NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of COUNTIES NACo®

NACo 90th ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXPO

CITY AND COUNTY OF PHILADELPHIA, PA.

JULY 11-14

Robert's Rules 101: Mastering the Basics

Monday, July 14 | 2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. | Room 111 AB

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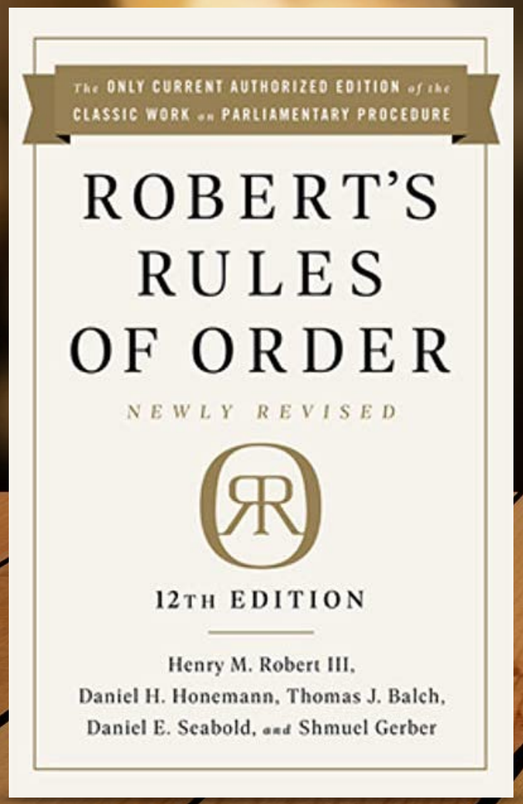
CITY AND COUNTY OF PHILADELPHIA, PA. | JULY 11-14

Robert's Rules 101:
Masteing The Basics

Tim Wynn, PRP

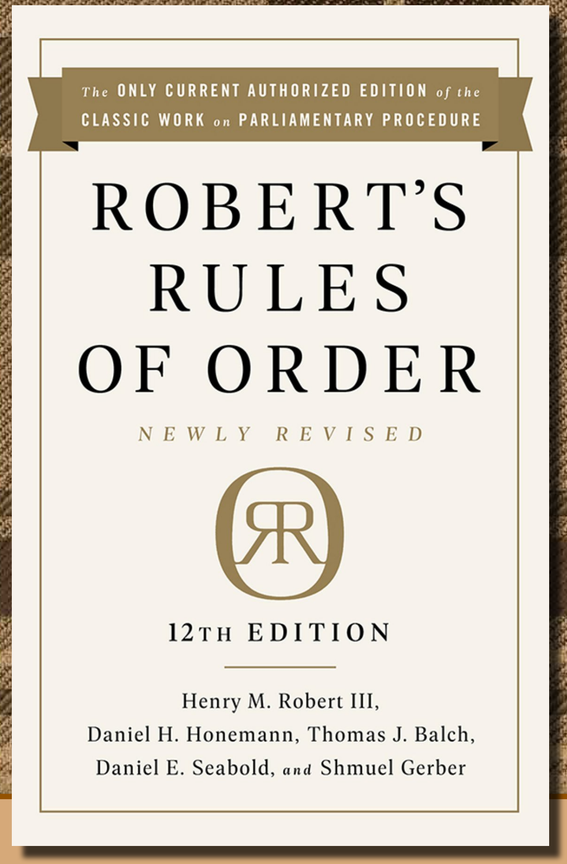
PerfectRules.com

The Basics



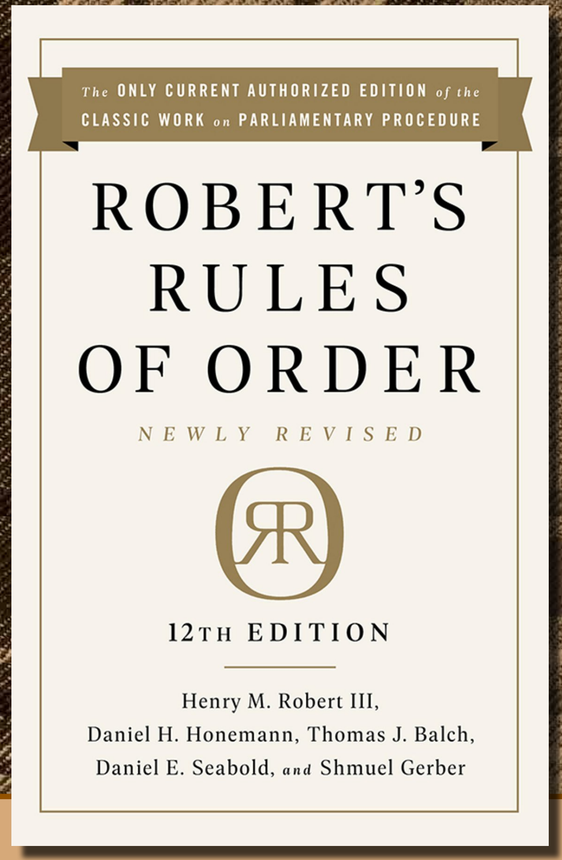
Why Robert's Rules Of Order?

