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MEMORANDUM

CITY OF MANASSAS


Department of Community Development

Phone: 703-257-8223 Fax: 703-257-5117

DATE: February 26, 2018

TO: Architecture Review Board

THRU: Jamie S. Collins, Development Services Manager

FROM: Gregory J. Bokan, AICP, Planner 

SUBJECT: ARB Rules of Procedure and Roberts Rules of Order

For the benefit of new members, and as a refresher for long standing members, staff would like to take the opportunity to hold a brief presentation on the Board's adopted Rules of Procedure, as well as, Roberts Rules of Order.

Roberts Rules of Order are a widely used set of parliamentary procedures. In Manassas they are used by City Council, as well as the City's Boards and Commission. They provide, among other things, specifics with regards to: calling and adjourning meetings, discussion, motions, and voting. The Board's Rules of Procedure provide specifics designed for the nature of the Board's work. These include, electing Board officers, processing applications, and conduct of meetings.

Do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions, I can be reached at (703) 257-8247 or gbokan@manassas.va.gov

Attachments:

1. ARB Rules of Procedure
2. Notes on Roberts Rules of Order



Architectural Review Board

RULES OF PROCEDURE

ADOPTED AUGUST 09, 2016

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Article 1. Purpose

The purpose of these Rules of Procedure is to establish procedures for the City of Manassas Architectural Review Board (ARB) to conduct its business. The ARB is appointed by the City Council to advise the City regarding historic preservation and to administer the Historic Overlay Districts, primarily through the consideration of applications for Certificates of Appropriateness.

Article 2. General Rules

The City of Manassas Architectural Review Board shall be governed by the terms of the City of Manassas Zoning Ordinance as they may be amended or revised. The ARB operates under Manassas Code § 2-301 and §130-404 and City Council policies related to advisory bodies. To the extent that its procedure is not addressed by City Code or these Rules of Procedure, the ARB follows Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised (current edition), as adapted to small boards.

Article 3. Officers and Duties

Section 3-1. Chairperson

The Chairperson shall preside at all ARB meetings and appoint any committees found necessary to investigate any matters before the Board.

Section 3-2. Vice-Chairperson

The Vice-Chairperson shall serve in the absence of the Chairperson, and when serving as such shall have the same powers and duties as the Chairperson.

Section 3-3. Clerk

The Clerk to the Board, a member of the Community Development Staff, shall maintain the records of the ARB, prepare a draft agenda for meetings, and prepare draft minutes for the ARB's approval. The Clerk shall also notify the alternate member if an absence of a voting member is anticipated.

Section 3-4. Elections

Elections shall be held at the beginning of each calendar year or as soon thereafter as they may practically be held.

Article 4. Meetings

Section 4-1. Regular Meetings

Regular meetings shall be held on the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30 PM at the Manassas City Hall. However, meetings may be held elsewhere in the City, with the concurrence of the Chairperson or the ARB.

Section 4-2. Special Meetings

The Chairperson or any three members of the ARB may call a special meeting by notice to the Clerk. At least three (3) working days' notice shall be given to each member and the public before a special meeting is held. The call of the special meeting shall state the date, time, location and purpose of the meeting, and no business except that identified in the call of the special meeting may be acted upon at the special meeting.

Section 4-3. Cancellation of Meeting

Whenever there is no business for the Board, the Chairperson may dispense with a regular meeting by giving notice to the Clerk, who shall notify all the members not less than twenty-four (24) hours prior to the time set for the meeting.

Section 4-4. Quorum and Voting

A quorum shall consist of three (3) members of the Board. The alternate counts toward the quorum. The affirmative vote of a majority of those present and voting is required to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness or decide any other matter before the ARB.

Section 4-5. Conduct of Meetings

The order of business at regular meetings shall be as follows unless modified with the consent of the ARB:

1. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag
2. Roll Call and Determination of a Quorum
3. Approval of minutes of previous meetings
4. Public Hearing (when applicable) and Comments from the Public
5. New Business
6. Old Business
7. Community Development Updates
8. Adjourn

Section 4-6. Closed Session

The ARB may enter closed session when permitted by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, but shall hold its deliberations on whether to grant or deny a certification of appropriateness in public. ARB members shall take proper precautions to preserve the confidentiality of attorney-client communications.

