

Rules of Order

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1 General

1.1 Purpose

These rules of order are designed to facilitate the smooth running of BCRTA meetings. In the same sense that “good fences make good neighbours”, good rules help to make good meetings. They can help to ensure fairness and orderliness in place of the rancour and chaos that might otherwise prevail. The rules may be amended from time to time by the Directors or a General Meeting. Where these rules are silent, *Roberts Rules of Order* apply.

1.2 Quorum

1.2.1 Definition

A quorum is the minimum number of persons required to be present at a meeting before the meeting can begin. Should the lack of a quorum be noted part way through a meeting, the meeting must be suspended until a quorum is restored, failing which the meeting must be adjourned.

1.2.2 General Meetings

Bylaw 5.10 specifies that the quorum for a BCRTA general meeting is the greater of one-third (1/3) or sixty (60) of the voting members in good standing on the date of the meeting.

1.2.3 Directors' Meetings

Bylaw 6.10(e) specifies that the quorum for Board of Directors meetings is a majority of the Directors then in office.

2 The Chairperson

2.1 Choice of the Chairperson

2.1.1 Directors' Meetings:

Under BCRTA Bylaws and Procedures, the President chairs Board of Directors' meetings, but may ask another director to chair in order to allow the President to make reports or participate in discussions or debates.

2.1.2 General Meetings:

BCRTA Bylaw 5.7 states that the Board may appoint a chair for a general meeting, failing which the President chairs the meeting unless she or he is unable to do so.

2.2 Speaking Order

- (a) Persons wishing to speak on a topic under discussion will signal the chair, who will compile a speakers' list.
- (b) During debate of a motion the chair will call upon speakers in the order in which their names were added to the speaker's list.

- (c) When an amendment is moved, the chair will compile a new list, consisting of those wishing to speak on the amendment. When the amendment has been dealt with, the chair will revert to the list for the main motion.

2.3 *Challenging the Chair*

If a meeting participant feels that the chair's ruling on a particular matter is incorrect, that person may "challenge the chair". Such a challenge must be made before business is resumed following the ruling in question.

- (a) The challenger calls, "Challenge the chair".
- (b) The chair asks the meeting for a motion "to sustain the chair". In the absence of such a motion, the chair is not sustained and must make a different ruling.
- (c) The challenger explains her/his reasons for the challenge, and the chair then states her/his reasons for making the ruling.
- (d) The meeting then votes on the "sustain" motion, and the chair acts in accordance with the result of that vote.

3 The Agenda

3.1 *Purpose*

An agenda prescribes the meeting's items of business and the order in which those items will be dealt with. If discussion or debate drifts into topics not closely related to the current item on the agenda, such discussion or debate is out of order.

3.2 *The Draft Agenda*

The President, in consultation with others as appropriate, prepares a draft agenda for General and Directors' meetings. Committee chairs do likewise for their meetings.

3.3 *Adoption of the Agenda*

- (a) The chair draws the meeting's attention to the draft agenda.
- (b) Unless there is dissent, the chair accepts additional items for the agenda.
- (c) The chair then asks for a motion to adopt the agenda.
- (d) During debate on the motion to adopt the agenda, amendments are in order, requiring a simple majority of votes to pass.

3.4 *Subsequent amendments to the agenda*

Once adopted, the agenda may only be amended by a two-thirds majority vote in favour.

4 Motions

4.1 *Purpose*

- (a) A meeting makes decisions by debating and voting on motions, sometimes referred to as resolutions, which are formal proposals moved and seconded by two voting members of the meeting. A proposal is not debated unless a motion first “puts it on the floor”.

4.2 Content of a Motion

- (a) A motion should, whenever possible, be worded in affirmative terms. It should not begin with a preamble (“Whereas”, or “In order to”) since these often represent arguable “facts” or opinions, discussion of which may detract from debate about the action part of the motion.
- (b) All motions at the Board table should include a description of the action, if any is proposed, and state by whom the action is to be taken. **Dir., Nov. 2011**

4.3 Putting a Motion on the Floor

- (a) A person wishing to move a motion may do so, provided that:
 - i the related agenda item has been reached; and
 - ii it is the person’s turn to speak, according to the chair’s list of speakers.
- (b) The mover must move the motion before speaking to it.
- (c) If there is no seconder, the motion is not debated.
- (d) The chair may rule on whether the motion is, or is not, in order.
- (e) The mover and seconder of a motion may not withdraw it, once it is on the floor, unless there is unanimous consent from the meeting.

