



The Alberta Teachers' Association

Rules of Order and Procedure

The following rules of order were adopted in 1967 for use in meetings of the Association. They are designed to facilitate the dispatch of business. Where the rules are silent, *Robert's Rules of Order* was adopted at the 1973 Annual Representative Assembly as the official guide.

The business of a properly constituted meeting is carried out through a series of motions that reflect the will of the majority in attendance. Robert's classification of motions into privileged, incidental, subsidiary, main or principal, and miscellaneous is set out for information in Figures 1 and 2.

A main or principal motion is a self-contained proposal not incidental to any proceeding, amendable and drafted in such a way as to be capable of expressing a decision of the meeting. Only one such motion may be before the Assembly at any one time.

Other motions, though independent in form, may be moved during the course of debate on a main or principal motion. The object of such motion(s) may be to set aside the main or principal motion. However, the purpose of all parliamentary rules and forms is to enable the Assembly better to express its will. Rules and forms should never be used to obstruct the business before the Assembly. A chair should not accept motions that are, in the opinion of the chair, designed to obstruct. In such a case, the decision of the chair may be appealed.

Subsidiary motions are used to move questions forward in the different states of procedure through which they have to pass before their final adoption. Included in this class are motions to refer or to take from the table or to amend.

Amendments are used to alter a question either by leaving out words, by adding words or by doing both. Only two amendments may be dealt with at once and they are dealt with from last amendment to first amendment to main notion.

Incidental motions are those that arise out of, and are connected with, other motions to which they relate. Incidental motions include a motion to withdraw, a motion to appeal from the ruling of the chair and a motion to suspend the rules. These motions have no rank among themselves.

Privileged motions, on account of their importance, take precedence over all other motions. They are usually undebatable. Included in this category are motions to adjourn or to fix a time at which to adjourn, questions of privilege or to call for orders of the day.

Defining and Interpretive

1.1 This rule and the rules that follow shall govern the proceedings of all meetings of The Alberta Teachers' Association, whether general, special, or in standing committee, special committee or committee of the whole.

1.2 In this and the following rules herein, the term *meeting* shall refer to the entire period in which a general or special meeting of The Alberta Teachers' Association, or its standing or special committees, is held.

1.3 The term *session* shall refer to any one of morning session (held before 1200), afternoon session (held between 1200 and 1800) and evening session (held after 1800) in any one day of a meeting.

1.4 The term *Association* shall mean The Alberta Teachers' Association.

1.5 The term *president* shall mean either the president or any person who, under the constitution of the Association, occupies for the time being the position of president or functions for the time being in the capacity of president.

1.6 The term *table officers* shall include the president, the immediate past president, the two vice-presidents and the executive secretary.

1.7 The term *local representatives* shall mean the members of the Annual Representative Assembly as defined in the General Bylaws of The Alberta Teachers' Association.

1.8 The term *rules* shall mean the "Rules of Order and Procedure for The Alberta Teachers' Association."

1.9 In all cases not expressly provided for in these rules, which arise in the proceedings of a meeting of the Association, *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall be the textbook.

Quorum

2.1 The presence of at least one-quarter of the registered provincial councillors from local associations, not including the president or chair, shall be necessary to constitute a meeting of The Alberta Teachers' Association, whether general, special or in committee of the whole.

2.2 The quorum for any standing or special committee or subcommittee of the Association shall be a majority of the members of the said committee or subcommittee.

2.3 If there be no quorum within 30 minutes after the hour appointed for the meeting of the Association, the secretary or other recording officer shall call the roll and take down the names of local representatives or members then present. The meeting shall thereupon stand adjourned until the time fixed for the next sitting or until such time as the Provincial Executive Council may order.

2.4 When any order, resolution or question shall be lost by a meeting of the Association, or by a committee thereof, for want of a quorum, the order, resolution or question so lost shall be the first business to be proceeded with and disposed of at the next sitting or meeting under that particular head.

Order of Business

3.1 The following shall be the order of business at meetings of the Association:

3.1.1 Call to order.

3.1.2 Adoption of minutes of the last regular meeting.

3.1.3 Introduction of guests.

3.1.4 Appointment of committees.

3.1.5 Reports of officers: president, executive secretary and treasurer.

3.1.6 Receiving of reports of committees.

3.2 The remainder of the agenda of the meeting of the Annual Representative Assembly of the Alberta Teachers' Association shall be set by the Steering Committee, which shall be the table officers of the Association plus any members appointed by the Provincial Executive Council under rule 3.1.4 above, but shall include the following items:

3.2.1 Report on electoral votes, if any.

3.2.2 Annual report of the Board of Administrators, Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund Board.

3.2.3 Report of returning officers.

3.2.4 Resolutions properly submitted for inclusion in the agenda.

3.3 No motion shall be received and discussed at a representative assembly of the Alberta Teachers' Association for introducing new matter that does not appear on the agenda other than matters of privilege and bringing up petitions. This rule may be suspended by a two-thirds vote of the delegates or members present, without debate.

