

**The Manitoba
Association of
Parliamentarians**

Better Meeting Management

The electronic meeting series

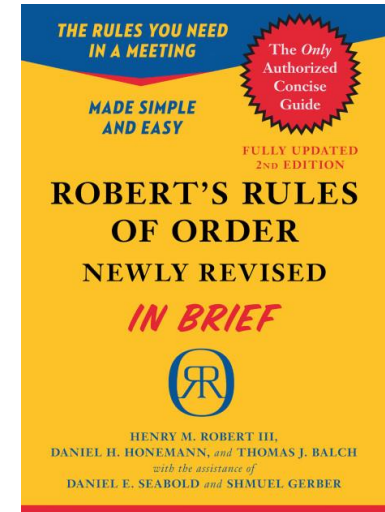
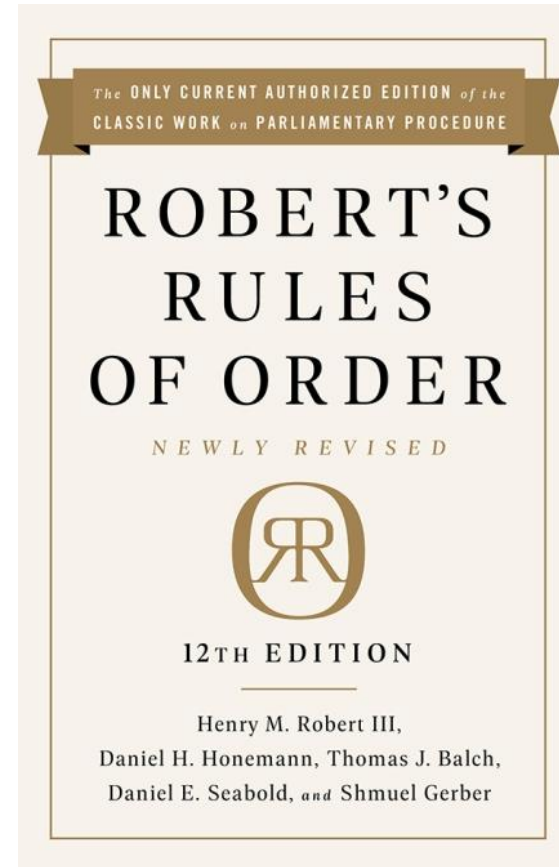
April 20, 2022
- RONR & Voting

Presented by
Paul Therrien, BA, M.Ed., CPHR-Ret.

The electronic meeting series

This series of five sessions is aimed at providing participants with **the basics** regarding the Zoom platform and how it can meet the meeting requirements of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised 12th ed.*

(RONR 12th ed.)



The image shows the Zoom logo, which consists of the word 'zoom' in a blue, lowercase, sans-serif font.



Disclaimer

The information presented does not constitute legal advice and should not be construed as such.

The Manitoba Association of Parliamentarians and this presenter do not endorse any specific product or service mentioned.

ZOOM is used for illustration purposes and is probably the most widely used videoconferencing platform.

Objectives-Scheduling

- Robert's and Electronic Voting
- Q&A
- *Next session – Open Forum on anything electronic & RONR.*



Do Bylaws Allow? (sample wording)

Virtual Meetings of Members Notwithstanding anything contrary to these bylaws, an annual general meeting or special general meeting of the members may, at the discretion of the Board of Directors, be held by means of an electronic communication system, that permits all members to participate in such meeting to hear each other during the meeting. An individual member who, through such a communication system attends a meeting, shall be deemed to be personally present at that meeting.

Standing Rule

Technical requirements and malfunctions Each unit owner is responsible for his or her audio and Internet connections; no action shall be invalidated on the grounds that the loss of, or poor quality of, a unit owner's individual connection prevented participation in the meeting.

Standing Rule

Voting online Votes shall be taken by the voting feature of the electronic communication system unless a different method is ordered by the Board, required by legislation, or by these Bylaws.

Standing Rule

Access by telephone Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in these bylaws, the Board will ensure that any electronic communication system utilized provides for a unit owner who wishes to do so, may participate by ordinary phone connection.

What is Voting?

Voting is the **action** or process for a group such as a meeting or an electorate to **indicate its choice** of candidate or course of action, often **following discussions**, debates, or election campaigns.



