



Knights of Columbus

The Method of Conducting
Council Meetings

Council Meeting Chamber Setup

NATIONAL
FLAG



VATICAN
FLAG



STATE/PROVINCE
FLAG



K OF C
FLAG



TREASURER FINANCIAL SECRETARY GRAND KNIGHT CHAPLAIN RECORDER



COUNCIL BANNER



MEMBERSHIP AND
PROGRAMMING
DIRECTORS &
CHAIRMEN



SALUTATION TABLE

ADVOCATE

LECTURER



MEMBERS



WARDEN

CHANCELLOR



MEMBERS



DEPUTY GRAND KNIGHT



MEMBERS



INSIDE GUARD



OUTSIDE GUARD

ENTRANCE

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of a grand knight's responsibilities. As he presides over the meetings of your council, it is imperative that he uses and understands the parliamentary procedures we've provided in this booklet. For a complete listing of parliamentary procedures, consult Robert's Rules of Order.

Responsibilities of Grand Knight

Ceremonials¹

1. Coordinates installation of council officers with district deputy.
2. Schedules and publicizes monthly Admission Degree.
3. Confers with district deputy for Formation Degree and Knighthood Degree.
4. Arranges Mass for departed brothers.
5. Awards certificates, cards and pins during Honorary/Honorary Life Ceremonials.
6. Maintains proper conduct of any ceremonials that may be conducted at regular meetings, such as the Admission Degree, or the Honorary or Honorary Life Ceremonial.

Duties

1. Appoints your council's chaplain. To do so, he must first confer with the deputy grand knight and trustees to select a priest or bishop for the position. After one has been decided upon, he must then submit the recommendation to the Ordinary of the Diocese. Appointment shall be made in accordance with any rules established by the Ordinary of the Diocese in which your council is located.
2. Appoints a membership director to organize and implement your council's recruitment, retention and insurance promotion action plans. The membership director confers with the grand knight on appointments of committee chairmen, who are then also appointed by the grand knight.
3. Appoints a program director to organize and implement your council's service program areas (Church, Community, Council, Culture of Life, Family and Youth). The program director then confers with the grand knight for the appointment of individual directors for each service program area.
4. Appoints members to standing committees, such as admission, recruitment and retention committees.
5. Schedules and presides at council officer meetings. Officer meetings should be held at least once a month.
6. Regularly monitors your council's progress toward earning the Star Council Award.
7. Appoints members to serve on the Admission Committee and ensures it functions properly. The Admission Committee consists of your council's chancellor and six additional members.
8. Recognizes Honorary and Honorary Life members. For details, see Honorary and Honorary Life membership requirements and ceremonial procedures in the *Knights of Columbus Leadership Resources booklet* (#5093).
9. Recognizes past grand knights, the Knight of the Month or Year, community leaders, etc.

¹All ceremonials are to be followed strictly as prescribed. Your council needs to hold at least two regular monthly meetings, no less than one of which shall be designated as a regular business meeting. For additional information, refer to the *Knights of Columbus Leadership Resources* (#5093) and the *Charter, Constitution, Laws* (#30) booklets.

10. Conducts the *Semiannual Council Audit Report* (#1295) with the trustees. Refer to the *Knights of Columbus Leadership Resources booklet* (#5093) for details.
11. Ensures that all council forms and reports, the *Annual Survey of Fraternal Activity* (#1728) and other necessary documents are completed and submitted to the Supreme Council in a timely manner.
12. Forms and/or maintains your council's Admission Degree team.
13. Arranges for your council to be represented at wakes and memorial services for deceased brothers. Arranges for the *Resolution of Condolence* (#1450) to be presented to the family of the deceased.
14. Oversees that all council reports from officers and committees are properly recorded in your council's files.
15. Begins all council meetings on time and ensures they are conducted in a timely and efficient manner.