Quick History of Robert's Rules



Quick History of Robert's Rules

General Henry M. Robert



Quick History of Robert's Rules

General Henry M. Robert

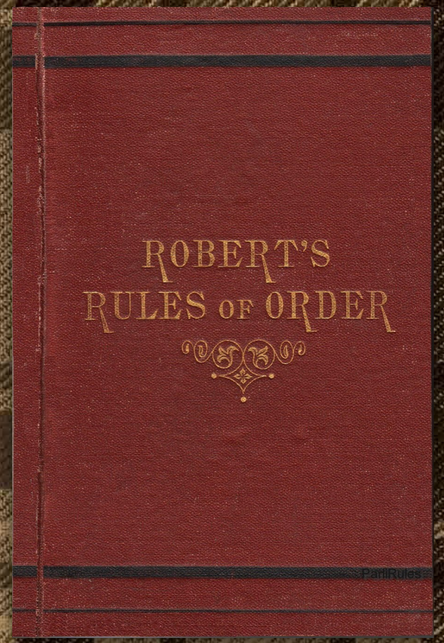
New Bedford, MA

Quick History of Robert's Rules

General Henry M. Robert

Quick History of Robert's Rules

1876



General Henry M. Robert

Quick History of Robert's Rules

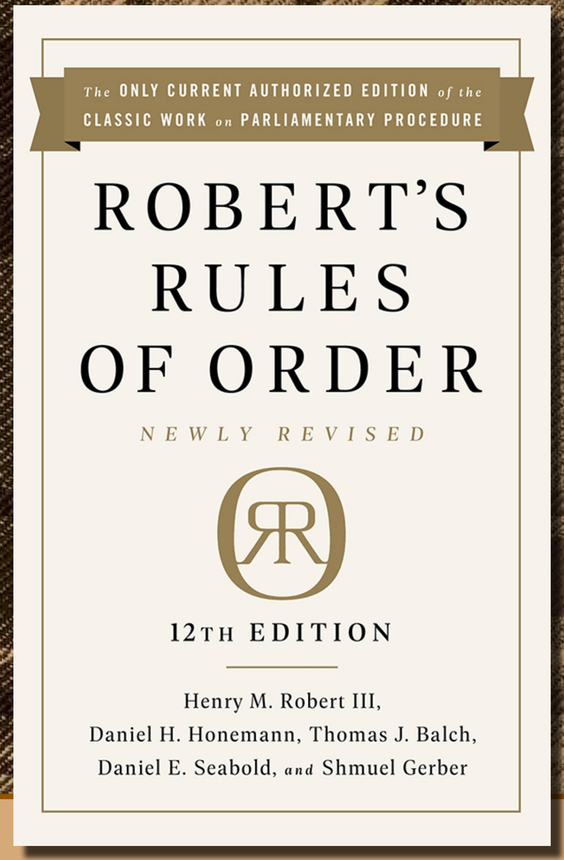
1876

General Henry M. Robert

Quick History of Robert's Rules

General Henry M. Robert

Current Edition

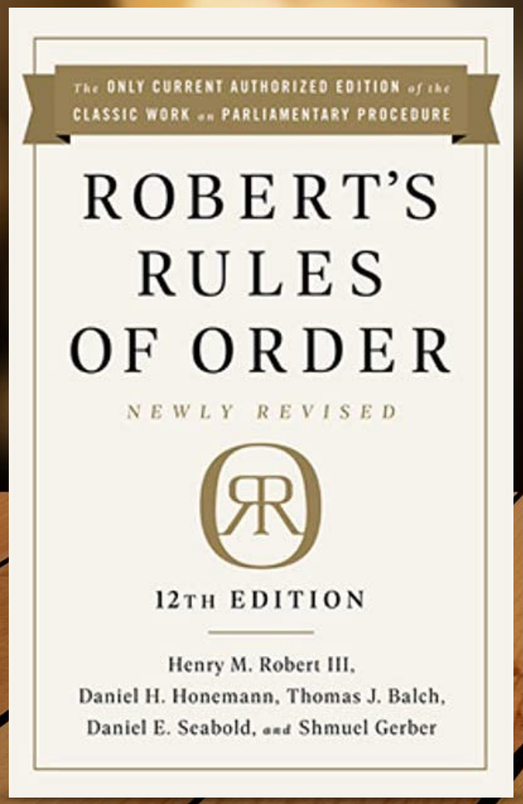


ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

"In a board meeting where there are not more than about a dozen members present, some of the formality that is necessary in a large assembly would hinder business. The rules governing such meetings are different from the rules that hold in other assemblies, in the following respects: . . ."

RONR (12th ed.) 49:21

The Basics



Specific Rules

Is the chair the most powerful person in a deliberative assembly?

a. Yes

b. No

RONR (12th ed.) 1:1

Is the chair the most powerful person in a deliberative assembly?

b. No

RONR (12th ed.) 1:1

Is the chair the most powerful person in a deliberative assembly?

Each member's opinion has equal weight, as expressed by vote. Being elected chair gives one more duties, not more power.

b. No

RONR (12th ed.) 1:1

MAKING A POINT OF ORDER

What is the purpose of a Point of Order?

a. To get business back on track

b. To object to a particular action

c. To point out a violation of the rules

d. To stop a member from speaking

RONR (12th ed.) 23:1

What is the purpose of a Point of Order?

c. To point out a violation of the rules

RONR (12th ed.) 23:1

Who can make a Point of Order in a board or committee meeting?

a. Anyone in attendance in a meeting

b. Any commissioner or staff member

c. Any member of the body that is meeting

d. Only the member who has been assigned the floor

RONR (12th ed.) 23:3

Who can make a Point of Order in a board or committee meeting?

c. Any member of the body that is meeting

RONR (12th ed.) 23:3

Who can second a Point of Order?

a. Any member except the presiding officer

b. Anyone in attendance

c. Any member of the body that is meeting

d. None of the above

RONR (12th ed.) 23:2(4)