Voting Results



- **Majority vote**

“more than half of the votes cast by persons entitled to vote, excluding blanks or abstentions, at a properly called meeting.” *(RONR 12th ed. 44:1-2)*

- **Plurality vote** The largest number of votes which may be less than the majority. *(RONR 12th ed. 44:11)*

- **Two-thirds vote**

“at least two-thirds of the votes cast by persons entitled to vote, excluding blanks or abstentions, at a properly called meeting.” *(RONR 12th ed. 44:3-6)*

Online Voting Methods

- **Roll Call**

- *Possible* online; may be time-consuming due to size of group; the need for a monitor;

- **Ballot Vote**

- *Hard copy Not* possible online; would be achieved by **Mail-in Votes**; the need for scrutineers;

- **Standing Vote**

- *Not* possible online;

- **Show of Hands**

- *Possible* for a very small group; the need for a monitor; the raise hand function on Zoom may be difficult to see;

- **Counted Vote**

- *Possible* by Roll Call

Weighted Votes (proportional)

10-unit 3-story condominium

1- 10 = 10% each (easy)

But could be:

Units 1+2 = 20% each on penthouse suite = 40%

Units 3 – 6 = 10% each = 40%

Units 7-10 = 5% each = 20%

Complicated

Bob and Mary are co-owners (tenancy in common) of suite # 5

Bob owns 40% and Mary owns 60%, but they only have one vote between them.

Bob = 40% of one vote = .4

Mary = 60% of one vote = .6





Voting Questions

- **Vote in advance of a meeting**
 - Impact on quorum; could increase participation; no problem for admin. Motions or elections. **To be avoided if possible.**
- **Do you still need a meeting?**
 - If legislation or Bylaws state that you need to have a meeting, the meeting must still take place.
- **What about the debate (deliberative assembly)?**
 - Discuss, debate, receive information, hear other members' opinions,
- **Ballots prepared in advance of the meeting**
 - Whether it's a paper ballot or an electronic ballot, both can be drafted in advance

Voting Matters

- **Votes DURING a meeting**
 - Paper ballots must include space for writing in the name of a candidate nominated from the floor.
 - Electronic ballots can be modified during the meeting.
 - Mail-in Ballots/Advance electronic voting could be a challenge.
- **Voting AFTER a meeting**
 - Possible, debate will have taken place, and any amendments will be included. No need to handle advance votes separately.
- **Voting security (encryption)**
 - Ensure the platform provider displays.



https://



Proxies / Advance voting

- Voting online can eliminate the need for proxies.
- Guard against amended motions at the meeting.
- Advance voters may want an opportunity to change their vote – **not recommended, this could change the result.**
- their vote stands for the amended motion.
- Advance votes are kept separate and the votes for amended motions are discarded.

RONR (12th ed.) 45:2, 45:55-56, 45:70-71

Voting (poll) on Zoom

- 1- Anonymous
- 2- Yes/No
- 3- Multiple choice (no ability to limit # of choices)
- 4- Prepare in advance is better
- 5- May find amendments cumbersome
- 6- If submitted in Chat must be copied and then create Poll and paste.
- 7- Report
- 8- Registration not secure – someone with the link could vote multiple times
- 9- Voting secure
- 10- No need for a 3rd-party app to vote

Voting Platform Questions for Vendor

- Definition of an election/ballot/vote
- Test/Trial options
- Zoom integration
- Ease of use (prep and voting)
- Report (certified)
- Security
- Cost per election; per year; per # of voters; U\$D;
- Support (before, during, after)
- Types of votes possible
- Vote by Desktop, laptop, tablet, iPad, smartphone? Android/IOS
- Is more than one vote possible on one ballot?*

Voting Platforms

Silver Springs, MD



Edmonton, AB



Arlington, VA



condovoter



Toronto, ON



Montreal, PQ

Absentee Voting

- **45:56 Absentee Voting.** It is a fundamental principle of parliamentary law that the right to vote is limited to the members of an organization who are **actually present** at the time the vote is taken in a regular or properly called meeting, although it should be noted that a member need not be present when the question is put. **Exceptions to this rule must be expressly stated in the bylaws.** Such possible exceptions include: **(a) voting by postal mail, e-mail, or fax, and (b) proxy voting.** An organization should never adopt a bylaw permitting a question to be decided by a voting procedure in which the votes of persons who attend a meeting are counted together with ballots mailed in by absentees. The votes of those present could be affected by debate, by amendments, and perhaps by the need for repeated balloting, while those absent would be unable to adjust their votes to reflect these factors. Consequently, the absentee ballots would in most cases be on a somewhat different question than that on which those present were voting, leading to confusion, unfairness, and inaccuracy in determining the result. If there is a possibility of any uncertainty about who will be entitled to vote, this should be spelled out unambiguously and strictly enforced to avoid unfairness in close votes.
- Robert, Henry M.. Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 12th edition (p. 400). Public Affairs. Kindle Edition.