3.4 The regular agenda of a representative assembly of the Alberta Teachers' Association may be suspended at any time by a two-thirds vote of the delegates or members present, without debate, to receive the report of a committee or for the transaction of special business.

3.5 Any one or more of these rules may be temporarily suspended by a vote of two-thirds of the representatives present at a representative assembly of The Alberta Teachers' Association, but they shall not be repealed, altered or amended without notice.

Opening Proceedings and Minutes

4.1 Meetings of the Association shall begin promptly at the hour appointed. In the absence of the president, either one of the vice-presidents, or the immediate past president, or other members of the Provincial Executive Council shall preside and these officers shall act in the order of precedence in which they are named. The above officer who, for the time being, presides at the meeting shall perform all the duties and functions and exercise all the rights, privileges and prerogatives of the president.

4.2 The minutes of the last regular meeting of the Association shall be in the hands of the delegates at least 15 days before the opening of the Annual Representative Assembly. These minutes shall not be read unless so required by a majority vote of the delegates.

4.3 During consideration of the printed minutes, they may then be corrected; but it shall not be competent for a representative to raise a discussion on the policy or merits of a question when attention is called to an error in the entry; no remarks are relevant unless in reference to a particular error and to a necessary correction of such error.

4.4 It is the responsibility of the executive secretary to ensure that the minutes of all meetings of the Association are properly recorded.

4.5 Minutes shall be approved after corrections, if any, have been made. The motion put from the chair shall be "That the minutes be now signed as a correct record of the proceedings of the meeting held on ..."

4.6 The minutes, when signed by the president, shall be deemed to be an authoritative record of the business of the Association.

Duties of President

5.1 The president shall preserve order and decorum, and decide questions of order, subject to appeal by the meeting.

5.2 When the president is called upon to decide a point of order or practice, the point shall be stated succinctly and without unnecessary comment, except to cite the rule or authority applicable to the case.

5.3 Whenever of the opinion that a motion offered to the meeting is contrary to the rules and privileges of the meeting, the president shall apprise the meeting thereof immediately and quote the rule or authority applicable to the case.

5.4 All questions arising in a meeting of the Association, or in any committee thereof, whether standing, special, or a committee of the whole, shall be decided by a majority of votes other than that of the president or chair; when there is an equality of votes, but not otherwise, the president or chair shall have a casting vote. The president may provide reasons for the casting vote if the president sees fit and the reasons as stated shall be entered in the minutes.

5.5 The president at any meeting of the Association shall have the discretionary right to give explanations from the chair of measures and questions affecting the body, or the right to state matters of fact within the president's knowledge for which the body has occasion. When in the chair the president shall treat a question in a judicial spirit, and shall not take part in the debate.

5.6 The president at the meeting of the Association shall have the discretionary right to leave the chair for the purpose of taking part in the debate, or for any other reason. The president shall, in such case, call on one of the other officers as provided under rule 4.1 to fill that place until the president resumes the chair. The chair so appointed shall, in like case, call on one of the officers as provided in rule 4.1

Rules of Conduct and Debate

6.1 Every local representative, before speaking to any question or motion, shall rise, address the chair and be recognized by the chair before commencing to speak.

6.2 No local representative shall use abusive or offensive words; nor speak beside the question in debate; nor reflect upon any vote of the Association except for the purpose of warning that such vote be rescinded; nor resist the rules of the Association on questions of order or practice, or upon interpretation of the rules of the Association. In case any member shall so resist or disobey, that member shall be admonished by the president and, if the offence occurs again, may, on the

order of the president, be excluded from the room or meeting, and shall be dealt with afterwards as the meeting or Provincial Executive Council may determine. In the case of an ample apology being made, the offender may, by vote of the meeting, be permitted forthwith to return to the meeting.

6.3 A local representative called to order from the chair shall immediately sit down, but may afterwards explain; and the meeting, if appealed to, shall decide the case without debate. If there be no appeal, the decision of the president shall be final.

6.4 It is the right of a local representative who believes that a rule or usage has been violated by a motion or in a speech, to rise and call another local representative to order with the words, "I rise to a point of order." The president will then say, "Please state your point of order." The objecting local representative shall do this succinctly and clearly and shall not, under cover of the objection, proceed to wander beyond it and touch upon the question under debate. The president may ask advice on the point of order, but shall decide the point of order, as provided under rule 5.2.

6.5 If the objecting local representative is not satisfied with the decision of the chair, the representative may rise and say, "I appeal from the decision of the chair." The president shall then give the terms of the decision and the point of appeal, and put the question, which is undebatable: "The question is now, shall the decision of the chair stand as the judgment of this meeting?" The question shall be decided by a simple majority.

6.6 A local representative may rise to a question of order or privilege at any time, but shall not move an adjournment of the meeting or of the debate under cover of such question.

