SIMPLIFIED RULES OF ORDER

Rules of order are intended to facilitate progress, not impede it. They are designed to include members in decision-making, with everyone having an equal opportunity to participate in the discussion and influence the group’s decisions. Use common sense: think “fair, reasonable and responsible”.

Quick facts on Robert’s Rules and other common sense tips:

1. Adoption of a motion requires a majority in favour; in the case of a tie, the vote of the Chair shall be the determining vote.

2. Quorum refers to the majority of the Council

3. A quorum must be present at Council meetings in order for acts and proceedings made during the meeting to be valid and/or binding.

4. Steps in handling a motion are:
   a) a member makes the motion (I move that we….)
   b) another seconds the motion (I second the motion….)
   c) The Chair states the motion (It is moved and seconded that….)
   d) Debate and possibly amendment take place.
   e) The Chair puts the motion to a vote (We are now voting on the motion to…All in favour? All opposed? The motion is carried/defeated.)
   f) The Chair announces the result (The motion is carried/defeated.)

5. Be clear about what is being voted on. Reread the motion before voting.
6. Three things are important to record in the minutes: the exact wording of the motion, that discussion took place, and the final outcome (carried or defeated).

7. The person seconding a motion does not have to be in favour of it; they just want it discussed.

8. If you make a motion, you can’t speak against but you can vote against it after hearing discussion.

9. If people tend to dominate the discussion, suggest making a rule that people may only speak twice on an issue, the second time after everyone else had had a chance to speak once.