Who can second a Point of Order?

d. None of the above

RONR (12th ed.) 23:2(4)

What happens after a member states a Point of Order?

a. The chair makes a ruling on the point

b. Members debate the point of order

c. The chair asks the secretary to read the pertinent rule

d. The Point of Order is followed, unless there is an appeal

RONR (12th ed.) 23:15

What happens after a member states a Point of Order?

a. The chair makes a ruling on the point

RONR (12th ed.) 23:15

Point of Order

Point of Order

1 Is Used To Point Out A Violation Of The Rules

Point of Order

1. Is Used To Point Out A Violation Of The Rules
2. Can Be Made By Any Member

Point of Order

1. Is Used To Point Out A Violation Of The Rules
2. Can Be Made By Any Member
3. Does Not Require Recognition

Point of Order

1. Is Used To Point Out A Violation Of The Rules
2. Can Be Made By Any Member
3. Does Not Require Recognition
4. Normally, Must Be Timely

Point of Order

DON'T HESITATE!

1. Is Used To Point Out A Violation Of The Rules
2. Can Be Made By Any Member
3. Does Not Require Recognition
4. Normally, Must Be Timely

POINT OF ORDER

POINT OF ORDER

POINT OF ORDER

POINT OF ORDER

A Member May Not Speak Against Another Member In Debate.

POINT OF ORDER

A Member May Not Speak Against Another Member In Debate.

Well Taken

Not Well Taken

POINT OF ORDER

A Member May Not Speak Against Another Member In Debate.

Well Taken

Not Well Taken

POINT OF ORDER

The Point Is Well Taken. Members Are Reminded To Refrain From Speaking Against Other Members.

Well Taken

Not Well Taken

Point of Order

Robert's Rules Of Order

"When a member thinks that the rules of the assembly are being violated, he can make a point of order . . . "

RONR (12th ed.) 23:1

Point of Order

Robert's Rules Of Order

"When a member thinks that the rules of the assembly are being violated, he can make a point of order . . . "

RONR (12th ed.) 23:1

APPEAL

Appeal

Robert's Rules Of Order

"By electing a presiding officer, the assembly delegates to him the authority and duty to make necessary rulings on questions of parliamentary law.

RONR (12th ed.) 24:1

Appeal

Robert's Rules Of Order

"But any two members have the right to Appeal from his decision on such a question."

RONR (12th ed.) 24:1

Appeal

Robert's Rules Of Order

"But any two members have the right to Appeal from his decision on such a question."

RONR (12th ed.) 24:1

What happens when an appeal is made and seconded?

a. The ruling of the chair is reversed

b. The chair must reconsider his decision

c. The question is vested in the assembly for final decision

d. A committee is formed to decide the matter

RONR (12th ed.) 24:1

What happens when an appeal is made and seconded?

c. The question is vested in the assembly for final decision

RONR (12th ed.) 24:1

If the presiding officer wants to speak in debate on an appeal, does he have to leave the chair?

a. Yes

b. No

RONR (12th ed.) 24:3(5)

If the presiding officer wants to speak in debate on an appeal, does he have to leave the chair?

b. No

RONR (12th ed.) 24:3(5)

If the chair is a member of the assembly and if his vote would affect the outcome, can he vote on an appeal?

a. Yes

b. No

RONR (12th ed.) 24:3(7)

If the chair is a member of the assembly and if his vote would affect the outcome, can he vote on an appeal?

a. Yes

RONR (12th ed.) 24:3(7)

What vote is required to overturn the ruling of the chair?

a. Majority in the negative

b. Two thirds in the negative

RONR (12th ed.) 24:3(7)

What vote is required to overturn the ruling of the chair?

a. Majority in the negative

RONR (12th ed.) 24:3(7)

APPEAL

APPEAL

I appeal from the decision of the chair.

APPEAL

APPEAL

The decision of the chair is appealed from.

APPEAL

The decision of the chair is appealed from.

