



***Bob's Rules of Order
For Colorado Local
Governments***
Robert (Bob) Widner

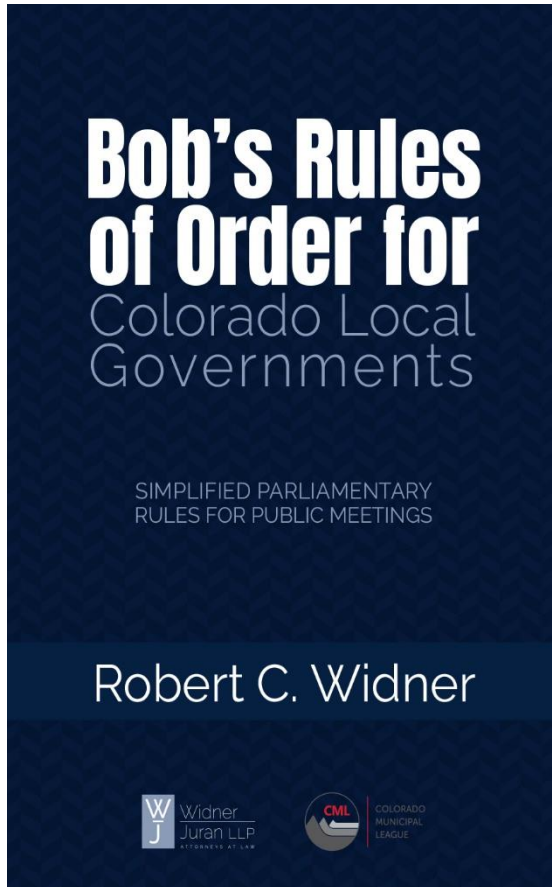
10/28/2024

Bylaws & Rules of Order

- “Bylaws”
 - Organization & Management of the Body
 - Largely **Specific** to the Body
 - Charter, Statutes & Policies for Meetings
- “Rules of Order”
 - Procedures for Decision Making
 - Can be **Uniform** for Similar Bodies

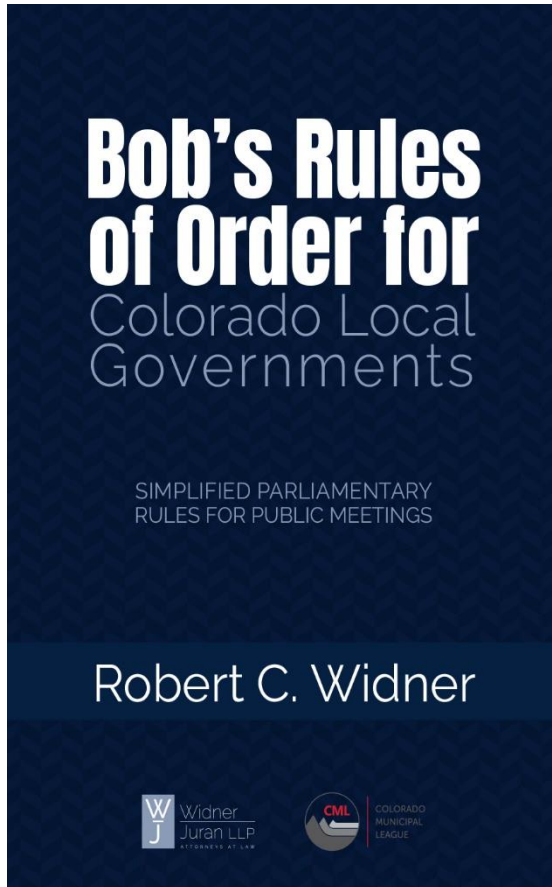
Rules of Order

Bob's Rule of Order



- Not a “*Shameless Plug*”
- Product of 34 years of:
 - +1,600 Public Meetings & Hearings
 - Meeting Frustrations & Problems
 - Successful Meeting Practices
 - Listserv Issues & Questions
 - Actual Use & Improvements





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Secret for Quick Understanding

- Exhibit B
- Exhibit C

Terminology

Terminology

Abstain

Agenda Item

Amendment

Body

Continue

Debatable Motion

Debate

Discussion

Floor

Member

Motion

Moving Member

Objection

Out of Order

Point

Postpone

Presiding Officer

Quorum

Recuse

Second

Withdraw

Terminology

Abstain

Agenda Item

Amendment

Body

Continue

Debatable Motion

Debate

Discussion

Floor

Member

Motion

Moving Member

Objection

Out of Order

Point

Postpone

Presiding Officer

Quorum

Recuse

Second

Withdraw

Terminology

- **“Discussion” and “Debate”**

Discuss ➡ Motion ➡ Debate

- **“Debatable Motion”**

- **“Objection”**
-

Terminology



- **Point of Order**
(Bring the Body into Compliance)
- **Point of Information**
(Obtain Urgently Needed Information)
- **Point of Appeal**
(Appeal Presiding Officer Decision)