Guidelines: Conducting a Council Officers' Meeting

1. Call to Order by grand knight.
2. Opening Prayer (chaplain or grand knight).
3. Review of correspondence and discussion of any recommended course(s) of action.
4. Review program schedule and events with officers, directors and chairmen.
5. Call for report of officers.
6. Call for report of membership and program directors. Assess membership recruitment, retention and insurance promotion performance toward earning the Star Council Award. Evaluate programs and activities and member involvement. Discuss future actions.
7. Call for report of financial obligations of the council and open the floor to any remarks by the council's treasurer.
8. Review financial secretary billing with the council's membership.
 - a. 1st billing — 15 days prior to billing period.
 - b. 2nd notice — 30 days later.
 - i. If payment is not received within 30 days of the second notice's mailing, the financial secretary will provide the names, addresses, telephone numbers and amount due for each member in arrears to the Retention Committee for personal follow-up.
 - ii. If directed by the grand knight, the financial secretary forwards a Knight Alert letter, signed by the grand knight, to the delinquent member. This is done only after the retention committee has completed their work.
 - c. After 15 days from sending the Knight Alert letter, if the member still has not paid his dues or no satisfactory arrangement has been made, the *Notice of Intent to Retain* (#1845) is prepared and signed by the financial secretary and grand knight.
 - d. Within 60 days from sending the *Notice of Intent to Retain* (#1845), your council may file a *Membership Document* (#100) and check "Suspension" in section 2 for members in arrears.
9. Call for retention committee report of previous assignments.
10. Review reports from Admission Committee and applications to be processed.
11. Review council supplies on hand and order any necessary supplies from knightsgear.com.
12. Good of the Order.
13. Closing Prayer (chaplain or grand knight).

Guidelines: Conducting a Council Meeting

- ❖ Call to Order. (Grand knight stands at all times while presiding.)
 - ▷ Grand Knight (One rap of gavel): Brothers, we are about to open this council in the first section. All persons not having received the honors of membership in the first section shall please retire from the chamber. The doors shall now be closed and the guards assume their positions. (In their absence, the grand knight shall appoint guards for the time being.)
- ❖ Warden's Report on Membership Card.
 - ▷ Grand Knight: Worthy warden, do you vouch that all present are in possession of the current membership card? (Warden salutes and proceeds to inspect membership cards.)
 - ▷ Warden: Worthy grand knight (salutes). I vouch that all present are in possession of the current membership card. (Salutes grand knight and deputy grand knight.)
- ❖ Prayer.
 - ▷ Grand Knight: Brothers, let us invoke the Divine blessing by repeating aloud the Lord's Prayer. (Four raps. Chaplain or grand knight so prays.)
- ❖ Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, or some other suitable patriotic display of loyalty. (Three raps. One rap at conclusion.)
- ❖ Roll Call of Officers.
 - ▷ Grand Knight: The recorder will call the roll of officers. (Two raps. The recorder calls the roll of all officers. The warden answers in his place for all officers called. As each officer is declared present, he is seated. In the absence of chair officers, the grand knight shall appoint officers for the time being.)
- ❖ ²Opening Ode.
 - ▷ Grand Knight: Brothers, we shall now sing the opening ode. (Three raps. At conclusion, one rap.)
- ❖ ³Chaplain's Message (This is an opportunity for the chaplain to educate council members about an element of the faith, to offer spiritual reflection, or to give another appropriate intervention.)
- ❖ Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting.
 - ▷ Grand Knight: Are there any corrections to the minutes? They are approved as read.
- ❖ Report of Admission Committee and Reading of Applications.
- ❖ Balloting for membership. (New members, readmissions, reapplications, transfers.)
- ❖ ²Initiations.
- ❖ Grand Knight's Report.
- ❖ ²Treasurer's Report.
- ❖ ²Reading by Grand Knight of Receipts of Treasurer to Financial Secretary and Treasurer's Voucher of Deposit.
- ❖ ²Reading of Bills and Communications.
- ❖ Financial Secretary's Report of Receipts of Meeting.
- ❖ ²Report of Auditors and Trustees.
- ❖ ²Chancellor's Report on Vocations.
- ❖ ²Report of Service Program Committees. (Grand knight calls on membership and program directors, who introduce their committee directors for their reports.)

