vote
- Ballot
- Roll call

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Elections

- Usually dictated by adopted rules
- Nominations
 - All nominations are completed before any balloting takes place, or
 - Balloting for each office immediately follows the close of nominations for that office
- Unless the bylaws prohibit, votes can be cast for any person eligible for election, even if not previously nominated

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Elections

- If fewer than the proper number receive a majority vote, or if there is a tie, additional balloting is necessary
- Names of all candidates not elected remain on the ballot
- A ballot vote is required even when there is only one nominee for each office unless the bylaws allow a voice vote

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Determining the Results

- Votes are counted by a tellers committee
- A sincere effort should be made to determine the intention of the voter
- Blank ballots are not counted
- Illegal votes
 - Cannot ascertain the voter's preference
 - Multiple ballots folded together
 - Vote cast for an ineligible candidate
 - Marked for more than the allowable number

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Sample Tellers' Report

For President

Number of votes cast	210
Number of votes needed to elect	106
Julie Adams received	111
Ruth Riley received	79
Mary Backus received	15
<i>Illegal votes</i>	
Minnie Mouse (ineligible)	1
Rhonda Sharp (ineligible)	2
Ballots marked for 2 candidates	2

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Tellers' Report

- Chairman of tellers committee reads the full report and hands it to presiding officer
- Presiding officer re-reads report and announces results for each office
 - Declares officer elected
 - No election and need to ballot again

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Purpose of Minutes

- Refresh the memory of the members who were present at the meeting
- Inform those absent from the meeting
- Provide a legal record of the meeting

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Minutes

- Minutes are a record of what was done at a meeting, not what was said
- Minutes should not contain opinion or judgmental phrases
- All main motions should be recorded exactly as voted upon

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Approving Minutes

- Proposed minutes are only a draft and do not become *'the'* minutes until approved
 - Minutes are approved at the next meeting or by a Minutes Approval Committee
- Corrections may be made any time an error or material omission is found

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Discipline

- Per ALA Standing Rules – the Unit has the responsibility for discipline of its members
- Maintains the organization’s standards and values
- Important to address behavior that is contrary to standards

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Unit Bylaws - Disciplinary Procedures

Any member of this unit may prefer charges against another member of this unit for suspected conduct that is deemed detrimental to the best interests of the Auxiliary or The American Legion or a violation of the Unit, Department or National Governing documents. Disciplinary procedures will be conducted according to the principles of fundamental fairness, which will include notice per applicable state statutes and an opportunity to be heard. If the charged member is found responsible for the allegations, the Unit shall impose disciplinary action against the member which may include censure, probation with corrective terms, suspension, or expulsion. The vote to suspend or expel a member requires a two-thirds vote. This unit may adopt additional procedures in the standing rules.

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Disciplinary Procedures

Once you have proper provisions in your governing documents...

- Educate members on proper behavior
- Important to consistently and fairly address inappropriate behavior
- Educate members on addressing inappropriate behavior
- Silence gives consent!

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Disciplinary Procedures

- Addressing inappropriate behavior
 - Start with a conversation
 - Inform member of inappropriate behavior
 - Listen to her response
 - Express concern for the member and the unit
 - Review formal disciplinary procedures
 - Ask for commitment to change behavior

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Questions



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