Robert's Rules of Order for CoA Meetings

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Robert's Rules…. from Wikipedia
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert%27s_Rules_of_Order

- A U.S. Army officer, Henry Martyn Robert (1837–1923), saw a need for a standard of parliamentary procedure while living in San Francisco. He found San Francisco in the mid-to-late 19th century to be a chaotic place where meetings of any kind tended to be tumultuous, with little consistency of procedure and with people of many nationalities and traditions thrown together.
- The first edition of the book, whose full title was *Pocket Manual of Rules of Order for Deliberative Assemblies*, was published in February 1876 by the then-Major Robert, with the short title *Robert's Rules of Order* placed on its cover.

Lots of resources

- https://robertsrulesmadesimple.com/
- *Robert's Rules in Plain English, 2nd edition*, Doris Zimmerman, HarperCollins Publishers, 2009

Main Principles:

- Only one motion can be discussed at a time.
- Everyone has the right to participate in discussion before anyone may speak a second time.
- Everyone has the right to know what is going on at all times.
- Only urgent matters may interrupt a speaker.

Following presentation of an agenda item, and citizens speakers

- Chair calls for a motion.
- Generally, the chair facilitates the discussion, but she can also make or second a motion.
- A motion, once made, must be seconded before discussion/debate begins. The maker and seconder get to explain why they put forward the motion.
- Following the motion/second, the chair facilitates an orderly discussion or debate. Board rules may limit the time a member can speak.
- One must wait until after everyone else has spoken before speaking a second time, unless it is to answer a question posed by another speaker.

Types of motions…

- Main motion (or base motion) on an agenda item. Req's 2nd.
- Amendment to main motion. Req's 2nd.
- Limit debate/Call for a vote. Req's 2nd. Requires 2/3 vote… (8 yeas out of 11 members).
- Postpone. Req's 2nd.
- Recess, Adjourn, Req's 2nd.
- Table a motion. Req's 2nd.
- Remove from the table (take up the issue). Req's 2nd.

Types of motions…

- Main motion – “I move we approve project XTZ.”
- Secondary motion – A motion about the main motion. Can be taken up during the discussion of the main motion.
  - Subsidiary motion - “I move that we refer project XYZ to the capital planning committee.”
  - Privileged motion – “I move that we recess for lunch.”
  - Incidental motion – “I move that we vote by paper ballot.”

Quick Reference

	Must Be Seconded	Open for Discussion	Can be Amended	Vote Count Required to Pass	May Be Reconsidered or Rescinded
Main Motion	√	√	√	Majority	√
Amend Motion	√	√		Majority	√
Kill a Motion	√			Majority	√
Limit Debate	√		√	2/3rds	√
Close Discussion	√			2/3rds	√
Recess	√		√	Majority	
Adjourn (End meeting)	√			Majority	
Refer to Committee	√	√	√	Majority	√
Postpone to a later time	√	√	√	Majority	√
Table	√			Majority	
Postpone Indefinitely	√	√	√	Majority	√

Speedy Action…

- When it's obvious that there is no objection to a matter, the chair can quickly move things along by simply asking whether there is any opposition to a questions, and hearing none, declare the motion as passed.
- Examples:
  - The agenda is complete, the meeting is apparently done, the chairs says, "Anyone object to adjourning? Hearing no objection, this meeting is adjourned at XX:XX pm. Thanks everyone!"
  - An amendment is offered to a motion to clarify the language without affecting the aim of the motion, and the chair says: "Anyone object to the amended language? Hearing no objection, the amended language is accepted."
  - An "friendly" amendment is offered to add to the motion, say, by adding a timeline for implementation or suggesting additional public notification, without affecting the aim of the motion, and the chair says: "Anyone object to the 'friendly' amendment? Hearing no objection, the amendment is accepted."
- Of course, if someone objects, then a motion, second, discussion, vote will be required.

Officer elections

- CoA commissions usually have chair, vice-chair, secretary elected from the membership.
- Sometimes there is a nominations committee to forward candidate names to the whole commission. Since most commissions are 11 or so members, “nom comm” not always needed.
- When nominations are made from the floor, **no 2nd is needed**.
- A person can nominate themself.
- The chair can ask “anymore nominations, hearing none, nominations are closed”. (Unless someone objects….)

Happy Meetings!!!!