Usually Debatable

APPEAL

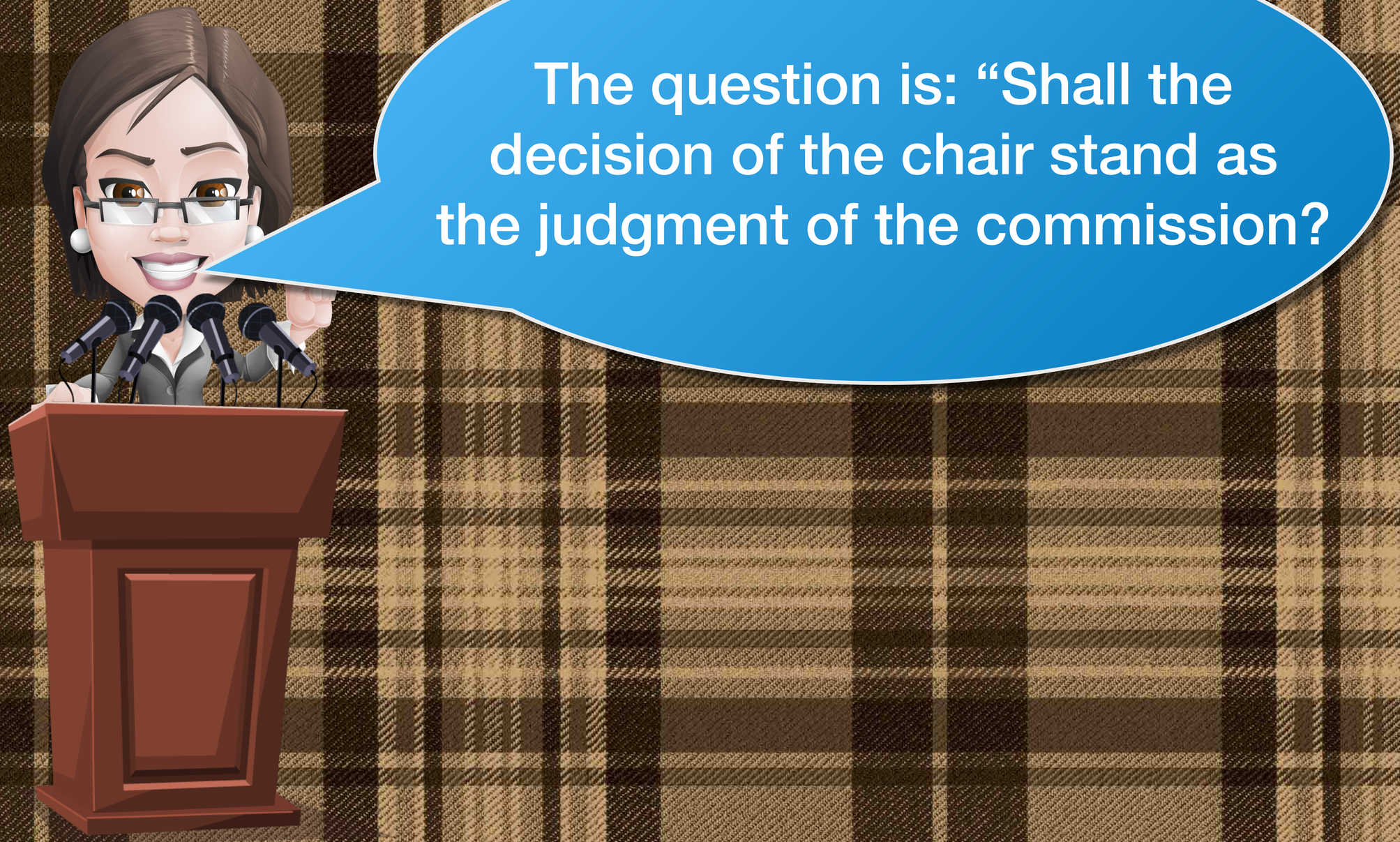
The decision of the chair is appealed from.

Usually Debatable

Majority To Overturn The Chair’s Ruling

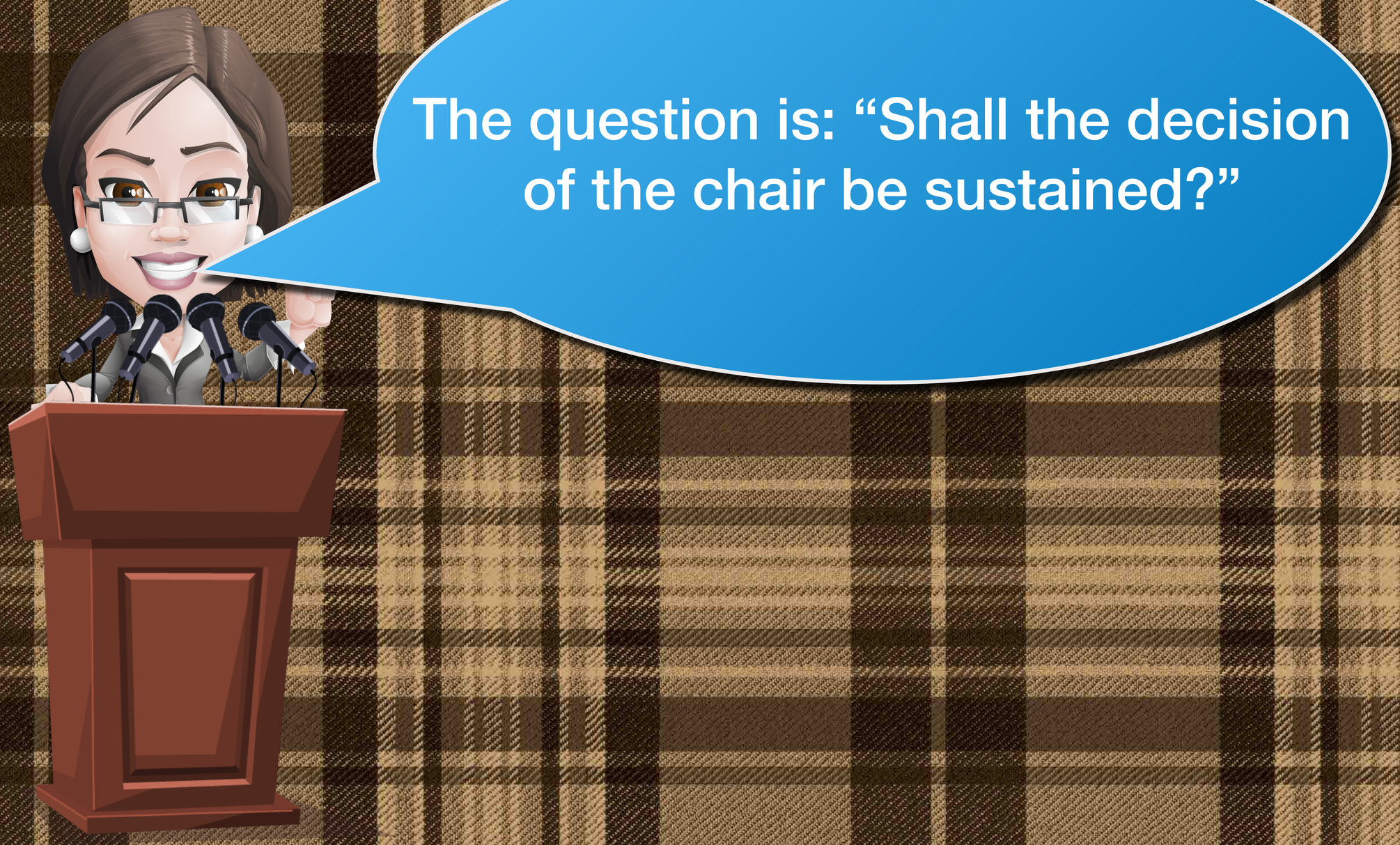
APPEAL

APPEAL



The question is: “Shall the decision of the chair stand as the judgment of the commission?