4.4 Types of Motion

Movers of the following types of motion may not interrupt the speaking order:

4.4.1 Main Motions

- (a) The main motion states the proposal and puts it on the floor for debate.
- (b) Only one main motion may be on the floor at a time.

4.4.2 Amendments

- (a) A motion to amend the main motion is in order at any time during debate on the main motion.
- (b) A motion to amend may propose additions, deletions or changed wording for the main motion, but is out of order if it would significantly change the intent of the main motion.
- (c) If a motion to amend passes, debate resumes on the main motion as amended.
- (d) During debate on a motion to amend, a motion to amend the amendment is in order, but no further amending motions may be moved until the motion to amend the amendment has been decided.

4.4.3 Refer

- (a) A motion to refer is in order at any time during a debate.

- (a) A referral motion names the person or group to which the matter is to be referred, and may also:
 - i give authority to that person or group to deal with the matter,
 - ii provide instructions on how the referral is to be handled, and
 - iii specify the time and/or date by which a report back, if any, is to be made.
- (b) During debate on an amendment, a motion to refer has the effect, if passed, of referring both the amendment and the main motion.

4.4.4 Postpone consideration

- (a) A motion to postpone consideration is in order at any time during a debate.
- (b) A postponement motion specifies when debate on that matter is to be resumed.
- (c) A two-thirds majority vote is required to pass a postponement motion since it has the effect of amending the agenda: either by effectively removing it from the meeting's agenda in favour of dealing with it in a future meeting, or by inserting the item into the current meeting's agenda at a later time.

4.4.5 Table a Motion

- (a) A motion to table a matter is in order at any time during a debate.
- (b) A tabling motion:
 - i is not debatable,
 - iv does not specify a time for resumption of debate on that matter,
 - v requires a two-thirds majority, since it removes the item from the agenda, unresolved, and
 - vi if passed, ends debate, either temporarily or permanently.
- (c) A motion to lift from the table may be made later in the same meeting or at the subsequent meeting. If the motion to lift the item from the table would, if passed, have the effect of amending the agenda, it will require a two-thirds majority in favour.

4.4.6 Put the Question

- (a) A motion "that the question be put" is in order at any time during debate.
- (b) The chair may delay a vote on that motion until both sides of a debate have been heard. If only one side has been heard, the chair may interrupt the speaking order to allow the other side to be heard and may rule that up to three speakers on each side will be heard before the motion to put the question is voted on.
- (c) A two-thirds majority vote is required to pass a motion to put the question, since it has the effect of denying any further speakers of their chance to be heard.

4.4.7 Rescind or Reconsider

- (a) A motion to rescind or reconsider a previous decision is in order at any time.
- (b) If it is moved during debate on the same topic, it requires only a simple majority vote to pass.

- (c) If it interrupts other business or delays the adjournment, it requires a two-thirds majority vote to pass, since it has the effect of amending the agenda.

4.4.8 Suspend the Rules (Temporarily)

- (a) A motion to suspend the rules may be made at any time, in order to allow the meeting to take an action that one or more rules would prevent it from taking.
- (b) The chair may ask if there is unanimous consent to suspend the rules. If there is not, a two-thirds majority is required to pass the motion.

5 Rights of Members Attending Meetings

5.1 Speakers' rights

- (a) Every member attending a meeting has a right to be heard with respect. The chair may suspend the business of a meeting until the meeting comes to order, and gives a speaker its attention.
- (b) No speaker shall, without the consent of the meeting (simple majority vote), speak for longer than four minutes on any motion, main or secondary.
- (c) The mover of a motion has the right to close debate on her/his motion, unless a motion to put the question has been passed.
- (d) Except as provided for in (c) above, a speaker will not be permitted to speak again during debate on a motion until other speakers have been heard.

5.2 "Points of ..."

The following may be raised at any time, and may interrupt the speaking order:

5.2.1 Point of Order

If at any time during a meeting a member believes that debate or other business is straying from the agenda s/he may rise to bring this to the chair's attention.

- (a) The chair must respond by bringing the meeting back to order, or by explaining to the member why s/he will allow matters to proceed as they are.
- (b) If the member disagrees with the chair's response, s/he may challenge the chair.

5.2.2 Request for Information

A member may ask at any time, through the chair, for information on the matter being debated.