- ▷ Membership Director
- ▷ Program Director
 - Church Director
 - Community Director
 - Council Director
 - Culture of Life Director
 - Family Director
 - Youth Director
- ❖ Report of Round Table Chairman.
- ❖ Report of Standing Committees.
- ❖ Unfinished Business.
- ❖ ²New Business. (When elections are in order, this is the first item under New Business.)
- ❖ Report of the Fourth Degree.
- ❖ Field Agent's Report.
- ❖ District Deputy's Report.
- ❖ ²Good of the Order.
 - ▷ Grand Knight: Before proceeding to the Good of the Order, let me ask: Does any brother present know of a member of this council, or an unassisted brother of the Order, sick or in distress? (Any such are reported. Four raps. Chaplain or grand knight leads prayer for sick or distressed. One rap.)
 - ▷ Grand Knight: The Good of the Order will now be conducted by the worthy lecturer, I trust to the enjoyment, instruction and edification of all present. (The lecturer then presides, but the grand knight may terminate this order of business at his pleasure.)
- ❖ Closing Prayer.
 - ▷ Grand Knight: Brothers, we shall now close this meeting. Let us kneel and pray that we may ever be united in charity, that God may bless our work, aid us to keep our pledges for His greater glory, and that He may grant eternal peace to the souls of our departed brothers. (Four raps. Chaplain or grand knight so prays. One rap at conclusion.)
- ❖ ²Closing Ode.
 - ▷ Grand Knight: We shall now sing the Closing Ode. (Three raps. At conclusion, one rap.) I now declare this meeting adjourned.

Use of the Gavel

One rap — instructs your council to come to order or be seated; a ruling on an action has been concluded.

Two raps — instructs council officers to stand.

Three raps — instructs all to stand.

Four raps — instructs all to kneel in prayer.

²Parts of the Order of Business marked with an asterisk may be omitted at meetings other than regular business meetings. At regular business meetings, minutes of all meetings to and including the last regular business meeting shall be read. Officers' jewels should be worn at all meetings.

³Or at any time he so desires. § 125 (13).

Parliamentary Procedure

Parliamentary procedure is utilized to ensure that meetings are conducted efficiently and that business is handled in a proper manner. In essence, parliamentary procedure is a more formal and structured way for members to come together, discuss and weigh any matters at hand until an agreement is reached.

Motions

The word “motion” refers to the procedure of bringing items before your council. When a member says, “I move that we give \$50 to buy playground equipment for the school,” he has made a motion. When the motion is talked about and discussed, it is often called “the question.”

Business may be presented to your council in two ways:

1. By a simple motion
2. By a resolution

After being presented to your council, both are considered in exactly the same manner.

Simple motions are usually short and presented without much preparation. As a rule, they are not written down before presentation. Wherever possible, however, written form is more satisfactory.

Resolutions are often long and the result of careful thought and planning. They are always written and take some form of the following:

Whereas, this community has a large group of boys and girls

Whereas, these boys and girls have already had experience in Boys and Girls Club work but are at the present time without leadership and supervision.

Be it resolved, that this council take upon itself the responsibility of supplying this leadership and supervision for the coming year, and that the effective carrying out of this matter be left to the Boys and Girls Committee.

Four Kinds of Motions

Some motions have the “right of way” over others. They are usually classified in four groups: main (or principal) motions, subsidiary motions, incidental motions and privileged motions.

Main Motion: A main (or principal) motion is one made to bring a particular subject before your council for consideration. It may take the form of a simple motion or a resolution. Such a motion cannot be made when any other question is currently being discussed by your council, and it must give way to all other types of motions. Main motions include:

1. Adoption of a motion or resolution
2. Amend the bylaws
3. Rescind or repeal a previous action
4. Ratify or confirm an action taken

Main motions generally are not in order when they conflict with your council's bylaws (unless there is a motion to amend the bylaws) or conflict with the Charter, Constitution, and Laws of the Knights of Columbus.