APPEAL



The question is: “Shall the decision of the chair be sustained?”

Unanimous Consent

UNANIMOUS CONSENT

UNANIMOUS CONSENT

If there is no objection, $100 shall be donated to the ABC Foundation.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Is there any objection?

UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Since there is no objection, $100 shall be donated to the ABC Foundation.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT

UNANIMOUS CONSENT

Objection!

UNANIMOUS CONSENT

I object!

SEEKING RECOGNITION & OBTAINING THE FLOOR

SEEKING RECOGNITION

SEEKING RECOGNITION

SEEKING RECOGNITION

The chair recognizes
the member.

SEEKING RECOGNITION

The chair recognizes Commissioner Grant.

SEEKING RECOGNITION

The chair recognizes Commissioner Grant.

Once recognized by the chair, the member has the exclusive right to be heard at that time.

Does the chair have the authority to decide who may speak?

a. **Yes, the chair controls which members can speak and at which times**

b. **No, the chair must recognize any member who seeks the floor while entitled to it**

RONR (12th ed.) 3:30

Does the chair have the authority to decide who may speak?

b. No, the chair must recognize any member who seeks the floor while entitled to it

RONR (12th ed.) 3:30

DEBATE

What Is The Purpose Of A Meeting?

A Meeting is for the TRANSACTION OF BUSINESS

A Meeting is for the TRANSACTION OF BUSINESS

A Meeting is NOT for Discussing Issues or Talking About Problems

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A Meeting is NOT for Discussing Issues or Talking About Problems

DEBATE is an essential part of the Transaction of Business

A Meeting is for the TRANSACTION OF BUSINESS

A Meeting is NOT for Discussing Issues or Talking About Problems

DEBATE is an essential part of the Transaction of Business

Idle Discussion is a major hinderance to the process

What Is The Difference Between Discussion And Debate?

Debate Is Discussion On The Merits Of The Pending Motion

DEBATE

DEBATE
Must pertain to whether the proposal under consideration should be ADOPTED

DEBATE
Must pertain to whether the proposal under consideration should be ADOPTED
Must pertain to a matter that is PENDING

DEBATE
Must pertain to whether the proposal under consideration should be ADOPTED
Must pertain to a matter that is PENDING
Cannot Attack a Member or Question a Member’s Motives

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In regards to a Member, Cannot contain words such as Lie, Liar, or Fraud, and Cannot impugn a Member’s character

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In regards to a Member, Cannot contain words such as Lie, Liar, or Fraud, and Cannot impugn a Member’s character
Debate alternates between those In Favor and those Opposed

CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

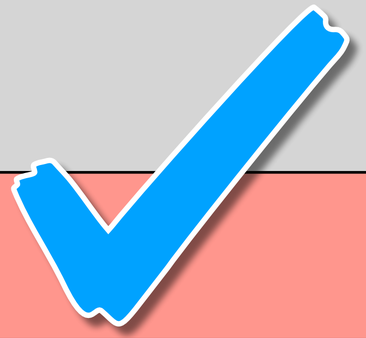
“This motion is a horrible idea.”

YES NO

CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

“This motion is a horrible idea.”

YES



CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

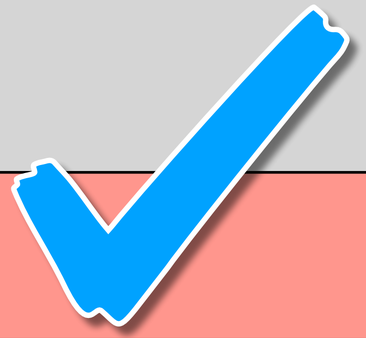
“This idea will never work.”

YES **NO**

CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

“This idea will never work.”

YES



CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

“While I have the floor, I’d just like to take the opportunity to thank all our volunteers for doing such a wonderful job at the voter-registration drive, last week, and I hope all of you will consider volunteering again, in the drive we’re doing next week.”

YES **NO**

CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

“While I have the floor, I’d just like to take the opportunity to thank all our volunteers for doing such a wonderful job at the voter-registration drive, last week, and I hope all of you will consider volunteering again, in the drive we’re doing next week.”

NO

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CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

“Before I talk about this motion, I’d like to say that the last motion was truly a great idea, and I’m glad we were able to adopt it.”

YES **NO**

CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

“Before I talk about this motion, I’d like to say that the last motion was truly a great idea, and I’m glad we were able to adopt it.”