5.2.3 Point of Privilege

A member may rise at any time to bring to the chair's attention a matter such as unsatisfactory conditions in the meeting place (temperature, sound level, etc.), unacceptable attacks on a person's integrity or reputation, or other matters that the member believes to be interfering with the smooth and proper conduct of the meeting. If the member is not satisfied with the chair's response, s/he may challenge the chair.

6 Reports

6.1 Receiving Reports

When an officer, committee chair, etc., presents a report to the meeting, it is not necessary for there to be a motion “to receive” the report, whether written or oral. If the matter being reported on is on the agenda and the agenda has been adopted, the meeting has already agreed to receive any related report(s), and to deal with any motions related to the matter.

6.2 Adopting Reports

A meeting has no need to “adopt” a report. However, the adoption of any recommendation(s) in, or arising from the report, will require motion(s) and debate in the usual manner.

7 Moving into Committee

7.1 Purposes

A meeting moves “into committee” in order to:

- (a) exclude non-members from a part of the meeting dealing with confidential matters;
- (b) deal with confidential matters that should not be recorded in the regular meeting’s minutes;
- (c) exclude certain members or staff from the meeting when their presence during discussion of certain matters might put them, or be seen to be putting them, into a conflict of interest situation; and/or
- (d) allow for debate in a less formal or restrictive manner than in regular session.

7.2 Procedures

- (a) A motion to move into committee is in order at any time.
- (b) A member moves, “That this meeting move into committee
 - i to consider;
 - ii with present;
 - iii with in the chair;
 - iv to rise [at, or no later than]”
- (c) The motion requires a seconder, may be debated, and may be amended with respect to the conditions outlined in (b), above.
- (d) Once the meeting has moved into committee:

- i The business of the meeting is confined to that for which the in-committee session was convened.
 - ii No seconder is required for motions.
 - iii The Chair relaxes somewhat, but does not disregard, the normal rules of order.
 - iv If minutes are to be kept, they will be kept separate from the main meeting's minutes, and are confidential to the members present, or entitled to be present, for the in-committee session. These minutes may only be presented for adoption in an in-committee setting, attended by members who were, or were entitled to be, present at the meeting of which these minutes are a record.
 - v When a member wishes for the in-committee meeting to adjourn, s/he moves, "That we rise and [report] [recommend] [do not report]."
- (e) Upon rising, the Chair of the in-committee session informs the regular meeting, now resumed, of any report or recommendation(s) which the closed meeting agreed to bring forward into the regular meeting.
- (f) The minutes of the **regular** meeting will record only:
- i the motion to move into committee;
 - ii that the move into committee was made;
 - iii that the committee rose; and
 - iv whether or not the committee brought forward any report and/or any recommendation(s).

8 BCRTA General Meetings

8.1 *Meetings and the Media*

BCRTA General Meetings shall be open to the media, except when meetings move into Committee.

8.2 *Limits to Business*

The business of a General Meeting must be limited to the items listed in the Agenda which, in the case of an Extraordinary General Meeting, must be items specifically related to the purpose(s) for which the meeting has been called.

8.3 *Distribution of Printed Materials*

Distribution of printed materials (other than those included in the *Registration Materials* package) such as information supplementary to that contained in the package, or documents that Members or Branches may wish to distribute, shall be permitted if approved by the President or a Committee Chair. An adverse decision may be appealed to the Meeting. Promotional materials prepared by or on behalf of one or more candidates are not permitted.

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8.4 *Nominations from the Floor*

The Nominations Chair shall:

- (a) at the commencement of the election for each position, call attention to the names of candidates listed on the printed ballots, and instruct the meeting as to the procedure for adding names (BCRTA Procedure 4.6.2.e, and Rules of Order 8.5.5.b);
 - (b) call for further nominations from the floor;
 - (c) declare nominations closed, and introduce all the nominees to the meeting; and then if there are nominations from the floor,
 - (d) if there are nominations from the floor, allow all candidates for that particular position two minutes each in which to introduce themselves.
- Dir., Mar 2015**

8.5 Voting

8.5.1 Voting Cards and Election Ballots

- (a) Each Director attending the Meeting shall be issued with one voting card and, when elections are on the Agenda, one set of election ballots. The cards and ballots may be passed only to another Director.
- (b) Each Branch shall be issued with voting cards and sets of election ballots equal to the number of delegates to which the Branch is entitled pursuant to the Bylaws.
 - i A Branch may make rules regarding the distribution of its voting cards and sets of election ballots prior to and during a Meeting, except that each delegate present during a vote or election shall be guaranteed the right to hold at least one voting card and one set of election ballots, and no delegate may hold more than four of each.
 - vii The voting cards and election ballots issued to a Branch may only be utilized by delegates from that Branch.
 - viii Unless they have been specifically instructed otherwise by a General Meeting of their Branch, delegates are free to vote as they see fit.