6.7 The president shall name who, in the president's opinion, has the floor, subject to appeal to the meeting, the question to be put without debate.

6.8 No local representative shall speak more than once to the same question without leave of the meeting, given if necessary by a majority on a motion duly made and put, but may explain a material part of the speech that may have been misconceived, and in doing so shall not introduce new matter.

6.9 The mover of a main or principal motion has the right to close debate on that motion. The mover of an order of the day, an amendment, the previous question or an instruction to a committee does not have this right.

6.10 No member, without leave of the meeting, given if necessary by a majority vote on a motion duly made and put, shall speak to the same question, or in reply, for longer than five minutes.

General Motions

7.1 All motions shall be in writing and shall be seconded before debated or put from the chair, but purely formal motions of routine business may be made viva voce.

7.2 No motion shall be deemed to be regularly before the meeting until it has been read or proposed from the chair, when it becomes a question.

7.3 When the meeting is in this way formally seized of a question, the question may be debated, amended, superseded, resolved in the affirmative or passed in the negative, but, by leave of the meeting, given, if necessary, by a majority vote on a motion duly made and put, the motion may be withdrawn by its mover and seconder at any time before decision or amendment.

7.4 A motion for referral, until it is decided, shall preclude all amendments of the main question, but it shall be in order to reject the motion for referral or to propose a motion against the principle of such question, which, when carried, will prevent referral.

7.5 All motions shall commence with the word *that* and no motion shall have a preamble.

7.6 A member who has debated the question shall not move a motion to table the question without first giving up the floor.

7.7 A member who has debated a question shall not move the previous question without first giving up the floor.

Reconsideration and Rescission

8.1 When a subject matter or question has been indefinitely postponed, it cannot again, during the same session, be taken

up and considered, nor can a subject matter or question that the meeting has refused to consider be taken up at that session.

8.2 After any question has been decided at a representative assembly of the Alberta Teachers' Association, any local representative who has voted with the prevailing side may, at the same assembly, move for a reconsideration thereof, but no discussion of the main question shall be allowed until the question of reconsideration has been resolved in the affirmative by a three-fourths vote of the local representatives or members present.

8.3 No question shall be reconsidered more than once, nor shall a vote to reconsider be reconsidered. As soon as notice of reconsideration is given, no action shall be taken by the meeting on the main question until such reconsideration is disposed of.

8.4 No question or motion can regularly be offered if it is substantially the same as one on which the judgment of the meeting has already been expressed during the current meeting.

Procedure for Motions

9 The procedure to cover motions shall be as set out in Figures 1 and 2.

Amendments

10.1 Amendments shall be put in the reverse order to that in which they are moved, except in filling up blanks, when the longest time and the smallest sum shall be put first.

10.2 Only one primary amendment (amendment to the main question) and one secondary amendment (amendment to the amendment) are permitted at a time, but any number of each can be offered in succession so long as they do not again raise questions already decided.

10.3 An amendment may propose (a) to leave out certain words, (b) to insert or add certain words, or (c) to leave out certain words and to insert or add others.

10.4 The sentence or paragraph to be amended shall first be read as it stands, then the words proposed to be struck out and those to be inserted, and finally the sentence or paragraph as it would stand if it were so amended.

10.5 Amendments must be relevant to a motion or question. If they are on the same subject matter with the original they are admissible, but not when foreign thereto.

10.6 Any local representative may move an amendment without giving notice thereof.

10.7 When the meeting has agreed that certain words shall stand, the president shall again propose the question in these words, "I shall now put before the assembly the main motion as amended."

10.8 An amendment, once negatived, cannot be proposed again.

10.9 When the meeting agrees that certain words shall stand as part of the question, it is irregular to propose an amendment to these words, as the decision of the house has already been pronounced in their favour, but this rule would not exclude an addition to the words, if proposed at the proper time.

10.10 When a question before a meeting consists of several sections, paragraphs or resolutions, the order of considering and amending is to begin at the commencement and to proceed through such question in course by paragraph; when a latter part has been amended, it is not in order to recur and make an amendment or alteration of a former part.

Budget Procedure at ARA

11.1 The chair of the Finance Committee shall present the proposed budget indicating major changes. The meeting shall then be open for general discussion.

11.2 A motion to approve the proposed budget shall be moved. Amendments explicitly required by resolutions previously approved by the assembly shall be deemed to be part of the motion and shall be detailed by the chair prior to further consideration of the expenditure estimates.

11.3 The expenditure estimates shall be considered, program area by program area. Amendments shall be in the form specified under rule 10, and program areas shall be deemed, for the purposes of rule 10.10, to be paragraphs. Notwithstanding the foregoing, where a function appears as part of more than one program area, amendments that cross program areas to affect such a function shall be in order

while the first program area containing the function is under consideration.

11.4 When all amendments have been disposed of, the main motion shall be put.