THE RULES

The Set Up of the Rules

General

Quorum

Presiding Officer

Floor

Motion & Second

“Friendly Requests”

Vote

Suspension/Deviation

The General Rules

Rule 1.1

Any state or local law that concerns the conduct of a meeting is a part of the *Rules of Order* to the extent the law is applicable to the Body.

Rule 1.2

**The meeting agenda will be followed
unless properly amended or
modified.**

Rule 1.3

The Body may presume that any legally required public notice for the meeting and for each agenda item was properly completed.

Rule 1.4

A Member shall disclose a conflict of interest and recuse themselves from both participation and voting when required by applicable state or local law.

Rule 1.5

**A motion is not required for the Body
to initiate discussion.**

Rule 1.5 – Quasi-Judicial

Application

- **Due Process:**

An Impartial, Unbiased, and Neutral “Tribunal”

- **Problem:**

“Motion to Approve” Before Evidence & Testimony

- **Related Issue:**

Questions/Position Statements Prior to Motion

Rule 1.6



The record for each decision of the Body includes all information presented to the Body that pertains to the decision, all discussion and debate of the Body in reaching the decision, and all laws and local policies applicable to the decision.



Rule 1.7



The Body's decision on a matter is presumed to be supported by the record and by reasonable inferences drawn from the record.



Rule 1.8



A meeting formally ends only upon the Presiding Officer's declaration of adjournment without objection or upon the approval of a Motion to Adjourn.



The Quorum

Rule 2.1

A quorum of the Body is required for the Body to conduct business unless otherwise expressly provided by the Body's bylaws or the *Rules of Order*.



Rule 2.2

Unless otherwise provided by the Body's bylaws or other applicable law, a majority of the total membership of the Body who are present and eligible to vote shall constitute a quorum.



It is a **Default** Rule

“Unless Otherwise Provided...”

- **Workshops, Trainings & Non-Decision Making Meetings**

Quorum is **Continuing Requirement**

“Present”

Look to Bylaws – What Constitutes Being Present?

- In-Person
- Remote Attendance?

“Eligible to Vote”

- Member of the Body (*obviously*)
- No *Legally Defined* Conflict of Interest
 - State Law
 - Bylaws/Policy

Rule 2.3 A Special & Limited Rule

A request to be excused from the meeting while a motion is on the Floor, if granted, shall be effective:

- + Upon the granting of the request if the excuse is due to a lawfully recognized conflict of interest; or
- + Upon the granting of the request if the excused Member's absence will not deny the Body of a quorum; or
- + Upon the final vote or other final resolution of the pending motion if the excused Member's absence will deny the Body of a quorum.



Rule 2.4

A Member's Unexcused absence while a motion is on the Floor shall not affect the quorum until the final vote or other final resolution of the motion.



Rule 2.5

In the absence of a quorum, the Presiding Officer, the Members present, or an administrative staff member shall:

- + Postpone the unresolved agenda item(s) to the next regular meeting; and
- + Adjourn the meeting (if meeting lacks quorum).



Rule 2.5

NOTE: Postponing Quasi-judicial Matters

Clearly state that the postponement is to a specific DATE, TIME, and PLACE.

VS.

“Hey, Come Back Next Thursday!”

The Presiding Officer

Rule 3.1

The Presiding Officer shall be the exclusive director and facilitator of all meeting conduct.



Rule 3.2

The Presiding Officer serves as the parliamentarian unless the role is assigned to another person.



Rule 3.3

The Presiding Officer is entitled to the same rights as a Member unless otherwise limited by law.



Rule 3.4



The Presiding Officer may exercise discretion during the meeting subject to a Point of Order or a Point of Appeal.



Rule 3.5

The Presiding Officer shall facilitate the meeting in a fair and neutral manner and, whenever practicable, defer to the Members to initially lead discussion, offer motions, and direct debate.



The Floor

Rule 4.1

**The Floor is required to address the
Body.**



Rule 4.2

A Member shall be granted the Floor by the Presiding Officer when properly requested in accordance with the *Rules of Order* and local meeting practice.