Article 5. Application Procedures for Certificates of Appropriateness

An application for a Certificate of Appropriateness will be scheduled for the next regular meeting if it is filed in the Department of Community Development by the established deadline adopted by the ARB. Upon receipt of a complete application for a Certificate of Appropriateness, the City staff shall:

1. Prepare a Staff Report on the application; and

2. Forward to the ARB a copy of the application, together with a copy of any supporting documentation filed by the applicant or available to staff for review and the Staff Report, no later than the Friday prior to the meeting; and
3. Maintain a record of all such applications and of their handling and final disposition.

Article 6. Consideration of Applications

1. The Clerk shall prepare a draft resolution for the ARB containing the staff recommendation. If the staff recommends the granting of a Certificate of Appropriateness, the draft resolution will contain any modifications or conditions the staff recommends.
2. Any party or property owner may appear in person or by an attorney or other agent to present their application. The order of business for consideration of applications for Certificates of Appropriateness shall be as follows unless modified with the consent of the ARB:
3. The Chairperson, or such person as they shall direct, shall give a preliminary statement concerning the application;
4. The City staff shall present a brief review of the Staff Report, providing the Board the submitted samples of materials, drawings, and photographs. Staff may provide recommendations to the Board. Any statements or arguments submitted by an official, Commission, or department of the City of Manassas, any state agency, or any local historical preservation or neighborhood association may be presented at this time.
5. The applicant shall present the evidence and arguments in support of the application.
6. In cases when the Board deems it necessary, it may receive public comment concerning the application. Persons opposed to granting the application may present evidence and arguments against the application.
7. The ARB may call witnesses and obtain factual evidence to assist in their deliberations. No member of the ARB may be called as a witness in regard to any matter for ARB action without that member's consent. An ARB member who testifies as a witness shall be disqualified from voting on the matter on which he or she testified.
8. The ARB shall permit the applicant to respond to evidence and arguments against the application. ARB members shall offer the applicant an opportunity to answer any questions they may have, and to comment on any observations that ARB members may have independently made of the property, before proceeding to deliberate whether to grant or deny the application and whether to accept the conditions recommended by staff and whether to require additional conditions. If the ARB votes to approve the application with modifications not in the staff recommendation, those modifications shall first be reduced to writing and provided to the applicant and all members of the ARB. (In the case of a Certificate of Appropriateness for a boarded-up vacant structure, the ARB may approve the application with conditions; these conditions shall similarly be reduced to writing before being voted on.)
9. The Clerk of the ARB shall summarize the evidence heard by the ARB, memorialize its decision, and provide a copy of such summary and decision to the applicant.

Article 7. Amendments

These Rules of Procedure may, within the limits allowed by law, be amended at any time by an affirmative vote of not less than four (4) members of the Board, provided that such amendment shall have first been presented to the membership in writing at a regular or special meeting preceding the meeting at which the vote is taken.

Adopted this 13 day of AUG, 2016



Chairperson,

Attest:



Clerk, Donna Bellows

Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR)

Here are Frequently Asked Questions for RONR. The answers here assume that RONR is the adopted parliamentary authority and that there are no bylaws, superior laws, or Special Rules of Order which super cede the rules in RONR:

1. Can the president or chairman vote?

If a member, the president or chairman has the right to vote, and does so in small boards of not more than about a dozen members present. In larger assemblies, the chairman (who has a duty to maintain an appearance of impartiality) may vote when his vote would affect the outcome: to make or break a tie or to make or prevent a two-thirds vote, or when the vote is by ballot (at the same time as everybody else). But for further clarification, please refer to your specific by laws. For more information, refer to RONR 10th ed. pp. 392-393.

2. Can the president/chairman make motions?

Yes, the president or chairman, if a member, has the same RIGHT to make a motion as any other member. In small boards of not more than about a dozen members present, the chairman usually participates the same as other members. However, in larger assemblies, the chairman has a duty to remain impartial, so would usually not make a motion directly. The chairman could say, for example, "The chairman will entertain a motion to..." and then wait for a member to make it, or "Is there a motion to suspend the rules that interfere with hearing the speaker at this time?"

The chairman may also *assume* a motion, as in: "If there are no [further] corrections, the minutes stand approved as read [as corrected]." or "If there is no further business to come before the meeting, this meeting will now adjourn. [pause] Hearing none, this meeting is adjourned."

