



CANADIAN  
UNITARIAN  
COUNCIL

CONSEIL  
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DU CANADA

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## Canadian Unitarian Council Annual Meeting Rules of Procedure

### Speakers

Delegates may speak to any motion. Visitors who are members of member societies shall have the privilege of the floor after all delegates have had the opportunity to speak. Other visitors shall have the privilege of the floor at the discretion of the chair. Members of the Board of Trustees who are not delegates and Ministers currently serving or retired from member societies shall have the privilege of the floor on the same terms as a delegate.

### To Speak

A person desiring to speak shall address the chair giving his or her name and society affiliation, and be duly recognized before speaking.

A person may speak for not more than three minutes at any one time unless this time limit is extended by two-thirds consent of the delegates present and voting. No one may speak twice on a particular question unless all delegates who wish to speak on that question have had the opportunity to do so except for the mover of a motion who may also speak at the close of debate.

### Motions

Motions shall be stated orally before action or debate on the motion shall take place. Only accredited delegates may introduce motions, and all motions must bear the name of the delegate and that of the society he or she represents. Motions for which previous notice is required are not in order unless they have been mentioned in the notice of the meeting. There is an exception to this notice rule for a motion introducing an Urgent Resolution. An Urgent Resolution may be proposed by any of the same five groups that may propose an ordinary resolution. Proposers of an Urgent Resolution shall submit their motion to the Executive Director as soon as possible, but no later than 6 p.m. seven days before the AGM is to occur.

### Amendments

Any suggested amendments must be received by the Proposers by February 28 to be considered. No substantive amendments\* will be entertained after this date. For any other amendment, it is strongly encouraged that such amendment first be presented at the Mini-Plenary on the CUC Annual Meeting Resolutions, held prior to the AGM.



The following are examples of amendments that may be used as alternatives to defeating a motion. All these motions must be seconded and are not in order when another has the floor.  
To:

- Postpone indefinitely: this motion is debatable and requires a majority vote.
- Postpone to a certain time: this motion is debatable and requires a majority vote. This motion can be amended.
- Lay on the table: this is the terminology that should be used instead of moving to “table” a motion. A motion to lay on the table is usually used with the intent that the delay is short term although there is no set time as to when a motion is made that it be “Taken from the table.” A motion to lay on the table has its risks as it goes directly to a vote with no discussion.
- Take from the table: this motion is not debatable and goes directly to a vote; it also requires a majority vote.

### Limit on Debate

Not more than 20 minutes shall be allowed for debate on any given motion, except by two-thirds consent of the delegates present and voting, when debate on such a motion may be extended for a further period or periods of fifteen minutes.

### Voting

Only accredited delegates shall be entitled to vote, and their voting cards must be displayed at the time of voting.

### Other Rules of Procedure

Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised (11th edition), shall apply.

- \*Substantive amendments are those which significantly alter the scope or intent of the proposed resolution. A *substantive motion* is one that has a significant meaning outside of procedural matters. It usually expresses an opinion, directs or suggests an action, or establishes policy, or creates a subordinate body or appoints individuals to one. When a substantive motion has been distributed in advance of the meeting to delegates, the extent to which it can be amended at the meeting is limited. An amendment that would be substantive not be in order, and should be formally ruled “Out of Order” by the Chair. After the proposed wording has been distributed in advance, it cannot be amended in such a way as to introduce an unrelated material question that was not part of the conceptual thrust that had been distributed.

There is no precise line between a substantive and a non-substantive amendment. The decision falls to the Chair in each instance, subject, of course, to appeal and decision by the assembly.

- **Point of Privilege:** Pertains to noise, personal comfort, etc. - may interrupt only if necessary!
- **Parliamentary Inquiry:** Inquire as to the correct motion - to accomplish a desired result, or raise a point of order



- **Point of Information:** Generally applies to information desired from the speaker: "I should like to ask the (speaker) a question."
- **Orders of the Day (Agenda):** A call to adhere to the agenda (a deviation from the agenda requires Suspending the Rules)
- **Point of Order:** Infraction of the rules, or improper decorum in speaking. Must be raised immediately after the error is made
- **Main Motion:** Brings new business (the next item on the agenda) before the assembly
- **Divide the Question:** Divides a motion into two or more separate motions (must be able to stand on their own)
- **Consider by Paragraph:** Adoption of paper is held until all paragraphs are debated and amended and entire paper is satisfactory; after all paragraphs are considered, the entire paper is then open to amendment, and paragraphs may be further amended. Any Preamble can not be considered until debate on the body of the paper has ceased.
- **Amend:** Inserting or striking out words or paragraphs, or substituting whole paragraphs or resolutions
- **Withdraw/Modify Motion:** Applies only after question is stated; mover can accept an amendment without obtaining the floor
- **Commit /Refer/Recommit to Committee:** State the committee to receive the question or resolution; if no committee exists include size of committee desired and method of selecting the members (election or appointment).
- **Extend Debate:** Applies only to the immediately pending question; extends until a certain time or for a certain period of time
- **Limit Debate:** Closing debate at a certain time, or limiting to a certain period of time
- **Postpone to a Certain Time:** State the time the motion or agenda item will be resumed
- **Object to Consideration:** Objection must be stated before discussion or another motion is stated
- **Lay on the Table:** Temporarily suspends further consideration/action on pending question; may be made after motion to close debate has carried or is pending
- **Take from the Table:** Resumes consideration of item previously "laid on the table" - state the motion to take from the table
- **Reconsider:** Can be made only by one on the prevailing side who has changed position or view
- **Postpone Indefinitely:** Kills the question/resolution for this session - exception: the motion to reconsider can be made this session
- **Previous Question:** Closes debate if successful - may be moved to "Close Debate" if preferred
- **Informal Consideration:** Move that the assembly go into "Committee of the Whole" - informal debate as if in committee; this committee may limit number or length of speeches or close debate by other means by a 2/3 vote. All votes, however, are formal.
- **Appeal Decision of the Chair:** Appeal for the assembly to decide - must be made before other business is resumed; NOT debatable if relates to decorum, violation of rules or order of business
- **Suspend the Rules:** Allows a violation of the assembly's own rules (except Constitution); the object of the suspension must be specified