Subsidiary Motion: A subsidiary motion is used to modify the main motion or to resolve it in some way other than by direct vote. It must be decided before the main motion and it is considered after privileged and incidental motions. The subsidiary motions are:

1. To postpone indefinitely
 - a. The purpose of this motion is to kill the main motion for the duration of the council meeting without taking a direct vote on it. It is not in order when another has the floor. It needs a second, is not amendable, can be debated, and requires a majority vote to pass.
 - b. Example: "I move to postpone donating \$400 to the school indefinitely."
2. To amend
 - a. The purpose of this motion is to change the pending motion before it is acted upon. It is not in order when another has the floor. It needs a second, is debatable if the motion to be amended is debatable, is amendable, and requires a majority vote to pass.
 - b. Example: "I move to amend the motion by inserting "St. Mary's" before the word "school."
3. To refer to committee (commit or refer)
 - a. The purpose of this motion is to have a small group investigate a proposal. It is not in order when another has the floor. It needs a second, is amendable and debatable, and requires a majority vote to pass.
 - b. Example: "I move to refer the motion of donating \$400 to St. Mary's School to the finance committee, to investigate if that amount will meet the school's needs."
4. To postpone to a certain time
 - a. The purpose of this motion is to put off or delay a decision. It is not in order when another has the floor. It needs a second, is debatable and amendable, and requires a majority vote to pass in most cases.
 - b. Example: "I move to postpone the motion of donating \$400 to St. Mary's School until the next council meeting."
5. To limit or extend debate
 - a. The purpose of this motion is to limit or extend the length of debate or the number of times a member can speak in debate. It is not in order when another has the floor. It needs a second, is not debatable, is amendable and requires a two-thirds vote to pass.
 - b. Example: "I move to limit debate to five minutes per member."
6. To move the previous question (to close debate)
 - a. The purpose of this motion is to close debate and immediately take the vote. It is not in order when another has the floor. It needs a second, is not amendable or debatable, and requires a two-thirds vote to pass.
 - b. Example: "I move the previous question."
7. To lay on the table
 - a. The purpose of this motion is to set aside the main motion temporarily. It needs a second, is not amendable or debatable, and requires a majority vote to pass.
 - b. Example: "I move to lay the motion on the table."

These subsidiary motions are listed here in their order of importance to the main motion, but must be considered in the reverse order. Thus, in reverse, a motion “to lay on the table” comes before all others, while a motion “to amend” takes precedence only over a motion “to postpone indefinitely.”

Privileged Motion: A privileged motion is one relating to the well-being of your council or any of its members. Because of its importance to individual members, it takes precedence over all other questions. The privileged motions are:

1. Orders of the day
 - a. The purpose of this motion is to make your council conform to the agenda or order of business, or to take up a general or special order. It is in order when another has the floor. It doesn't need a second, and is not amendable or debatable. No vote is taken unless the members want to set aside the orders of the day, which takes a two-thirds vote to pass.
 - b. Example: “I call for the orders of the day.”
2. Questions of privilege
 - a. The purpose of this motion is to permit a member to make a request relating to the rights and privileges of your council or an individual member and to consider it immediately because of its urgency. It is in order when another has the floor, but courtesy demands that the question of privilege wait until the member has finished speaking. It doesn't require a second, is not debatable or amendable, and requires the grand knight rule on the request. (Note: If the question of privilege is raised by the member in the form of a formal motion, only then does it need a second, is debatable and amendable, and can be reconsidered. It also must be adopted by a majority vote.)
 - b. Example: “Worthy grand knight, I rise to a question of privilege concerning the council and ask that the member speak into the microphone because it is difficult to hear in the back of the room.”
3. To recess
 - a. The purpose of this motion is to take a short intermission and then resume business where your council left off. It is not in order when another has the floor. It needs a second and is not debatable or amendable. It requires a majority vote to pass.
 - b. Example: “I move to take a 20 minute recess.”
4. To adjourn
 - a. The purpose of this motion is to end the council meeting immediately. It is not in order when another has the floor. It needs a second and is not amendable or debatable. It requires a majority vote to pass.
 - b. Example: “I move to adjourn.”
5. To fix time to adjourn (when a question is pending)
 - a. The purpose of this motion is to set the time to adjourn the meeting. It is not in order when another has the floor. It needs a second, is not debatable, but is amendable. It requires a majority vote to pass.
 - b. Example: “I move that we adjourn this meeting at 8:30.”