NO

DEBATE

Must pertain to whether the proposal under consideration should be ADOPTED

Must pertain to a matter that is PENDING

Cannot Attack a Member or Question a Member's Motives

In regards to a Member, Cannot contain words such as Lie, Liar, or Fraud, and Cannot impugn a Member's character

CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

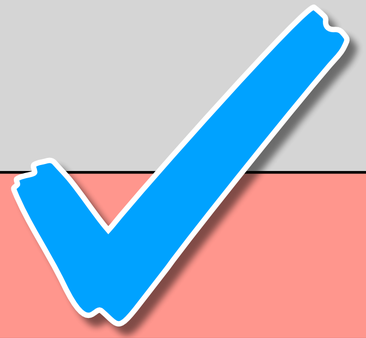
“If this motion is adopted, residents will leave town -- not necessarily this month or next month, but eventually, our population will decline as a direct result of this motion.”

YES **NO**

CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

“If this motion is adopted, residents will leave town -- not necessarily this month or next month, but eventually, our population will decline as a direct result of this motion.”

YES



CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

“I feel that the chairman of the fundraising committee only wants to have this raffle because he wants to make a good impression before he runs for office in two months.”

YES **NO**

CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

“I feel that the chairman of the fundraising committee only wants to have this raffle because he wants to make a good impression before he runs for office in two months.”

NO

DEBATE
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CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

“We all heard our fellow member, Mr. Jones, say that last year’s raffle made money. But he knows that’s not true; it lost money.”

YES **NO**

CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

“We all heard our fellow member, Mr. Jones, say that last year’s raffle made money. But he knows that’s not true; it lost money.”

NO

CAN YOU SAY THIS IN DEBATE?

“We all heard our fellow member, Mr. Jones, say that last year’s raffle made money. <u>But he knows that’s not true</u>; it lost money.”

NO

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TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE DEBATE

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE DEBATE

1. State Whether You’re For or Against the Motion

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE DEBATE

1. State Whether You’re For or Against the Motion

2. Give Your Reasons for Your Position

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE DEBATE

1. State Whether You’re For or Against the Motion

2. Give Your Reasons for Your Position

3. Recognize Counterpoints

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE DEBATE

1. State Whether You're For or Against the Motion

2. Give Your Reasons for Your Position

3. Recognize Counterpoints

4. Urge Support, if Desired

Ending Debate

When can the chair end debate?

a. When everyone has had an opportunity to speak

b. When no new points are being raised

c. Whenever he chooses

d. Never

RONR (12th ed.) 43:3

When can the chair end debate?

d. Never

RONR (12th ed.) 43:3

What should the chair do when no member responds to his call for debate?

a. Ask for a motion to close debate

b. Say “If there is no objection, debate will be closed.”

c. Announce that debate is now closed

d. Put the question on the pending motion to a vote

RONR (12th ed.) 4:34

What should the chair do when no member responds to his call for debate?

d. Put the question on the pending motion to a vote

RONR (12th ed.) 4:34

Is a motion to LIMIT or END DEBATE debatable.

a. Yes

b. No

RONR (12th ed.) 15:5(5)

Is a motion to LIMIT or END DEBATE debatable.

b. No

RONR (12th ed.) 15:5(5)

What vote is required to LIMIT or END DEBATE?

a. One-third vote

b. Majority vote

c. Two-thirds vote

d. Same vote as the motion to which it applies

RONR (12th ed.) 15:5(7)

What vote is required to LIMIT or END DEBATE?

c. Two-thirds vote

RONR (12th ed.) 15:5(7)

PREVIOUS QUESTION
(Calling the Question)

ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

"The Previous Question is the motion used to bring the assembly to an immediate vote on one or more pending questions . . ."

RONR (12th ed.) 16:1

PREVIOUS QUESTION
(CALLING THE QUESTION)

PREVIOUS QUESTION
(CALLING THE QUESTION)

1. Can Be Made By Any Member <u>Who Has The Floor</u>

PREVIOUS QUESTION
(CALLING THE QUESTION)

1. Can Be Made By Any Member Who Has The Floor
2. Requires A Second

PREVIOUS QUESTION
(CALLING THE QUESTION)

1. Can Be Made By Any Member Who Has The Floor

2. Requires A Second

3. Is NOT Debatable

PREVIOUS QUESTION
(CALLING THE QUESTION)