Rule 4.3



A Member's right to the Floor is limited to five minutes.



Rule 4.4

A Member may obtain the Floor only once until all other Members are offered an opportunity to obtain the Floor.



The Motion

Rule 5.1

A motion is required for the Body to take a formal action.



Rule 5.1 The “So Moved” Motion

- Authorized as Exception to a Formal Motion
- The Motion is Clearly Understood by the Body
- Presiding Officer has discretion to Accept
(Good to Summarize for Clarity)
- Simple Objection Defeats & Forces Formal Motion

Rule 5.2

A motion shall propose an affirmative proposition in clear and understandable language that is limited to either a “yes” or a “no” vote.



Rule 5.2

- Three Essentials to a Properly Stated Motion
 - Affirmative = Changes the Status Quo
 - Clearly Understandable
 - Asks for a “Yes” or “No” Response
-

Rule 5.3

A motion requires a second.



Rule 5.4

To be placed on the Floor for the Body's consideration, the Presiding Officer must acknowledge that the motion was properly stated and seconded in accordance with Rules 5.2 and 5.3.



Rule 5.5

A motion, once acknowledged by the Presiding Officer and placed on the Floor, is owned by the Body.



Rule 5.6

The Presiding Officer shall offer the Moving Member the first opportunity to speak to a debatable motion.



The “Friendly Requests”

Friendly Requests??

- Two Circumstances Where Efficiencies Can Exist:
 - Amendment of Motion
 - Withdrawal of Motion
- Typically Requires Formal Motion to Amend or Withdraw.
- But Sometimes.....
 - We All know the Amendment Makes Sense
 - We All know the Withdraw is Needed

Rule 6.1

A Friendly Amendment is authorized only for a debatable motion, and the amendment of the motion will be effective unless a Member objects.



Rule 6.2

A Friendly Withdrawal is authorized only for a debatable motion, and the amendment of the motion will be effective unless a Member objects.



The Vote

Rule 7.1

**The Presiding Officer's call for the
vote closes the Floor.**

Rule 7.2

Proxy or absentee voting is not permitted.





Rule 7.3

**A Member may not explain their vote
after the call for the vote.**



Rule 7.4

Neither the Moving Member nor the Member offering a second on a motion must advocate or vote in favor of the motion.





Rule 7.5

Each Member eligible to vote on a motion shall vote either “yes” or “no.”



Rule 7.6

The approval of a motion requires a vote of a majority of a quorum unless a greater number of votes is required by the *Rules of Order* or by law.



Rule 7.7

The approval of a motion by the required vote shall decisively approve the motion's proposition or question.



Rule 7.8

**The failure of a motion to receive the
required vote for approval shall
decisively disapprove the motion's
proposition.**



Rule 7.9

A Member shall not change their vote after the announcement of the final vote except in exceptional circumstances with the approval of the Presiding Officer.

Rule

Suspension/Deviation

Rule 8.1

The Presiding Officer may suspend certain rules.

Rule 8.2

The Body may suspend certain rules.

Rule 8.3



An inadvertent and non-substantive deviation from a rule by the Presiding Officer or the Body without objection from a Member is authorized and intended.



Motion Class & Priority

Priority

- **Privileged** = Any time Motion
 - Any Point (Order, Information, Appeal)
 - Recess
 - Executive Session
- **Main** = Only When No Motion is On the Floor
 - Principal Motion
 - Continue or Postpone an Upcoming Matter on the Agenda
 - Reconsider
 - Adjourn
- **Subordinate** = Only When Main Motion is on the Floor
 - Amend
 - Continue or Postpone a Matter when Motion is on the Floor
 - Close Debate

Points & Motions

Points (3)



- Point of **Order**
(Bring the Body into Compliance)
- Point of **Information**
(Obtain Urgently Needed Information)
- Point of **Appeal**
(Appeal Presiding Officer Decision)

Motions (Only 8)

- **Principal Motion**
 - Motion to **Continue or Postpone**
 - Motion to **Amend**
 - Motion to **Close Debate**
 - Motion to **Reconsider**
 - Motion to **Recess**
 - Motion to **Adjourn**
 - Motion for **Executive Session**
-

Motions (Only 8)

- **Principal** Motion
- Motion to **Continue or Postpone**
- Motion to **Amend**
- Motion to **Close Debate**
- Motion to **Reconsider**
- Motion to **Recess**
- Motion to **Adjourn**
- Motion for **Executive Session**



Discussion