These privileged motions are also listed in their order of importance to the main motion, but must be taken up in the reverse order. Thus, a motion “to fix time to adjourn” must be considered first, followed by a motion “to adjourn” and then a motion “to take a recess.”

Incidental Motion: An incidental motion is one that comes up while other motions are being considered and must be disposed of before the main motion or a subsidiary motion can be acted upon. The incidental motions include, but are not limited to:

1. Point of Order
 - a. The purpose of this motion is to correct a breach in the rules. It is in order when another has the floor. It doesn't require a second, is not debatable unless the grand knight submits the question to the council members, and is not amendable. The grand knight rules on the point, unless the grand knight submits the point to a majority vote of the council members present.
 - b. Example: "I rise to a point of order."
2. Appeal from the Decision of the Chair
 - a. The purpose of this motion is to disagree with the grand knight's ruling and let the members decide the disagreement by a majority vote. The motion must be made at the time a ruling was made. It needs a second, is not amendable and can be debated.
 - b. Example: "I appeal the decision of the chair."
3. To suspend the rules
 - a. The purpose of this motion is to set aside a rule of your council (except bylaws, fundamental principles of parliamentary law, or rules that protect absent members or basic rights of the individual). It is not in order when another has the floor. It needs a second; is not debatable or amendable; and requires two-thirds vote to suspend a parliamentary order or order of business, or a majority vote to suspend a standing rule.
 - b. Example: "I move to suspend the rules and take up new business before old business."
4. Objection to consideration of a question
 - a. The purpose of this motion is to prevent the main motion from being considered. It is generally in order when another has the floor. It doesn't need a second, is not debatable or amendable and requires a two-thirds vote.
 - b. Example: "I object to consideration of the question."
5. To withdraw a motion
 - a. The purpose of this motion is to withdraw a pending motion on the floor without taking a vote. It is in order when another has the floor. It doesn't need a second, is not debatable or amendable and simply needs the general consent of the council to pass. If there is objection, the grand knight may put the request to a majority vote.
 - b. Example: "I ask for permission to withdraw the motion of donating \$400 to the school."

How to Make a Motion

The following procedure is generally recognized as good form in making a motion.

1. A member obtains the floor through the following steps:
 - Stands. (Except in very small or informal meetings, the grand knight should also stand.)
 - Addresses the grand knight as "Worthy Grand Knight" and renders the salute. (Representing the tree of the Cross, the member makes a vertical motion, with his arm and vertically open hand, from top to bottom).
2. Grand knight recognizes the speaker by announcing his name and rendering the salute in return. (Representing the arms of the Cross, the grand knight makes a horizontal motion, with his arm

and horizontally open hand, from left to right). The speaker may not present the motion until recognized by the grand knight.

3. Member states the motion carefully. This is usually done by saying “I move that _____” or “I move the adoption of the following resolution.” It is best to have the motion prepared in written form before the meeting.
4. If the motion requires a second, it must be seconded before it can be discussed. If it does not receive a second, it is lost. Any eligible member, other than the one who made the motion, may second it. Those seconding may remain seated, stating simply, “I second the motion.”
5. Grand knight repeats the motion in full. Typically, this statement is along the lines of the following: “The motion has been made and seconded that _____. Is there any discussion?”
6. The motion is then open for discussion. To participate, members must follow the aforementioned procedure (Step 1) to obtain the floor:
 - Address the chair as “Worthy Grand Knight” and render the salute
 - Receive recognition by the grand knight, who announces the speaker’s name and renders the salute in return

A good grand knight encourages as much discussion as possible. In this way, the facts and merits of the question are brought to light and members can vote more intelligently. Thorough discussion helps your council meetings feel more inclusive and satisfying to attendees. The person who makes the motion is usually given the opportunity to open and close the discussion.

