

American Chemical Society



ACS Local Section Officers Webinar: *Robert's Rules of Order for Effective Meetings*

November 15, 2023

1:00- 2:30 pm ET

Welcome



- **Overview of Today's Event**
- **Ground Rules**

Agenda

Opening Remarks

“Robert’s Rules of Order for Effective Meetings” presentation by ACS
Secretary and General Counsel, Flint Lewis

Question & Answer

Closing Remarks

American Chemical Society



Robert's Rules of Order for Effective Meetings

Flint H. Lewis

ACS Secretary and General Counsel

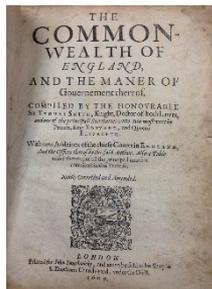
Meet the Presenter: Flint H. Lewis, JD



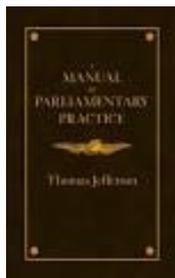
- ACS Secretary & General Counsel
- Elected Secretary to ACS Board in 2001 and General Counsel in 2004
- Holds an undergraduate and JD from University of San Diego and is a certified Registered Parliamentarian by NAP



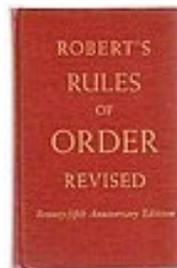
A Brief History of Parliamentary Procedure



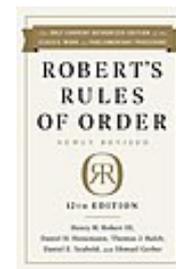
Sir Thomas Smyth
House of Commons



Manual of
Parliamentary Practice



First Major Revision



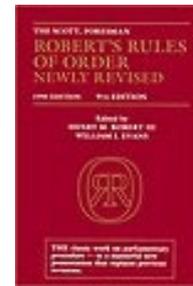
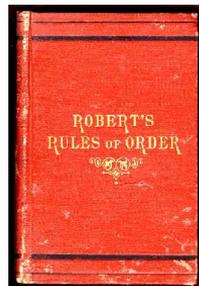
12th Edition Published
(Current)



