

Decision Making: Roberts Rules of Order Process (adapted to the needs of small boards)

- When a topic comes up on the agenda, the person identified on the agenda will give **introductory remarks, including context, history, discussion** to date on this topic, etc.
- When there are multiple options possible, **list each out on a separate flip chart** page and to pros/cons of each in writing
- A member of the board can make a **main motion** to take a specific action by saying that “I move that...” and the content of their proposed action or recommendation. (Or, if the direction of the conversation is clear, the Chair can call for a motion from a board member “to that effect”. Common practice is that the Chair should generally not make a motion, though it is usually not forbidden.)
- Another member of the board can then **second the motion**, indicating that they believe the motion is worthy of discussion
- If there is no second to the motion, the motion is deemed to have **“died for lack of a second”** and it is not discussed
- If a proposed motion comes from a committee of the board, or a task force/ work group charged by the board to come up with recommended action, it can **be treated as a seconded motion from that group** if two or more board members served in that committee/group. Discussion can ensue without a motion in the board meeting
- Once the motion is made and seconded, the group **discusses the motion**
- **Amendments can be made to the motion** by someone making a new motion that is seconded and agreed to by the group (for example, if the original motion is to implement a new policy on a certain date, but during discussion the group agrees that a later date is preferable, a new seconded motion would amend the original motion with the new date)
- A board member, or the Chair, can **call the question**, meaning they think there has been adequate discussion so the vote should occur (this is to be used with proper attention to the group process, and is not meant to cut off debate prematurely)
- Motions can be **postponed definitely** (until the next meeting, for example) or **postponed indefinitely** (put aside permanently)
- **Tabling a main motion** doesn’t “kill” it; it is used to deal with something more urgent than the motion but the main motion will come back for consideration in the same meeting