1. Can Be Made By Any Member Who Has The Floor

2. Requires A Second

3. Is NOT Debatable

4. Requires a Two-Thirds Vote for Adoption

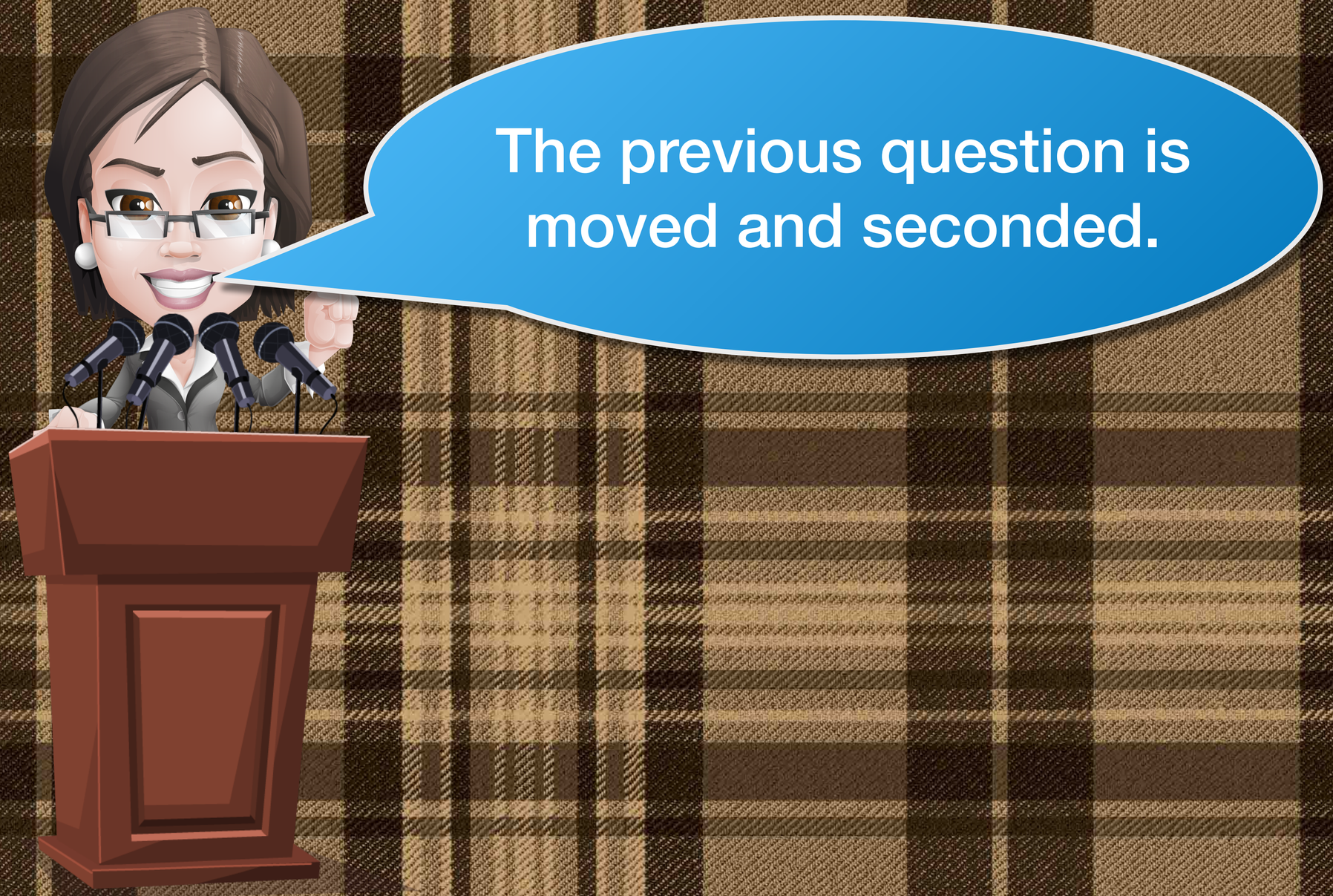
PREVIOUS QUESTION

PREVIOUS QUESTION

I move the
Previous Question.