So you see, without actually directly making a motion, the chair can accomplish pretty much the same thing without blatantly compromising his or her impartiality. Another option is to ask someone before the meeting to make a motion that the chair wishes to be considered. After all, the chairman is a member, too, and has just as much right to have things go their way as any other member. Accepting the job of chairman does not remove any rights as a member.

Again for further clarification on your specific board, the bylaws should be able to provide you the information. For further assistance, refer to RONR 10th ed. pp. 470-471, 343, 210, 234, 490.

2. Can the chairman enter into debate?

In small boards of not more than approximately a dozen members or so present, yes. In larger assemblies, if the chairman wishes to debate, he/she should relinquish the chair to the vice president or another member, until the matter is disposed of, before resuming the chair. For more information, refer to RONR 10th ed. pp. 470-471, 382-383.

3. Can bylaws be suspended?
Only bylaws that are in clearly in the nature of rules of order may be suspended. For more information, refer to RONR 10th ed. p. 17.
4. Can a member of a nominating committee be nominated?
Yes. For more information, refer to RONR 10th ed. p. 419.
5. Can a member nominate themselves for an office?
Yes. There is no rule in RONR 10th ed. that prevents it.
6. Can nominees vote for themselves?
Yes. There is no rule in RONR 10th ed. that prevents it.
6. Must the President, if nominated, step down from the chair during the election? No. For more information, refer to RONR 10th ed. pp. 436.
7. Can a bylaws requirement for a ballot vote be suspended if there is only one nominee for each office?

No, such a bylaw cannot be suspended even by a unanimous vote or unanimous consent. For more information, refer to RONR 10th ed. pp. 255 and 244.
8. What is a write-in vote?
During a ballot vote, a member may write a name on the ballot, which is a vote for that person, rather than voting for a candidate whose name already appears on the ballot. For more information, refer to RONR 10th ed. pp. 427.
9. The President has resigned, now what?
The Vice-President *automatically* becomes the President for the remainder of the term of the President. For more information, refer to RONR 10th ed. pp. 442.
10. Are mail-in, e-mail, or telephone votes okay?
No, not unless authorized by the bylaws. For more information, refer to RONR 10th ed. pp. 469-470.
11. When somebody calls out "Question!", must debate cease?
No. Previous Question is the proper motion for that, and a member must be recognized by the chairman to move Previous Question, not just shout it out from their seat. If recognized and seconded, it is not debatable, and requires a two-thirds vote to be adopted. If adopted, debate ceases and a vote is taken on the immediately pending question. For more information, refer to RONR 10th ed. pp. 189-201.
12. When does a resignation take effect?
A resignation is actually a request to be excused from a duty. It is effective only after the resignation has been accepted by the appointing or electing authority, unless the bylaws say otherwise. For more information, refer to RONR 10th ed. pp. 277-280.
13. How long can a member speak in debate?
Ten minutes, unless he obtains the consent of the assembly to speak longer (two-thirds vote), and then a second time for 10 minutes after everyone has been given a chance to speak once. If debate is closed before the

member has had a chance to make a speech or a second speech, none may be made. For more information, refer to RONR 10th ed. pp. 41.

14. Do nonmembers have a right to attend or speak at board meetings?

No, nonmembers have no rights to the proceedings. However, a request can be granted to attend by a majority vote or unanimous consent, but it requires a two-thirds vote to suspend the rules to allow a nonmember to speak in debate. For more information, refer to RONR 10th ed. pp. 255, 625.

15. Do members who are not members of the Board of Directors have a right to be present or speak at board meetings?

No. See the answer to #17, as nonmembers have no rights to the proceedings of the Board.

16. Do members of an organization have access to the minutes of the Board of Directors?

The Board may grant an individual member's request to inspect the minutes, or by a two-thirds vote or by a vote of a majority of the entire membership, the organization can order the minutes to be produced and read at a meeting, or by a majority vote if previous notice is given. For more information, refer to RONR 10th ed. pp. 470.

17. Should seconds be recorded in the minutes?

No. For more information, refer to RONR 10th ed. pp. 451-456.

18. If a motion has been defeated, can it be brought up again at the next meeting?

Yes, if the meeting is a different session, which is the normal situation, in other than legislative bodies. For more information, refer to RONR 10th ed. pp. 325-331.

