

## **FLOOR PROCEDURE GUIDELINES**

These guidelines are intended as a guide to conducting business on the floor of the assembly.

### **WHO IS ELLIGIBLE TO VOTE?**

Area GSRs and DCMs, Area Officers (including Registrar & Hotel Coordinator), Delegates, and Standing Service Committee Chairpersons are full voting members of the Louisiana Area Assembly. Alternates attending in place of an absent primary member are also voting members during their period of primary service.

### **ORDER OF BUSINESS OF THE AREA SERVICE MEETING**

The order of business of the area business meeting is determined by the Agenda Committee at the agenda planning meeting of each assembly. The business meeting format is usually as follows:

- Opening by Area Chairman
- Officers Reports
- Committee Reports
- Budgetary Motions
- Old Business
- New Business
- Adjournment

### **PLACING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

Any AA member in Area 27 may place an item on the agenda by presenting it in written form to the Agenda Committee. Alternatively, it may be presented to a member of the area committee who may submit it. All motions that involve the expenditure of money should be submitted to the Budget & Finance Committee prior to being introduced on the floor at the business meeting. Items concerning or involving a standing service committee should be submitted through that committee for presentation to the agenda committee. Prioritization of agenda items is done by the Area Committee at the agenda meeting immediately following the business meeting.

### **SECONDS TO MOTIONS**

Any voting member of the assembly may second a motion by saying, "Second." A second to a motion does not necessarily mean the member supports the motion, just that the member wants it to be considered and discussed.

### **WITHDRAWAL & AMENDMENTS TO MOTIONS**

A motion may be withdrawn by the member sponsoring the motion at any time prior to a vote. Amendments to a motion must be related to the motion. After a motion has been stated by the chair, any voting member may offer an amendment, but it must be seconded and passed by a majority vote. The chair then restates the amended motion and business proceeds. The procedure for voting on the motion as amended is to vote on the amendment first, then on the

motion as amended. If the amendment fails, the original motion is then reopened for discussion and subsequent action.

### **DEBATE & DECORUM**

Debate is any spoken comment and discussion on the merits of a pending motion. When a motion is made and seconded, it must be stated by the chair before any debate. Any member wishing to speak in debate must come to the microphone and wait until no other member is speaking. Comments are limited to three minutes and are timed by the alternate chair. No member shall speak twice on a motion until all other members who desire to speak to the motion have had an opportunity to speak. If at any time the chair is required to state a point of order or otherwise speak within the privileges of the chair, then the member speaking should defer to the chair. Such an interruption will not count toward the member's time to speak to the motion.

### **CALL THE QUESTION**

A motion to close debate, commonly referred to as "calling the question," must be made in order at the microphone. This motion can be used only to close debate, not to prohibit debate, and is considered "out of order" if made before debate has begun. The call-the-question motion requires a second, is not debatable, and requires a two-thirds vote to end debate. If passed, the motion on the floor is voted on. This motion yields to the motion to "lay on the table."

### **POSTPONE THE MOTION**

A motion to postpone is to remove the present motion from consideration and entrust it to the care of the secretary until the next area assembly. It requires a second, is undebatable, unamendable, and requires a majority vote. A motion to postpone may be made at any time prior to the vote on the main motion. The motion to postpone is normally made to allow some action directed by the Assembly Chair or taken on by the motion's sponsor that will clarify or resolve the status of the agenda item for a more informed action by the assembly. The postponed motion will be considered at the next assembly, and will be automatically included in that assembly's agenda by the Secretary.

### **LAY ON THE TABLE**

A motion to "lay on the table" or table is to remove the present motion from consideration and entrust it to the care of the secretary until its consideration is resumed at the next area assembly. It requires a second, is undebatable, unamendable, and requires a majority vote. A motion to table may be made at any time prior to the vote on the main motion. The tabled motion may be considered at the next assembly by a member making a motion to "take the tabled motion off the table." Such a motion requires a second, is undebatable, unamendable, and requires a majority vote. If a motion is not taken from the table at the next assembly after it was tabled, it expires upon adjournment of that assembly.

### **POINT OF ORDER**

A point of order is an assertion that a procedure is being violated and a request that correct procedure be enforced by the chair. It takes precedence over any pending motion out of which it arises. It is in order when another has the floor even if it is necessary to interrupt a speaker. It does not require a second and is not debatable or amendable. It is decided by the chair, subject to appeal. To make a point of order, a member rises and says, "Point of Order." The chair asks the member to state his point, and the member does so, being as specific as possible without entering into debate or asking a question. The chair then rules on the point of order.

An appeal of the decision of the chair is permitted by a member announcing, "I appeal the decision of the chair." If the appeal is seconded, the chair then defines the issue involved, explains the reasons for his decision, and says, "Shall the decision of the chair be sustained?" An appeal is debatable, but no member may speak more than once in debate, and the chair may defend his decision once again at the end of the debate. A majority vote sustains the chair's decision.