**The Life of a Motion**

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The Following is a general “life story” of a motion

**I. A motion is made.** Inorder to be considered a motion must be read aloud to the MCANA.

**II. The motion is seconded.** Each motion must have a second. A second is defined asa voting member of the MCANA saying, “Yes, we need to discuss and/or vote on this.” It does not necessarily indicate that the person seconding the motion is in favor of it. The second may be listed on the motion form when it is given to the Chair or Secretary. If, when the Chair or Secretary reads the motion there is not a second on the form, the Chair will “call” (or ask) for a second. Once a motion is seconded, it is said to be “on the floor” or “on the table.”This means that the MCANA must either approve, defeat, table or refer the motion before it moves on to the next motion or item of business. If a motion is not seconded, it will not be considered by the MCANA.

**III. The intent is read.** The intent is read after a second is obtained

**IV. What happens after a motion is “taken up” by the MCANA?** There are a number of things that can happen to a motion once it becomes the current item of business.

1. **A motion may be “discussed.”** After obtaining a second and having the intent read, members may discuss the merits of a motion. The Chair may limit such “debate” on a motion in the interest of time. It should be remembered that the debate section of the meeting is not a “sharing” meeting and is not a chance for everyone to talk.
2. **A motion may be “passed.”** After being seconded, having the intent read and being discussed, a motion may be “passed.” This means that the MCANA votes in favor ofthe motion. The Chair will indicate the number of votes needed to pass a motion.
3. **A motion may be “withdrawn”** by the person who made it at any time up until the actual voting begins.
4. **A motion may be “defeated.”** After a motion is seconded, the intent is read, and it is discussed, a motion may be “voted down.” This means that it fails to pass and the action it recommends is not taken. Unless there is a motion to reconsider, it becomes a dead issue for the rest of that business meeting.
5. **A motion may be “Ruled Out Of Order” if it is improper.**  A motion for all the members of the MCANA to relapse together or a motion to endorse Coca-Cola could be thrown out as being out of order since it goes against some of our basic concepts. A motion may also be thrown out if it does nothing (moot), if it is not worded correctly, or if it is made to waste the time of the MCANA (frivolous and dilatory). It is very important that the Chair clearly give the reasons for the ruling. If the MCANA feels that a ruling by the Chair is not correct, it may override the Chair by an established majority vote (more than half of those eligible to vote).
6. **A motion may be “amended”.** An amendment is a motion that changes the original motion. For example, a motion is made to have a meeting on Saturday at 4.00 PM. Then, another motion is made to have the meeting at 3.00 PM. The second motion is considered to be an amendment to the first. A motion may be amended at any time between the time it is seconded and the time voting on the motion actually begins. Usually the person making the amendment will state that it is an amendment. A vote is held on an amendment before a vote is held on the original motion. If there is more than one amendment, they will each be voted on before the original motion. All amendments must be voted on except when the person who originally made the motion accepts an amendment as a “friendly” amendment. In this case, a vote on the amendment is not necessary and the motion is considered to be changed by this friendly amendment. In other respects, an amendment is generally treated as a motion (seconding, discussion, etc.). If an amendment changes the intent (the basic goal) of a motion, it is NOT an amendment and must be considered as a separate motion. It will be considered AFTER the current motion is handled. If there is a question about whether or not a motion is an amendment, the Chair will make a ruling. The MCANA may reverse such a ruling by an established majority vote (one more than half of those eligible to vote). If an amendment is passed, the original motion is changed and the amended form of the motion is read. Then the procedure continues. If an amendment fails, the original motion remains the same and the procedure continues. An amendment may not be amended—this would be too confusing for the MCANA.
7. **A motion may be “tabled.”** This means that the motion is put off until a later time. The Chair may table a motion or bring it “back on the table.” The MCANA may vote to table or to take a motion off the table at any time by a simple majority vote (a majority of members voting). The MCANA may override a decision by the Chair to either table or take off the table with an established majority vote (more than half of those eligible to vote). In the statement or motion tabling a motion, the time that it will come off the table will be stated. If a time is not stated, it is assumed that the motion will come back on the table at the next MCANA business meeting. All amendments should be taken care of before a motion is tabled if possible. Usually, a tabled motion is brought back up in the old business section of the next meeting. A motion can be tabled as many times as is deemed necessary.
8. **A motion may be “committed.”** This means that a motion is given to a subcommittee or person for review and recommendation. The Chair may commit a motion or it may be committed by a MCANA vote. The MCANA may override the Chair and commit or not commit a motion by an established majority vote (more than half of those eligible to vote). The statement or motion committing a motion will include a time at which the committed motion and report must be brought back to the MCANA. If a time limit is not given, it is assumed that the motion and report must be brought back by the next MCANA business meeting. The motion will generally be considered in the old business portion of the next meeting. The body or person to whom a motion is committed will report back in a clear manner. It will indicate if it is for or against a motion or if it feels that the motion needs to be changed. A recommended change can be handled as an amendment. The committed motion cannot be changed without a vote or agreement by the person making the original motion. If there is no report on a committed motion, it is assumed to be passed back to the MCANANA without comment. If more time is required for a report, the subcommittee or person must obtain MCANA approval to extend the deadline. All motions that affect policy (which is defined as what appears in this Guide) must be