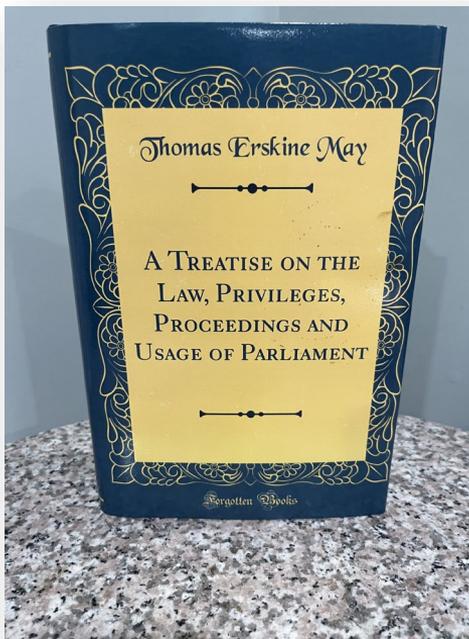
Lex Parliamentaria

Robert's Rules of Order

Second Major Revision



Relevance of Procedure - Brexit



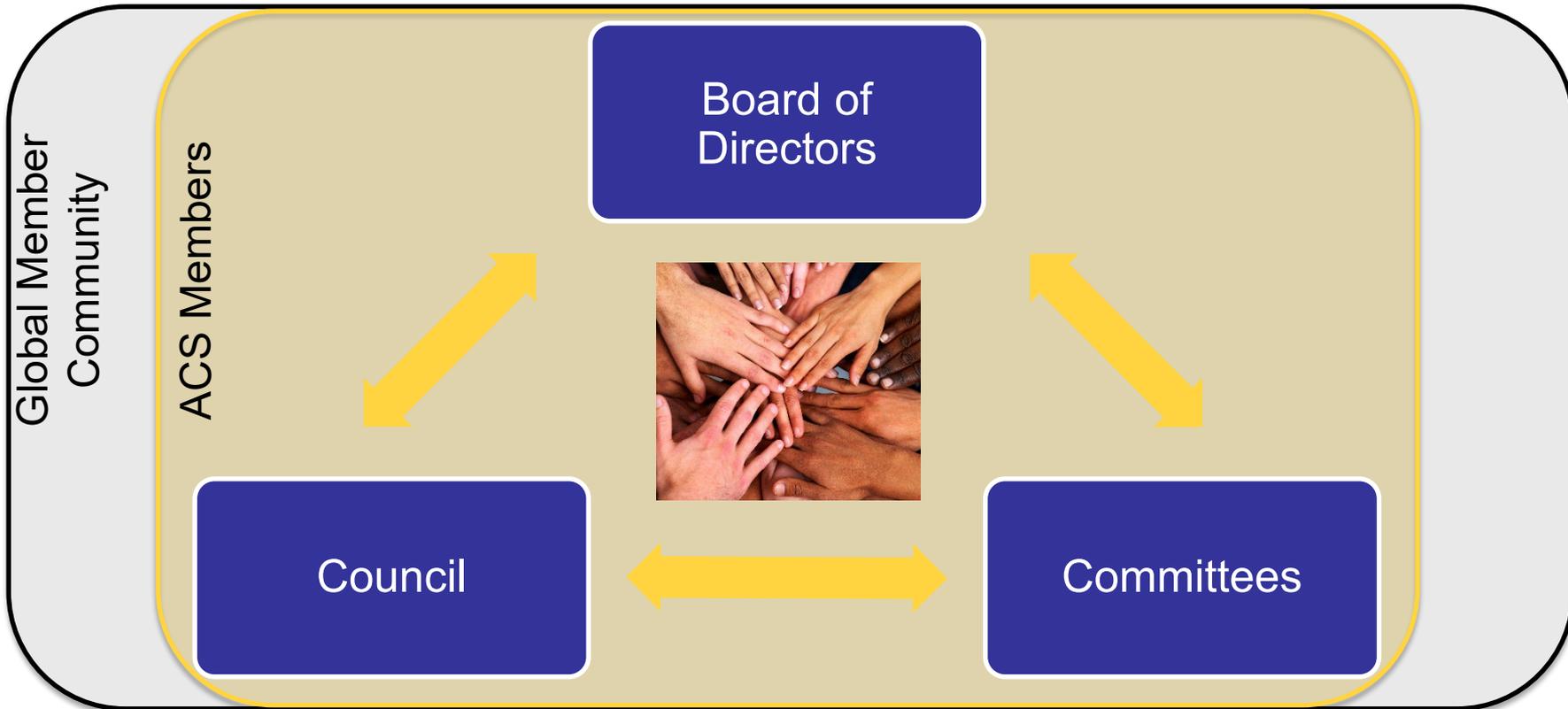
Henry M. Robert & His Rules

- **When:** 1876 (same year as ACS)
- **Who:** 35 Chemists, led by Prof. Charles F. Chandler of the Columbia School of Mines
- **What:** Founded the American Chemical Society to *“stimulate original research, awaken and develop talent ... provide fellowship and ensure a better appreciation of the science by the general public.”*
- **Where:** New York City
- **First President:** John William Draper
- **Read More:** [The Founding of the ACS](#)



Charles F. Chandler

ACS Governance: Board, Council, and Committees



Responsibilities of the Board

A Board of Directors shall be the legal representative of the SOCIETY and as such shall have, hold, and administer all the property, funds, and affairs of the SOCIETY.

**ARTICLE VII Section 1.a.
ACS CONSTITUTION**



Council

The popular deliberative assembly of the SOCIETY shall be known as the Council, which shall act in an advisory capacity to the SOCIETY and the Board of Directors and perform other duties as described in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules.

