



Rules of Order

CUPE 3903 uses our own rules of order during General Membership Meetings. These are set out in the Local's by-laws. In order to participate effectively, and get the most out of meetings it is important to know how these rules work. The following is a basic outline of rules you will need to know.

Motions

Decisions at meetings are made through the process of motions. Once a motion has been made and seconded, it becomes the sole subject of the meeting until it is adopted, rejected, tabled or ruled out of order.

The Process

[1] Recognition – A speaker can only speak when recognized by the Chair. Raise your hand to be put on the speaker's list

[2] Making the Motion – Once it is your turn to speak, you can make the motion

[3] Secunder – Every motion has to have a seconder

[4] Restating the Motion – The Recording Secretary must read back the motion to the membership. If the motion is out of order it must be declared so at this point

[5] Discussion – Members are free to discuss the motion. All discussion must relate to the motion

[6] Amendments: An amendment may be made to the motion during discussion. The amendment must not alter the intent of the original motion, and must be seconded.

Once an amendment is on the floor it replaces the motion as the focus of discussion

[7] Once debate is finished or the question is called the motion is re-read to the membership

[8] Voting – The vote is usually taken by a show of hands

[9] Declaring the Result – The Chair will declare the motion passed or defeated

Withdrawing a Motion

A motion may be withdrawn with the approval of the Mover and the Secunder. Once debate has ended on a motion, the motion can only be withdrawn upon unanimous vote of the members present. If there is any objection the motion must proceed to a vote.

Tabling a Motion

If a motion requires further study/ debate etc., a Member may move to table. Tabling a Motion requires a seconder and takes precedence over all other motions, except Motions to Adjourn. It cannot be debated and must be voted on immediately.

3903 Rules of Order (continued)

Points of Order

A member may call a point of order when

[1] A discussion is wandering away from the point

[2] When the bylaws are being violated

[3] When the chair allows discussion on a non-debatable motion A member may interrupt another speaker to make a Point of Order. The Chair must rule on the appropriateness of the point immediately.

Challenge to the Chair

If a member feels that the Chair's ruling violates the bylaws or procedures she can challenge the chair. A Challenge must be seconded. At this point the Chair gives way to another member, usually a Vice President. The challenger states her reason for the challenge. The Chair responds. There is no debate. A vote is called immediately. The Chair then resumes her position, regardless of the outcome of the challenge.

Points of Information

A member who requires more information on the subject being debated can direct their inquiry to the Chair. The member cannot interrupt the speaker on the floor. But, the Points of Information may take precedence over other speakers on the list.

Limiting Debate

The Chair is allowed to prevent people from speaking more than once to any motion or amendment. Only the mover and second may speak more than once to provide clarification or answer a question from the floor. Debate may also be limited by a motion to limit debate to a certain amount of time. E.g. 10 minutes on a certain topic.

Calling the question

Members calling for the question to be put from the floor do not have official status, they are merely asking the Chair to call the question. Normally the Chair does this when the speakers list is ended, but the Chair can do this at any time, if the member are willing. The Chair can call a vote regarding whether to call the question, as is common practice in our meetings.