8.5.2 Voting on Motions

- (a) Except for elections, all voting shall be conducted by show of voting cards.
- (b) There shall be no roll call votes.
- (c) A count of voting cards may be called for by the chair of the meeting, or by voters holding 40 or more voting cards; and the count of voting cards shall be undertaken by the elected scrutineers.

8.5.3 Voting in Elections

Elections shall be by secret ballot, except that, if at the time of balloting for a particular office there is the same number of nominees for the office as there are positions available, that/those person(s) shall be declared elected by acclamation.

8.5.4 Order of the Elections

- (a) President
- (b) 1st Vice President
- (c) 2nd Vice President

- (d) Treasurer
- (e) Directors for the Greater Vancouver and Fraser Valley Regions
- (f) Directors for the regions outside of (e)
- (g) ACER-CART Representative
- (h) BCRTA delegates to the BCTF Annual General Meeting

8.5.5 Balloting Rules

- (a) The printed ballots will include the names of those candidates whose valid nomination forms were in the hands of Office Staff by 5:00 pm on the day before the General Meeting.
- (b) The names of candidates nominated from the floor shall, at the direction of the Nominations Chair, be added to the printed ballots by the voters.
- (c) A ballot shall be valid if it is marked for at least one candidate but not if it is marked for more than the number of vacancies to be filled. The final determination of a ballot's validity lies with the Nominations Chair.
- (d) To be declared elected a candidate must receive more than 50 percent of the valid ballots cast; except in the election for BCRTA Delegates to the BCTF AGM, where candidates are elected in order of the number of votes received, up to the number required to make up the delegation. **Dir., May 2015**
- (e) Following an indecisive ballot, where there are more than two candidates remaining over and above the number of remaining positions to be filled, the candidate with the fewest votes shall be dropped from the next ballot.
- (f) Candidates defeated in an election for a position shall be deemed to have been nominated for the position next to be filled.
- (g) At any time prior to the conduct of a ballot a candidate may, by giving notice to the meeting, withdraw from that election.
- (h) Following completion of the election process, and unless there is a resolution to the contrary, the ballots shall be destroyed.

9 Virtual Meetings

9.1 Purpose

When a matter needs to be considered between regular meetings, a “virtual” meeting may be convened. The agenda for a virtual meeting shall be limited to the matter(s) requiring consideration before the next regular meeting.

9.2 Convenors

- (a) In the case of the Board, a virtual meeting shall be convened at the call of the President or of three or more Directors.
- (b) In the case of a committee, a virtual meeting shall be convened at the call of the Chairperson or of three or more Committee members.

9.3 *Participants and Quorum*

A virtual meeting shall consist of a dialogue conducted either by telephone or other electronic means among all available members of the Board or Committee, and appropriate guest(s).

- (a) The chair shall ensure that every reasonable effort is made to inform Board or Committee members and appropriate guests that such a meeting is to take place and to facilitate their participation.
- (b) No Board or Committee member or appropriate guest shall be denied participation other than for her or his own reasons such as travel, illness, etc., or because reasonable efforts to make contact with the person have failed.
- (c) A quorum shall be a majority of the Board or Committee members.

9.4 *Procedures*

Dir., Dec. 2010

To the extent permitted by the meeting's technical limitations, the meeting shall be conducted in accordance with regular BCRTA Rules of Order.

- (a) The chair shall make arrangements for minutes of the meeting to be recorded. Board meeting minutes will normally be kept by the Office Administrator. A committee member may keep committee meeting minutes.
- (b) The chair shall formally call the meeting to order to signal its commencement. The minutes shall record the date, time and manner of the call to order, and the names of all those participating in the meeting.
- (c) The chair shall signal the conclusion of the meeting by announcing its adjournment and, unless there is objection from three or more participants, the meeting shall then stand adjourned. The date and time of the adjournment shall form part of the minutes.
- (d) Virtual meeting minutes shall be kept in a separate file/folder and shall be presented for adoption at the next regular meeting of the Board or committee.