

Rules Applicable to the Conduct of the DPCA Meeting on April 22, 2023

(For immediate consideration by the DPCA Voting Body)

1. Motions to Adopt Proposed Items

Upon confirmation by the presiding officer that the meeting has arrived at a point designated in the agenda for consideration of an individual proposed item (i.e., the 2024 Delegate Selection Plan, 2023 Global Meeting location/date, etc.), the main motion pending before the DPCA Voting Body shall be the adoption of the version of the respective item as distributed to all DPCA Members by Candice Kerestan via Mobilize and NationBuilder on April 20, 2023.

2. Debate Rules

2.1 Overall Time Limit for Debate on Main Motion

The time taken to debate a main motion, including all time spent debating any subsidiary motions, is limited to 60 minutes for the 2024 Delegate Selection Plan and 20 minutes for all other main motions. For the avoidance of doubt, this limitation concerns time taken in “debate”. Time taken to address other matters (such as tabulating votes and dealing with privileged and incidental motions) shall not count towards this limit.

2.2 Terminal Motions Subject to Time Limit on Debate of Main Motion

For the avoidance of doubt, debate on any motion made for the purpose of disposing of any pending motions (e.g., motion to refer, motion to postpone, etc., each being a “terminal motion”) remains subject to the overall time limit imposed for debate on the main motion.

Upon expiry of such time limit, any such pending terminal motion becomes undebatable and subject to vote under Section 2.3.

2.3 Vote on the Merits in the Absence of Any Successful Terminal Motion

Upon expiry of the time limit to debate the main motion, a member may offer a terminal motion that is otherwise in order provided that the terminal motion is offered promptly. In the absence of making and adopting any such terminal motion, the presiding officer shall put the pending underlying motion to an immediate vote. The presiding officer shall repeat this process as necessary to resolve all pending motions whose time for debate has thus expired.

2.4 Speaking Time

Subject to the other limits set out in Section 2, individual speeches during debate on any motion shall be limited to not more than 1.5 minutes, provided that a person introducing a main motion shall be limited to not more than 1.5 (one and one-half) minutes of speaking time when making the introduction.

2.5 The Body Retains the Freedom to Extend Debate

For the avoidance of doubt, the limits set out in Section 2 can be extended as desired through the adoption of a motion to extend debate that is otherwise in order. A motion to extend debate requires a two-thirds majority.

3. Debate Procedures: A Reminder of Principles from Robert's Rules of Order 12th (RRO)

3.1 On Motions Generally

The meeting addresses issues of substance and procedure through the use of “motions.” A main motion is the mechanism used to bring an item of business to the assembly (RRO§6:1). For example, when the meeting is debating the 2024 Delegate Selection Plan, the main motion under consideration is the adoption of the 2024 Delegate Selection Plan by the DPCA Voting Body.

While a main motion is pending, members might choose to offer some other motion that is not a main motion. RRO defines more than 90 types of motions that can be made (depending upon the circumstances), and it places each of these motions into different categories. In practice, relatively few of these are used by the DPCA Voting Body.

Secondary motions are meant to help the assembly to deal with and find a disposition for the main motion (RRO§6:3). Secondary motions include motions to amend (which serve to revise the main motion), motions to refer (to a committee or other body), and motions to postpone (to a defined future meeting or indefinitely). Motions to amend are meant to address the substance of the main motion, while the others are mainly procedural.

Privileged motions do not relate to the business under discussion. Instead, these address “special matters of immediate and overriding importance” which must be addressed without delay (RRO§6:11). These include call for orders of the day (reminding the presiding officer to stay within the agenda), motions to recess (which provide a temporary break in the meeting), motions to adjourn (which bring the meeting to an end). These also include various questions of privilege, such as a point of parliamentary inquiry (which can, for example, be used to ask the presiding officer to clarify the nature of the current motion under discussion if matters have become confusing).

Incidental motions address a variety of procedural matters. The most common is the point of order (raising an objection that rules governing the conduct of the assembly have been violated). Points of order should be used with care. The member raising a point of order should state clearly the nature of the rule that they allege has been violated. A point of order must not be used to address the merits of a pending motion.

Finally, motions that bring a question again before the assembly (e.g, motion to discharge a committee, motion to reconsider) are rare in DPCA Meetings.

3.2 Privileged Motions and Any Other Urgent Motions that Take Priority

Any DPCA Member wishing to make a privileged motion or other priority motion should make this reasonably clear when raising his/her/their hand. For example:

** hand up (URGENT)

** hand up (Point of Order)

Any DPCA Voting Member with a parliamentary inquiry (e.g., a question concerning whether a specific motion is presently in order) may address this to the acting parliamentarian who will use reasonable efforts to respond.

3.3 Alternating Speeches FOR and AGAINST

During debate on a motion, the presiding officer shall use reasonable efforts to call upon speakers so that speeches alternate between those in favor and those opposed to the motion. To facilitate this, members who wish to speak should indicate which position they will take by typing in the chat window accordingly. For example:

** hand up (Pro)

** hand up (Con)

3.4 Different Speakers; Opening Speeches

During debate on a motion, the presiding officer shall use reasonable efforts to call only once upon a member to speak until no other members wishing to speak on the same side of the issue have been able to do so. The presiding officer shall use reasonable efforts to call first upon the principal sponsor/author of the respective proposed item to make the first speech in support of it.

3.5 Recognition of Speakers

Only persons who are members of an assembly have the right to be recognized and to address the assembly. (Consider, for example, meetings of a City Council where only Council members have the right to speak and others attending must be invited to speak by the Council members.) Therefore, only DPCA Members have the right to ask to be recognized during the meeting.