7. After a motion and a second to move the previous question, the vote is taken. In the spirit of charity, full discussion should be encouraged before your council accepts a motion to move the previous question.

How to Amend a Motion

An amendment to a motion is made to change or modify the previous motion which is under consideration. An amendment may do one of four things:

1. Add one or more words or sentences to the motion under consideration.
2. Strike out one or more words or sentences from the motion under consideration.
3. Substitute another motion for the one being considered.
4. Substitute words or replace wording under consideration.

An amendment, like the main motion, must be seconded. It is also debatable so long as the motion to be amended is debatable, and it is amendable.

The proper form for making an amendment is either of the following:

- “I move to amend the motion to read _____.”
- “I move to amend the motion by _____.”

The amendment to a motion, if seconded, must be voted upon before the original motion. If the amendment is agreed upon, the original motion will be revised and voted on accordingly. If the amendment is lost, the motion is voted upon as originally stated.

In case of an amendment to an amendment, the most recent amendment is always voted upon first. If it is carried, the preceding amendment is then voted upon as amended.

Ways of Voting

When the discussion is over, the grand knight repeats the motion either verbally or by asking the recorder to repeat the motion. He then puts it to a vote. The following four voting methods are commonly used:

1. Voting by Acclamation: “Aye” or “Nay.” This is probably the most commonly used method of voting. However, it has both advantages and disadvantages:
 - ❑ Advantages:
 - a) It is the quickest method.
 - b) For unimportant questions or where there is no doubt about the wishes of the majority, it is very satisfactory.
 - ❑ Disadvantages:
 - a) The minority group may produce enough sound to “drown out” the majority.
 - b) The grand knight has an ability to favor the outcome if the vote is close.
 - c) The side voting first (which must always be the affirmative) has a decided psychological advantage. For example, if a member that intends to vote “nay” senses that the majority of his council is going to vote the other way, he may change his vote at the last second or abstain from voting.
2. Voting by Standing or Raising the Hand: This method overcomes the first two disadvantages of voting by acclamation (“Aye” or “Nay”), as the majority and the minority are clearly identified from the floor and the chair. This method is advisable for all important matters where the following two methods are not used, and where the result of the voter would otherwise be uncertain.
3. Voting by Roll Call: Sometimes also called “Yeas and Nays.” Roll call gives every member the chance to have his vote on record. Legislative bodies, therefore, use it frequently.
4. Voting by Ballot: This takes more time. Slips of paper are first passed around to the members, who write the name of the person they prefer, or “yes” or “no” on their slip. To make voting by ballot quicker, tellers may be selected to collect and count ballots.
 - ❑ Advantages:
 - a) Offers discretion. No one person need influence the vote of another.
 - b) Offers accuracy. Every member present has a chance to vote and get a fair decision.
 - c) The decision is not known until all ballots are cast.

The Grand Knight’s Vote

The grand knight is the conductor of the debate and should, in most cases, remain as impartial to either side as possible. However, should he choose to vote, please note the following:

- ❑ If the grand knight’s vote causes a tie, a motion is then lost.
- ❑ If a vote is a tie without the vote of the grand knight, he has the option to cast his vote and thus carry or deny the motion.

Please note, when voting by ballot, there is this important difference: The grand knight must vote in the same way as the other members, and therefore has no deciding vote.

How to Elect Officers

Council officers should always be chosen by ballot. There are three popular methods of suggesting candidates:

1. Nominations from the floor with a choice by ballot.
 - Satisfactory and speedy
2. An “informal” ballot to indicate choice, followed by an election via “formal” ballot.
 - Least likely to offend any of the candidates
3. Suggestions by a nominating committee: a “slate” with one or two names for each office.
 - Permits some knowledge of the qualifications of the candidate for the respective office

In all cases, balloting should continue until a majority vote has been received by one of the candidates.

Keep Careful Records

Good records are a valuable asset. They are an accurate report of what is done in the business meeting by both the committees and the officers. There are two kinds of records: minutes and reports.

Minutes Should Be Complete.