**V. After a motion is passed or defeated.** Once a motion is either passed or defeated, it may be “reconsidered” only once during that meeting. Usually a motion is only reconsidered if additional information comes to light during the meeting or it is realized that the original decision was made in haste. The Chair may call for a motion to be reconsidered or may rule that a motion to reconsider will not be allowed if the Chair feels that it is “beatinga dead horse.” The MCANA may vote to override the Chair by an established majority vote (more than half of those eligible to vote).

1. **A motion to reconsider must be made by a member of the MDRSCNA who voted or spoke in the majority on the original vote.** A motion to reconsider must be passed by a 2/3 established majority vote (2/3 of those eligible to vote) of the MCANA. It should not be used to waste the time of the MCANA. Once a motion to reconsider is passed, the motion in question is again “taken up” by the MCANA and the process listed above begins again.
2. **Other definitions:** Listed below are some additional terms and procedures that may be used in a business meeting.
3. **“Out of Order”** is one of the most misused terms. As can be seen from the procedures above, things move in an orderly manner in a business meeting. If something is out of order, it simply does not follow the order in which our business is conducted. For example, if a motion is made to send $1,000 to WSC and seconded and then a motion is made to meet next Saturday, the second motion is “out of order.” The original motion must be dealt with before such a motion can be considered. The term “out of order” does not refer to the merits of something, but simply to its placement. It should not be used as a way to say that someone or something is wrong.
4. **“Point of Order”** is another misused term. This is a question about whether or not something fails within the orderly procedure of business. For example, if the issue on the floor is an H & I matter and a person starts talking about P I, then someone could ask about a “point of order” and inquire if the second line of discussion is “in or out of order.” It is not used to ask aquestion about what is going on.
5. The **“Call to a Vote”** is the way that the MCANA can shut off debate on a motion and bring an immediate vote. What actually happens is that, in effect, someone makes a motion to vote immediately. A voting member of the MCANA should say, “I call for a vote.” Such a call requires a second. After a call to a vote has been made and seconded, the Chair asks if there is any objection, and, if there is not, a vote is taken on the motion immediately. If there is an objection, the “Call to a Vote” is then voted on as a special motion. If it passes, a vote on the motion is held immediately. If it fails, debate continues. A voting member may ask a question after a call to a vote, but this is the only thing that can happen after the “call” has been approved.
6. When the Chair **“Entertains a Motion” or “Calls for a Motion,”** the Chair is asking for someone to make a motion. There may be cases where the Chair sees a need for a motion, but the Chair is not allowed to make motions. The Chair then “prods” the MCANA to get a motion going. The Chair may also use this type of statement to get other things going such as calling for a second or calling for debate.
7. On occasion, the MCANA may need to **“Suspend the Rules.”** This means that wetemporarily do not use some specific part or all of the Rules of Order. For example, if a member of the MCANA, who is going to bring up a very important motion, is suddenly called away from the meeting, the MDRSCNA could temporarily stop what it was doing (even debating another motion) and consider that member’s motion. The Chair may rule that the Rules of Order need to be suspended, and, if there is no objection, go ahead with the important item of business. If there is an objection, a vote will be held on whether or not to suspend the rules (such a vote must pass by an established majority). Also, any member of the MCANA may make a motion to suspend the Rules of Order. A motion to suspend the rules requires an established majority vote (more than half of those eligible to vote).