ARTICLE VI Section 1.a.
ACS CONSTITUTION



Committees

The Council shall establish Committees including but not limited to:



- Membership Function
- Council Executive Function
- Committees Function
- Elections Function
- Governing Documents Function
- Meetings Function
- Units Function

More on Committees

Definition:

“...a body of one or more persons, elected or appointed by an assembly or society, to consider, investigate, or take action on certain matters or subjects, or to do all of these things.”

Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 12th ed.; Public Affairs Books, New York, NY 2020.



Why Committees?

It helps Boards to be more efficient and effective, by serving as a way of doing complex, detailed and time-consuming work.



Types

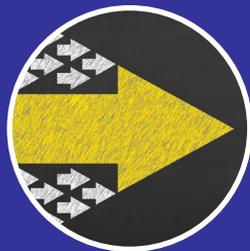
- Standing - perform ongoing function
- Special – end when task is done



Authority:

Limited to consider/act upon issues as defined by the resolution creating them, their charge and duties in the Governing documents.

Why Should I Care About Robert's Rules?



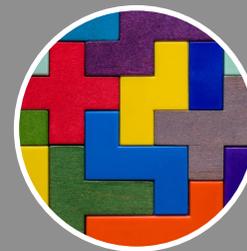
Leadership

Guides you
through committee
business



Fairness

Everyone is subject
to the same rules



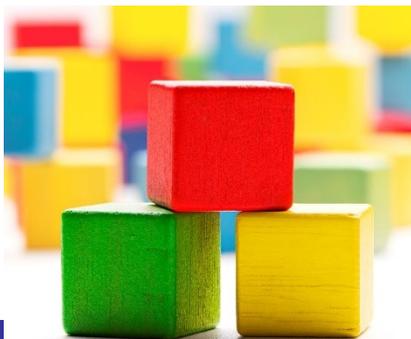
Efficiency

Ensures that
committees are
efficient.