The minutes of the meetings are kept by the recorder. He can use the *Recorder's Minute Book* (#1403) (available through knightsgear.com) or another form of record if preferred.

The minutes of the business meetings should contain a complete record of what transpired. This includes every motion, whether lost or carried, and the names of the members who made and seconded them. Details of the discussion are not necessary, but records should indicate the number of votes on either side if the votes were counted. No personal opinions or comments should be included.

The minutes of the meeting must be read and opened for correction at the following meeting.

Reports

From time to time, officers and committees must submit reports, which are sometimes best presented in a written format. This is particularly the case with Meeting-to-Meeting Reports and Annual Reports.

Meeting-To-Meeting Reports

Meeting-to-Meeting reports are not necessarily made at every meeting.

- The treasurer's report should include a record of all money received and expended for the council. The figures of this report must be carefully balanced, and a statement must be kept of the amount of money on hand.

Note, the treasurer may not pay out any money unless given a written order issued by the financial secretary and signed by the grand knight.

- ❑ Reports should be expected occasionally of the committees — and in particular, the standing committees.
- ❑ When a report is called for, if there is no report to make, the chairman should say, “The _____ committee has no report to make.”
- ❑ When a report is given, it should include a record of all committee meetings held, the work done, any future plans, as well as additional matters the committee feels is of import.

Work Through Committees

Committees generally consist of an odd number of members (usually three or five), chosen for the purpose of investigating a specific matter or carrying out a particular piece of work.

Committees offer two great advantages. First, they allow more time and greater opportunity for consideration of a question. Second, they are a means of delegating responsibility in your council.

A committee is subject to the same rules of order as your council, except that it can act with greater freedom.

Committees are formed by the grand knight, who appoints its members.

Parliamentary Terms

Acclamation A method of voting.

Adjourn To close the meeting.

Amend To change a motion by means of another motion.

Amendment A change made in a previous motion. Such an amendment is debatable and may be reconsidered.

Appeal from decision of the chair An incidental motion. Any member disagreeing with the grand knight’s decision may thus put the matter to a vote of your council. This is in order, even though another member has the floor. The member rises, saying, “I appeal from the decision of the chair.” If the appeal is seconded, the grand knight must say, “Shall the decision of the chair be sustained?” It cannot be amended but may be reconsidered. A tie vote sustains the chair.

Ballot A method of voting.

Debatable The discussion of a motion or question. Discussion must always follow the accepted rules of order.

Division of the house If any member of your council is dissatisfied with the result of the vote as announced by the grand knight, he may call for a “division of the house” or “division of the council” or just “division.” The grand knight says, “A division is called for; those in favor of the motion will rise.” The grand knight then appoints “tellers” to count those standing. Announcing the number, the grand knight says, “Those opposed will rise.” They are also counted by the teller and the grand knight announces the result.

Fix time to which to adjourn This is a privileged motion which takes precedence over all others.

Lay on the table A subsidiary motion, the purpose of which is to postpone consideration to a more convenient time. This is often considered a polite way of defeating a motion, with the assumption that it is to lie on the table permanently. If carried, a motion to “lay on the table” usually takes with it everything concerned with the question. It is not debatable and cannot be amended.

Majority A total which is a number greater than half the votes cast.

Meeting The time a council remains together without adjournment. A call-to-order after an adjournment constitutes another meeting.

Minutes The written records of the proceedings of the meetings, as kept by the recorder.

Motion The accepted name applied to the procedure of getting a matter before your council.

New Business Matters which have not been formally discussed before, but are brought up for the first time.

Nomination Suggesting the name of a person for an office, to be used at the time of election. It is not a motion and requires no second.

Objection to consideration of a question An incidental motion. The object of this motion is to avoid consideration of a question which is irrelevant or otherwise improper. Such an objection may be made to any principal motion, but only when it is first introduced and before it is debated. It can be made when another member has the floor and does not require a second. It cannot be debated or amended. The grand knight may decide the point or may put the question, “Will the council consider it?” If decided in the negative by a two-thirds vote, the matter is dismissed.

Obtain the floor Securing the right to speak, either to make or discuss a motion.

