

Parliamentary Procedures for the 2020 Virtual ABC

A. Robert's Rules of Order

Robert's Rules provides a standard order of conducting business for large meetings so that they may operate and function effectively. Robert's Rules balance the right of decision of the Majority with the right of the Minority to be heard.

Due to time constraints, ACA WSO uses a modified version of Robert's Rules for the ABC that are meant to help ensure that courtesy is given to all involved, while promoting the orderly exchange of ideas.

B. Establishing Quorum

In any proceedings, such as the ABC, it is essential to establish quorum in order to protect the integrity of the voting process. Because the WSO Bylaws state that quorum is 2/3 of the Registered Delegates attending, the Secretary must ensure that the number of Delegates online in Zoom does not drop below quorum at specific times during the ABC in order to appropriately conduct any business where motions will be entertained.

Those times are as follows:

1. At the start of the discussion of Ballot Proposals on Day 1
2. At the start of the discussion of Ballot Proposals on Day 2
3. At the start of the discussion of the motions from the floor
4. At any other time during the ABC when a motion or motions will be considered

C. Making a Point

The following can be done by posting a message on Chat:

1. POINT OF ORDER. A question about Process, or Objection and Suggestion of an Alternative Process. This may include a request for the Chair to rule on the process.
2. POINT OF INFORMATION. A request for Information on the Process or about the content of a Motion.


D. Types of Motions

At the ABC, a motion that is passed asks that the WSO take a certain action. The ABC Conference will only consider the following types of motions:

1. Those based on the Ballot Proposals approved by the Fellowship in advance of the ABC. NOTE: a Proposal is not a motion until, and unless, it is officially made into a motion.
2. Those made by Delegates from the floor
3. Those made by Committees of the Board

E. General Rules of Discussion and Voting

1. Delegates may not speak for a second time during any block of designated time.
2. Delegates are strongly encouraged to not repeat a point that has already been made during that time segment.


3. Any topic that cannot be resolved in the given time limit will be deferred for resolution to a Problem Solving Discussion Group (defined later in this document) at the end of Day 1. Deferred topics will be brought back before all Delegates on the Day 2.
4. The Chair will be given discretion in pausing the proceedings when requests are made to amend, refer to committee, postpone, table, or to Call the Question. These procedural issues can sometimes shut the process down prematurely because they can become confusing and waste limited time.
5. A motion passes by a 60% majority.
6. Minority Opinion:
 - a. If the vote is not unanimous, a total of two minutes will be allotted for Delegates who voted in the minority to speak their opinion.
 - b. By using the 'thumbs up' icon on Zoom , Delegates will be asked to indicate if anyone wishes to change their vote after hearing the minority opinion.
 - i. If so, the vote is retaken and no matter what the results, minority opinion does not apply to this vote.
 - ii. If not, the original vote stands.

F. Ballot Proposal Process

Given the time constraints of the ABC, and in compliance with the "limited time" directive in Section XIX.A.4.e of the OPPM, the Chair will set a time limit of approximately 30 minutes for full consideration of each Ballot Proposal that becomes a motion. This limit is intended to allow ample time for open dialogue and a minimum of Robert's Rules maneuvering.

Ballot Proposals will be considered in the order of their favorable vote on the Ballot, i.e., start with those that received the highest Fellowship percentage of affirmative votes. This respects the fellowship's feedback.

Instead of jumping straight into presentation and seconding of motions, the ABC Conference Chair (the "Chair") will follow the guideline introduced into the OPPM in April of 2019 and guide the proceedings as follows, and as depicted in the attached diagram, ABC 2020 Motions Flow Chart:

1. Ask the Secretary or designated person to read the Ballot Proposal into the record. For lengthy Proposals, an abbreviated introduction is appropriate, with a notice to the Secretary to include the entire proposal in the minutes.
2. Initiate 10 minutes of open Delegate discussion about the merits of the Proposal to get a sense of the group BEFORE a motion is introduced. Delegates will indicate they wish to talk by using the 'raised hand' icon  .
3. At the end of the discussion, ask for suggested wording of a motion based on that Proposal. NOTE: if this is not an easy task to accomplish, it is likely a sign that the Proposal will fall into poll category c. below.
4. Take a formal poll with the following three choices:

- a. I support this Proposal in the form of the suggested motion.
 - b. I oppose the purpose of this Proposal and am not likely to support it in any form
 - c. I generally support the concept of this Proposal, but would only support it if it is reworked before a motion is created.
5. The results of this poll will be interpreted as follows:
- a. Must receive 60% or more for a formal motion to be called for an entertained at this point in the proceedings.
 - b. Must receive 60% or more for the Proposal to be considered an unfavorable move by the Delegates. In this case, the Chair may suggest to the Delegation that
 - i. The Proposal be considered moot (will not become a motion) or
 - ii. If someone feels strongly about the Proposal, they may make a motion. It will require a second to proceed through the rest of the motion process. Otherwise, it will become moot.
 - c. The Proposal will fall into this category if it either receives 60% of the vote, or if it does not get a 60% or more vote in either a. or b. above. The process for Proposals in this category is:
 - i. The Chair initiates 5 minutes of further discussion to help identify what changes are being requested.
 - ii. If issues are not resolved, and because it is not yet an actual motion, the Chair will indicate that the Proposal appears to require additional work by a Problem Solving Discussion Group before presenting it for a final vote.
 - iii. The Chair asks for a show of hands on Zoom to see if the Delegates favor moving the Proposal to Day 2 so that interested Delegates can attempt to resolve differences. Note: If a motion is made and seconded at this time, the normal motion protocol will be followed.

G. Problem-Solving Discussion Groups

To help keep the larger meeting from being bogged down by detailed discussions that involve extensive wordsmithing, for Ballot Proposals that fall into category 5.c above, interested delegates will be invited to participate in small group discussions at the end of Day 1. The goal will be to explore the creation of a compromise motions. Zoom allows for break-out groups, each of whom will be given up to an hour for discussion with the goal of either creating a universally acceptable motion that will be presented on Day 2. The alternative is for groups to present a motion to refer the matter to WSO.

H. Calling the Question/Motion to Postpone or Table

Because of the 30-minute time limit on each item and the process described above, in the interest of time and fairness, the Chair is permitted to not recognize motions to “call the question” or “move to postpone or table.” In previous ABCs these motions became highly

confusing, often thwarting productive group discussion, and actually burned up extra time for their own debate and vote.

The Chair may say something like “we’re near the end of the discussion/debate. Calling the question will take longer, so I’m going to suggest we allow the remaining debate to occur.” Or, “Calling the question normally would require debate and a vote. Before making the decision to do so, please indicate by Yes or No using the Zoom icons whether you would like to end the discussion/debate now.”

I. Motions from the Floor

Delegates may make Motions from the Floor unrelated to the Ballot proposals on Day 1 that they feel are time sensitive.

Such motions must

1. Be submitted in writing to the Conference Secretary within an hour after the official close business on Day 1.
2. Be written succinctly.
3. Include a rationale for why the motion should be considered time critical, e.g., final decisions are in the process of being made about an upcoming WSO event.
4. Be unrelated to the Ballot Proposals on Day 1.

On Day 2, Delegates will then vote on whether they agree to proceed with any of the floor motions.

ABC 2020 Modified Motion Flow