19. Can a meeting be adjourned if there is still business pending?

Yes. For more information, refer to RONR 10th ed. pp. 225-226.

20. Who decides what is on the meeting Agenda?

The members at a meeting may adopt an agenda by a majority vote, and may amend it prior to its adoption. After it is adopted, an amendment to the Agenda requires a two-thirds vote, or a vote of a majority of the entire membership, or unanimous consent. For more information, refer to RONR 10th ed. pp. 360-363.

21. What is a quorum?

It is the minimum number of voting members who must be present at a meeting in order to conduct business, usually specified by the bylaws. If not specified in the bylaws, then in most societies a quorum is a majority of the entire membership. In a body of delegates, a quorum is a majority of the members registered as attending. In organizations without a reliable register of members, a quorum at a regular or properly called meeting is those who attend. In a mass meeting, a quorum is those persons present at the time. For more information, refer to RONR 10th ed. pp. 334-335.

22. What can be done in the absence of a quorum?

Have the meeting but voting cannot occur. It is still considered a valid meeting but no voting rights. Then next meeting take measures to obtain a quorum. For more information, refer to RONR 10th ed. pp. 336-337.

23. How do you count abstentions? As ayes? As no's?

In the usual case, abstentions are not counted. They are not "votes" technically. In a room of 100 people, a vote of 1-0 [one affirmative and zero negative] is legitimate, and renders a binding decision. Also, A vote of 1-0 in room of 100 people is technically a "unanimous vote" because there was no vote in opposition. However, if the bylaws specify "a majority of those

PRESENT" or "two-thirds of those PRESENT", instead of "PRESENT AND VOTING", then an abstention has the same effect as a negative vote. (This language is generally undesirable, as it denies a member the right maintain a neutral position by abstaining.) For more information, refer to RONR 10th ed. p. 394 and p. 390.

24. Can married couples be officers (or board members) at the same time?
Yes. Unless the bylaws say otherwise, there is no parliamentary rule to prevent it. Also, the voters have spoken, and saw nothing wrong there, too!
25. What is a majority? Fifty-one percent? Fifty percent plus one?

The word "majority" means "more than half." The false definition "51%" only applies to units of exactly 100; the false definition of "50% + 1" is only true for even numbers, and false for odd numbers.

For more information, refer to RONR 10th ed. pp. 387.

26. When nominations for offices are being taken from the floor, and in a situation in which the office calls for more than one person to be elected, can one make a nomination for more than one person at the same time?
No -- unless nobody objects.

For more information, refer to RONR (10th ed.), p. 418, l. 6-11.

27. Can a member vote on or second a motion to approve the minutes of a meeting that he did not attend?

Yes, absolutely! There is no requirement in Robert's Rules of Order that a member have first-hand knowledge of something before voting on minutes or other motions. In fact, a motion need not be made regarding the approval of the minutes. The chair says, "Are there any corrections to the minutes?" Members may offer corrections, and when there are no further corrections forthcoming, the chair says, "If there are no further corrections to the minutes, they stand approved as corrected... the next item of business is..." or if no corrections are offered, "If there are no corrections to the minutes, they stand approved as read... the next item of business is..." Note that there is no second involved in this process. For more information, refer to RONR (10th ed.), pp. 343-344.

28. In the event of a tie vote what are the President's duties or options?

On a tie vote, a motion requiring a majority vote for adoption is lost, since a tie is not a majority.

If the presiding officer is a member of the assembly, he can vote as any other member when the vote is by ballot. In all other cases the presiding officer, if a member of the assembly, can (but is not obliged to) vote whenever his vote will affect the result--that is, he can vote either to break or to cause a tie; or, in a case where a two-thirds vote is required, he can vote either to cause or to block the attainment of the necessary two thirds.

The chair cannot vote twice, once as a member, then again in his capacity as presiding officer. In an appeal from the decision of the chair, a tie vote sustains the chair's decision, even though his vote created the tie, on the principle that the decision of the chair can be reversed only by a majority.

For more information, refer to RONR (10th ed.), pp. 392-393.

29. How many times can minutes be corrected after they are approved?

There is no limit as far as Robert's Rules are concerned.

"If the existence of an error or material omission in the minutes becomes reasonably established after their approval—even many years later—the minutes can then be corrected by means of the motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted, which requires a two-thirds vote, or a majority vote with notice, or the vote of a majority of the entire membership, or unanimous consent."