Order of the day To call for orders of the day is a privileged motion. This commonly refers to the order in which your council has decided to take up its matters of business. To change this order of business after the time for consideration of each question is once set, a vote of your council is required.

Plurality The person receiving the greatest number of votes. It is not necessarily the majority, although it may be.

Point of order An incidental motion made to correct disorder in the proceeding or in the deportment of members. Any member may obtain the floor and say, “I rise to a point of order.” The member then states the point, and the grand knight decides whether it is well-taken. It does not require a second and cannot be debated, except that the grand knight may ask for the opinions of others before giving his decision. It cannot be amended, but it may be reconsidered.

Previous question To “move the previous question” is a subsidiary motion. Its object is to bring the question which is under consideration before your council for vote without further debate. It cannot be debated and cannot be amended. It requires a two-thirds vote for its adoption.

Question The motion before your council is called “the question.” When members wish to close the discussion and put the matter to a vote, they may call “question-question.”

Questions of privilege This is a privileged request concerned with the health of members. The form is “Worthy grand knight, I rise to a question of privilege.” The grand knight then says, “The brother will

state his question of privilege.” The grand knight then decides on the merits of the case. Although another member may have the floor, the question is in order and requires no second. It is debatable, may be amended and may be reconsidered.

Quorum A sufficient number of members present at a meeting to transact business. This number is usually a majority unless otherwise specified in the bylaws.

Recess, Take a A privileged motion used to secure a resting period or intermission without adjourning the meeting. If the time to resume the meeting is named in the motion to take a recess, it cannot be amended or debated. However, if the time is not named, it may be debated or amended.

Reconsider “To reconsider” is a means whereby a decision once made and which later seems wrong, may be corrected or changed. It must be made by some persons who voted on the affirmative side of the question. It cannot be amended or reconsidered. If carried, the original question is again put before your council. It usually takes the order of a principal motion.

Refer to a committee This is often called to “commit” or “refer” or “recommit,” and it is a subsidiary motion. The usual form of the motion is to “refer the matter to a committee.” It is advised to name the committee in the motion if it is a standing one or if a new committee should be formed. Such a motion is debatable and may be amended by altering the committee or by giving it more specific instruction.

Reports The (preferably written) records or findings of officers or committees that are submitted for consideration and approval at a meeting of your council.

Rescind A motion to rescind is designed to nullify a former action of a council when it is too late to reconsider the action. It may come up at any meeting as a new motion and has no privileges. If sentiment is exceedingly strong, a motion may be made to “strike from the records” the rescinded action. If carried, the recorder writes across the material in the records “stricken from the records by order of the council, (date).”

Resolution A formal type of principal motion.

Robert’s Rules of Order A manual of rules of order for deliberative assemblies. This is a standard and authoritative source. It should be consulted regarding many detailed points.

Second An indication that at least a second person approves of the motion.

Simple motion A rather simple type of principal motion.

Special committee A committee chosen for some particular purpose. When its object is attained, the special committee is usually discontinued automatically. However, when a special committee has not completed its work, it may ask permission of the council to “sit again.”

Standing committee A committee appointed for a long period of time, often a year. Such committees are frequently named in the bylaws.

Standing vote A method of voting whereby members indicate their choice by standing.

Suspend the rules An incidental motion used in urgent cases to save time. It is usually resorted to only by unanimous consent. It cannot be amended or reconsidered.

Unanimous ballot A ballot cast by the recorder for a candidate when he is the only person nominated for a particular office and no one objects to him for that office. The usual form is for the grand knight to instruct the recorder to “cast a unanimous ballot” for the candidate being considered for the certain office. However, if anyone objects, the balloting must be done in the usual way.

Unfinished business Motions that have not yet been decided and have been left over from preceding meetings.

Withdraw a motion An incidental motion permitting a previous motion to be withdrawn. It is not debatable and cannot be amended, but may be reconsidered. However, a motion may be withdrawn by the person who made it with the consent of the person who seconded it and the grand knight if done before decision or amendment.

Yeas and nays A method of voting sometimes called voting by roll call.