Effective Meetings

Leadership: Know the Basics



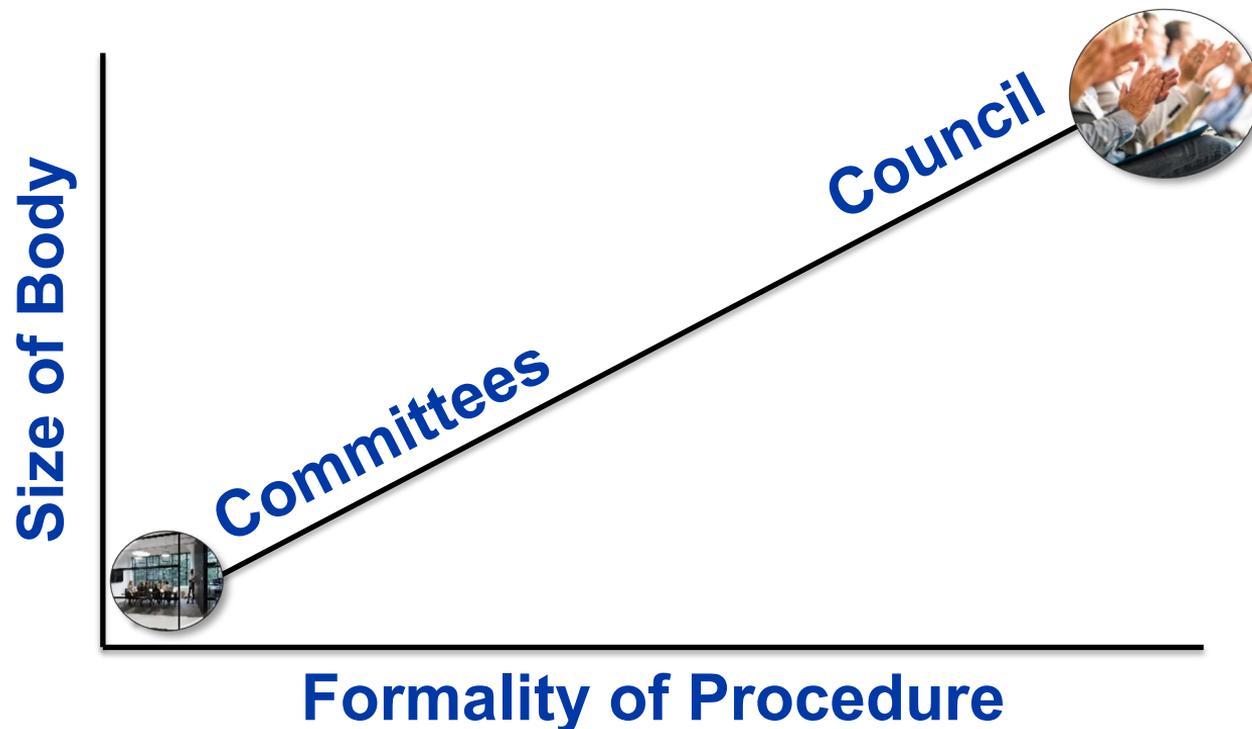
Basics

- Know the sequence for consideration
 - How the motions are made
 - How the votes are taken

Why the basics?

- ACS operates on consensus and prefers informal procedures
- Strict application is perceived negatively

Formality and Size – Option 2



Sequence for Consideration

- Motion made
- Second
- State the motion
- Debate
- Vote
- Announce the vote



Mover controls

Committee controls



Amendments (Add, Delete, Both)

- Amendment = secondary motion; must be “germane”
- Outside-in: Do the amendment first, then main motion
- Follow the sequence for consideration
- Can amend amendment, but no more can be pending
- If amendment approved: also vote on the underlying motion as amended (i.e. 2 votes are needed to adopt)



Special Rules for Committees

- “...motions to close or limit debate are not allowed in committees.” [p. 477]
- Informal discussion of a subject is permitted while no motion is pending [p. 465]
- No limit to number of times a member can speak (p. 464)
- Chair is more active



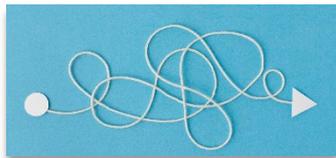
Chair's Role in Committees

- Robert's: "In committees, the chairman is usually the most active participant in the discussions and work of the committee." [50:25, p. 476]
- ACS Practice: Chairs vote, but exercise caution in expressing strong views or speaking too often.



Common Procedural Errors

- Moving to lay on the table
- Calling the question/closing debate without motion
- Asking for abstentions
- Chairs overactive in debate
- Not approving the agenda
- Moving to a second main motion without addressing the first
- Friendly amendments
- Accept/Receive a report



New Sample Rules for Electronic Meetings



- Secretary sends all email with link or URL, time, backup phone number
- Schedule Internet availability at least 15 minutes before start
- Member sign in and maintain internet and audio access thru meeting
- Establish quorum at outset by audible roll call
- Each member responsible for own audio/Internet connection
- Chair may mute or disconnect a connection when undue interference
- Chair shall specify exact method of being recognized
- Secretary designates online area for display of pending motions
- Voting shall be by anonymous feature of Internet meeting service
- If large group, cause ongoing display of Chair and current speaker



Parliamentary Procedure: Enabling ACS Global Impact





secretary@acs.org

Please take our quick survey



Upcoming Webinar: Local Section Annual Reports



- What: How to use Community Connection tool to submit your annual reports
- When: ***Hosted Virtually*** on December 13, 2023 at 1pm ET
- Future Webinar Schedule:
<https://www.acs.org/officer-toolkit/acs-local-sections-monthly-webinar-series.html>

Registration Opening Soon



ACS Leadership Institute

January 26-28, 2024

Westin Peachtree Plaza Hotel
Atlanta, GA

American Chemical Society



Thank You!

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