For more information, refer to RONR 10th ed. p. 458.

30. Does a treasurer's report need to have a motion of approval?

No motion is needed - or proper. A treasurer's report is simply "received" as it is given and no motion should be made to "adopt", "accept" or "approve" it. An annual auditors' report, on the other hand, is "accepted" or adopted, but not the treasurer's financial report itself.

For more information, refer to RONR 10th ed. p. 461.

ROBERTS RULES CHEAT SHEET

To:	You say:	Interrupt Speaker	Second Needed	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Needed
Adjourn	"I move that we adjourn"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Recess	"I move that we recess until..."	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
Complain about noise, room temp., etc.	"Point of privilege"	Yes	No	No	No	Chair Decides
Suspend further consideration of something	"I move that we table it"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
End debate	"I move the previous question"	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
Postpone consideration of something	"I move we postpone this matter until..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Amend a motion	"I move that this motion be amended by..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Introduce business (a primary motion)	"I move that..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

The above listed motions and points are listed in established order of precedence. When any one of them is pending, you may not introduce another that is listed below, but you may introduce another that is listed above it.

To:	You say:	Interrupt Speaker	Second Needed	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Needed
Object to procedure or personal affront	"Point of order"	Yes	No	No	No	Chair decides
Request information	"Point of information"	Yes	No	No	No	None
Ask for vote by actual count to verify voice vote	"I call for a division of the house"	Must be done before new motion	No	No	No	None unless someone objects
Object to considering some undiplomatic or improper matter	"I object to consideration of this question"	Yes	No	No	No	2/3
Take up matter previously tabled	"I move we take from the table..."	Yes	Yes	No	No	Majority
Reconsider something already disposed of	"I move we now (or later) reconsider our action relative to..."	Yes	Yes	Only if original motion was debatable	No	Majority
Consider something out of its scheduled order	"I move we suspend the rules and consider..."	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
Vote on a ruling by the Chair	"I appeal the Chair's decision"	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority

The motions, points and proposals listed above have no established order of preference; any of them may be introduced at any time except when meeting is considering one of the top three matters listed from the first chart (Motion to Adjourn, Recess or Point of Privilege).

PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING A MAIN MOTION

NOTE: Nothing goes to discussion without a motion being on the floor.

Obtaining and assigning the floor

A member raises hand when no one else has the floor

- The chair recognizes the member by name

How the Motion is Brought Before the Assembly

- The member makes the motion: *I move that (or "to") ...* and resumes his seat.
- Another member seconds the motion: *I second the motion* or *I second it* or *second*.
- The chair states the motion: *It is moved and seconded that ... Are you ready for the question?*

Consideration of the Motion

1. Members can debate the motion.
2. Before speaking in debate, members obtain the floor.
3. The maker of the motion has first right to the floor if he claims it properly
4. Debate must be confined to the merits of the motion.
5. Debate can be closed only by order of the assembly (2/3 vote) or by the chair if no one seeks the floor for further debate.

The chair puts the motion to a vote

1. The chair asks: *Are you ready for the question?* If no one rises to claim the floor, the chair proceeds to take the vote.
2. The chair says: *The question is on the adoption of the motion that ... As many as are in favor, say 'Aye'.* (Pause for response.) *Those opposed, say 'Nay'.* (Pause for response.) *Those abstained please say 'Aye'.*

The chair announces the result of the vote.

1. *The ayes have it, the motion carries, and ...* (indicating the effect of the vote) or
2. *The nays have it and the motion fails*

WHEN DEBATING YOUR MOTIONS

1. Listen to the other side
2. Focus on issues, not personalities
3. Avoid questioning motives
4. Be polite

HOW TO ACCOMPLISH WHAT YOU WANT TO DO IN MEETINGS

MAIN MOTION

You want to propose a new idea or action for the group.

- After recognition, make a main motion.
- Member: "Madame Chairman, I move that _____."

AMENDING A MOTION

You want to change some of the wording that is being discussed.

- After recognition, "Madame Chairman, I move that the motion be amended by adding the following words _____."
- After recognition, "Madame Chairman, I move that the motion be amended by striking out the following words _____."
- After recognition, "Madame Chairman, I move that the motion be amended by striking out the following words, _____, and adding in their place the following words _____."