PREVIOUS QUESTION

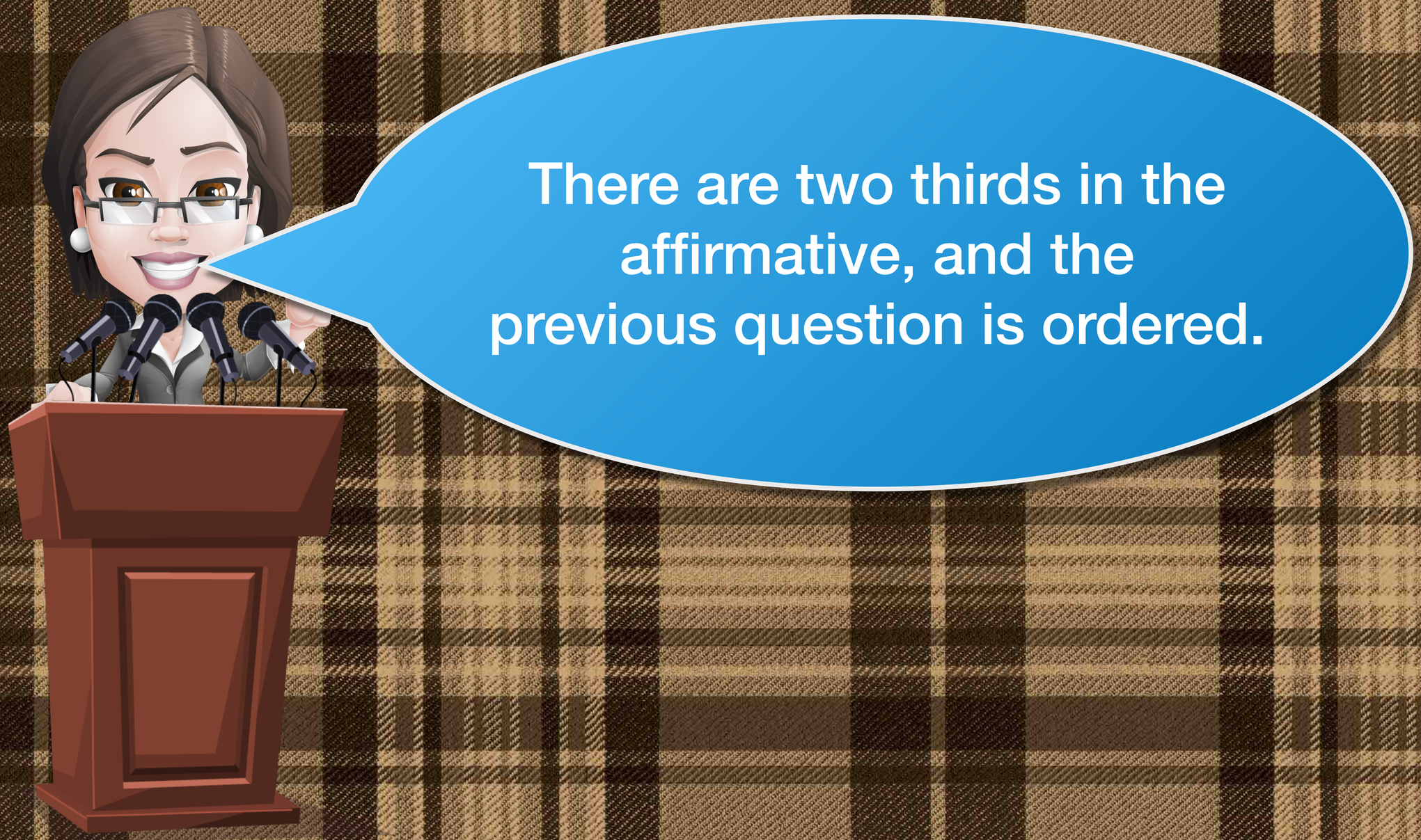
PREVIOUS QUESTION



PREVIOUS QUESTION

PREVIOUS QUESTION

PREVIOUS QUESTION



PREVIOUS QUESTION

Not Debatable

PREVIOUS QUESTION

Not Debatable

Requires A Two-thirds Vote

PREVIOUS QUESTION

Less Formal

PREVIOUS QUESTION

I move to end debate.

Less Formal

PREVIOUS QUESTION

Less Formal

Not Debatable

PREVIOUS QUESTION

- Less Formal
- Not Debatable
- Requires A Two-thirds Vote

RIGHTS AND RESTRICTIONS FOR THE MAKER OF A MOTION

RIGHTS AND RESTRICTIONS FOR THE MAKER OF A MOTION

Maker Has The Right To Speak First In Debate

RIGHTS AND RESTRICTIONS FOR THE MAKER OF A MOTION

Maker Has The Right To Speak First In Debate

Maker Cannot Speak Against His Own Motion

Voting

Q.

Q.

What Does “Majority” Mean?

Q.

What Does “Majority” Mean?

A.

51%

Q.

What Does “Majority” Mean?

A. 51%

B. Half Plus One

Q.

What Does “Majority” Mean?

A. 51%

B. Half Plus One

C. More Than Half

Q.

What Does “Majority” Mean?

A. 51%

B. Half Plus One

C. More Than Half

D. Any Of The Above

Q.

What Does "Majority" Mean?

A. 51%

B. Half Plus One

C. More Than Half

D. Any of the Above

RONR (12th ed.) 44:1

ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

"The word majority means "more than half "; and when the term majority vote is used without qualification—as in the case of the basic requirement—it means more than half of the votes cast by persons entitled to vote, excluding blanks or abstentions, at a regular or properly called meeting."

RONR (12th ed.) 44:1

Majority
Vs.
“Half Plus One”

Majority = “More Than Half”

Majority = “More Than Half”

What is “More than Half” of 5?

Majority = “More Than Half”

What is “More than Half” of 5?

Anything Over 2.5

Majority = “More Than Half”

What is “More than Half” of 5?

Anything Over 2.5

Would 3 be a Majority of 5?

Majority = “More Than Half”

What is “More than Half” of 5?	Anything Over 2.5
Would 3 be a Majority of 5?	Yes

Majority = “More Than Half”

What is “More than Half” of 5?	Anything Over 2.5
Would 3 be a Majority of 5?	Yes
Would 3 Votes Adopt the Motion?	

Majority = “More Than Half”

What is “More than Half” of 5?	Anything Over 2.5
Would 3 be a Majority of 5?	Yes
Would 3 Votes Adopt the Motion?	Yes

Majority = “More Than Half”

What is “More than Half” of 5?	Anything Over 2.5
Would 3 be a Majority of 5?	Yes
Would 3 Votes Adopt the Motion?	Yes

Half Plus One

Majority = “More Than Half”

What is “More than Half” of 5?	Anything Over 2.5
Would 3 be a Majority of 5?	Yes
Would 3 Votes Adopt the Motion?	Yes

Half Plus One

What is “Half + 1” of 5?

Majority = “More Than Half”

What is “More than Half” of 5?	Anything Over 2.5
Would 3 be a Majority of 5?	Yes
Would 3 Votes Adopt the Motion?	Yes

Half Plus One

What is “Half + 1” of 5?	3.5

Majority = “More Than Half”

What is “More than Half” of 5?	Anything Over 2.5
Would 3 be a Majority of 5?	Yes
Would 3 Votes Adopt the Motion?	Yes

Half Plus One

What is “Half + 1” of 5?	3.5
Would 3 be “Half + 1” of 5?	

Majority = “More Than Half”

What is “More than Half” of 5?	Anything Over 2.5
Would 3 be a Majority of 5?	Yes
Would 3 Votes Adopt the Motion?	Yes

Half Plus One

What is “Half + 1” of 5?	3.5
Would 3 be “Half + 1” of 5?	No

Majority = “More Than Half”

What is “More than Half” of 5?	Anything Over 2.5
Would 3 be a Majority of 5?	Yes
Would 3 Votes Adopt the Motion?	Yes

Half Plus One

What is “Half + 1” of 5?	3.5
Would 3 be “Half + 1” of 5?	No
Would 3 Votes Adopt the Motion?	

Majority = “More Than Half”

What is “More than Half” of 5?	Anything Over 2.5
Would 3 be a Majority of 5?	Yes
Would 3 Votes Adopt the Motion?	Yes

Half Plus One

What is “Half + 1” of 5?	3.5
Would 3 be “Half + 1” of 5?	No
Would 3 Votes Adopt the Motion?	No

Robert's Rules 101:
Masteing The Basics

Tim Wynn, PRP

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