REFER TO A COMMITTEE

You feel that an idea or proposal being discussed needs more study and investigation.

- After recognition, "Madame Chairman, I move that the question be referred to a committee made up of members Smith, Jones and Brown."

POSTPONE DEFINITELY

You want the membership to have more time to consider the question under discussion and you want to postpone it to a definite time or day, and have it come up for further consideration.

- After recognition, "Madame Chairman, I move to postpone the question until _____."

PREVIOUS QUESTION

You think discussion has gone on for too long and you want to stop discussion and vote.

- After recognition, "Madam President, I move the previous question."

LIMIT DEBATE

You think discussion is getting long, but you want to give a reasonable length of time for consideration of the question.

- After recognition, "Madam President, I move to limit discussion to two minutes per speaker."

POSTPONE INDEFINITELY

You want to kill a motion that is being discussed.

- After recognition, "Madam Moderator, I move to postpone the question indefinitely."

POSTPONE INDEFINITELY

You are against a motion just proposed and want to learn who is for and who is against the motion.

- After recognition, "Madame President, I move to postpone the motion indefinitely."

RECESS

You want to take a break for a while.

- After recognition, "Madame Moderator, I move to recess for ten minutes."

ADJOURNMENT

You want the meeting to end.

- After recognition, "Madame Chairman, I move to adjourn."

PERMISSION TO WITHDRAW A MOTION

You have made a motion and after discussion, are sorry you made it.

- After recognition, "Madam President, I ask permission to withdraw my motion."

CALL FOR ORDERS OF THE DAY

At the beginning of the meeting, the agenda was adopted. The chairman is not following the order of the approved agenda.

- Without recognition, "Call for orders of the day."

SUSPENDING THE RULES

The agenda has been approved and as the meeting progressed, it became obvious that an item you are interested in will not come up before adjournment.

- After recognition, "Madam Chairman, I move to suspend the rules and move item 5 to position 2."

POINT OF PERSONAL PRIVILEGE

The noise outside the meeting has become so great that you are having trouble hearing.

- Without recognition, "Point of personal privilege."
- Chairman: "State your point."
- Member: "There is too much noise, I can't hear."

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

You are going to propose a question that is likely to be controversial and you feel that some of the members will try to kill it by various maneuvers. Also you want to keep out visitors and the press.

- After recognition, "Madame Chairman, I move that we go into a committee of the whole."

POINT OF ORDER

It is obvious that the meeting is not following proper rules.

- Without recognition, "I rise to a point of order," or "Point of order."

POINT OF INFORMATION

You are wondering about some of the facts under discussion, such as the balance in the treasury when expenditures are being discussed.

- Without recognition, "Point of information."

POINT OF PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

You are confused about some of the parliamentary rules.

- Without recognition, "Point of parliamentary inquiry."

APPEAL FROM THE DECISION OF THE CHAIR

Without recognition, "I appeal from the decision of the chair."

Rule Classification and Requirements

Class of Rule	Requirements to Adopt	Requirements to Suspend
Charter	Adopted by majority vote or as proved by law or governing authority	Cannot be suspended
Bylaws	Adopted by membership	Cannot be suspended
Special Rules of Order	Previous notice & 2/3 vote, or a majority of entire membership	2/3 Vote
Standing Rules	Majority vote	Can be suspended for session by majority vote during a meeting
Modified Roberts Rules of Order	Adopted in bylaws	2/3 vote

Military Park Residents Association



Chairman when the President and Vice-President are Absent

Chairman when the President and Vice-President are Absent

For more information about parliamentary procedure and Robert's Rules of Order, visit www.parlipro.org.

QUESTION:

If the president and the vice-president are absent from a meeting, is the secretary the next person in line to conduct the meeting?

=====

ANSWER:

No, the secretary **COULD** be elected chairman pro tem, but the secretary already has a job to do at the meeting, i.e. taking minutes. If the secretary is elected chairman pro tem then there would need to be another election for secretary pro tem. Refer to Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR), 10th edition, p. 437:

"If neither the president nor any vice-president is present, the secretary - or in the secretary's absence some other member - should call the meeting to order, and the assembly should immediately elect a chairman pro tem to preside during that session. Such office is terminated by the entrance of the president or a vice-president, or by the election of another chairman pro tem."

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