



## **SURREY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION GENERAL MEETING STANDING RULES OF ORDER**

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### **Quorum – 150 members**

#### **1. Right to Attend and Speak**

- 1.1 All members of the STA shall have the right to attend the meeting.
- 1.2 The right to speak shall be on recognition of the chair and obtained by standing at one of the microphones. Every person shall identify himself/herself when granted recognition by the chair.
- 1.3 The chair shall, in recognizing speakers, have the right to deviate from the order in which persons seek recognition to permit a speaker or speakers to present a contrary point of view from that of those who have already spoken.
- 1.4 No speaker shall, without the consent of the meeting, speak more than once or for longer than two minutes on each motion except for the mover of the motion, who shall have the right to speak for up to three minutes. This rule shall not deprive the mover of the right to close debate.
- 1.5 Asking and answering questions shall not constitute speaking to a motion.
- 1.6 Questions and answers thereto shall be directed through the chair.
- 1.7 No member shall comment on any matter immediately before moving a motion.
- 1.8 The chair will ask for a motion for the question to be put, if there has been debate on both sides of the issue, when the time on the agenda for the next item has arrived. If the meeting declines to put the question at that time, the matter automatically goes to unfinished business unless another procedural motion arises.

#### **2. Proposed Agenda**

- 2.1 The preparation of the proposed agenda shall be the responsibility of the president.
- 2.2 The proposed agenda shall contain the location of the meeting, the hours at which the meeting will convene and adjourn, and the business to be transacted.  
This agenda shall be made available to members as long as possible before convening of the meeting and shall, insofar as is possible, contain all information pertinent to the items to be included in the proposed agenda of the meeting.
- 2.3 In the event that a general meeting fails to have a quorum at the stated time, the meeting shall be reconvened fifteen minutes later. Members at the reconvened meeting shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of dealing with the business on the agenda and no other business. (See By-Law 11.05)
- 2.4 The proposed agenda shall provide opportunities for members to ask questions concerning the work of the Association.
- 2.5 A written report from each standing or Ad Hoc committee shall be available at the Annual General Meeting.
- 2.6 When there is more than one candidate for any full-time office position of the Association, an opportunity for a speech of up to two minutes will be provided for each candidate before any elections take place. (See 12.4)
- 2.7 When candidates for Local Representative to the BCTF who have not had an opportunity to address the meeting as part of the earlier speeches will be offered an opportunity to address the meeting for up to one minute. (See 12.6)

**3. Motion to Adopt Agenda**

*Debatable, amendable, but cannot be referred, postponed or tabled.*

- 3.1 The agenda shall be circulated to the meeting. The chair shall bring to the attention of the meeting any changes to the proposed agenda that have originated with the Executive Committee.
- 3.2 Subject to the provisions of these rules, the constitution and by-laws, and the policies and procedures of the Association, when a motion to adopt the agenda is made, the meeting can, by motions requiring simple majorities, add items to, delete items from, or rearrange the order of items on the proposed agenda. This applies only to meetings that have a quorum of at least 150 members.

**4. Motions to Amend the Agenda (subsequent to its adoption)**

*Debatable, amendable, but cannot be referred, postponed or tabled, require a two-thirds majority.*

- 4.1 Once the proposed agenda has been adopted, it becomes the property of the meeting. Items on it may therefore not be withdrawn without the unanimous consent of the voting members present. However, any change to the agenda, once it has been adopted, can be made by motion, but any such motion shall require a two-thirds or larger majority to pass. This applies only to meetings that have a quorum of at least 150 members.

**5. Motion to Adopt Minutes**

*Not debatable, amendable as to errors in fact only.*

- 5.1 There shall be a motion to adopt the minutes of the previous meeting. These minutes shall have been circulated to staff representatives, committee chairpersons, members of the Executive Committee and be available at the next general meeting.
- 5.2 A summary of decisions of each general meeting of the Association shall be published in a President's Perspective.

**6. Main Motions**

*Debatable, amendable, may be referred, tabled, postponed or reconsidered.*

- 6.1 A main motion is defined as a motion that introduces a substantive question as a new subject.
- 6.2 Main motions must be moved and seconded. It shall be the primary responsibility of the sponsor of a main motion to move and second the motion, but it shall be the right of any member to move or second any main motion.
- 6.3 Every effort will be made to provide written copies of motions which are not printed on the agenda either on paper or overhead projections.
- 6.4 Special resolutions shall be defined as motions that seek to amend the constitution and by-laws of the Association and other motions so defined in the Societies Act. Such special resolutions shall require a two thirds majority vote to pass.
- 6.5 The Societies Act requires notice of motion of any special resolution. This notice shall be given at any STARA or general meeting prior to the meeting at which it is being considered and shall contain the words "with or without amendment" to clarify to propose amendments to the material as circulated.

## 7. Secondary Motions

(A secondary motion is any motion that is in order when a main motion is being debated.)

7.1 A secondary motion can be made and considered while a main motion is pending. After a secondary motion has been made and has been admitted by the chair as in order it must be acted on or disposed of before direct consideration of the main question can be continued. Secondary motions that will be accepted by the chair are those listed in rule 7.2.

7.2.i Subsidiary motions (A subsidiary motion is intended to assist a meeting in treating or disposing of a main motion.) *No subsidiary motion, other than an amendment, shall be in order until after the chair is satisfied that an opportunity has been given to present the affirmative and negative points of view.*

7.2.i. (a) Postpone main motion indefinitely.

*Debatable (including debate on the main motion). Not amendable and may be reconsidered only if the motion to postpone indefinitely is passed.*

A motion to postpone indefinitely allows the meeting the privilege of declining to take a position on a main motion. Its adoption kills the main motion and avoids a direct vote on the question.

7.2.i. (b) Amend.

*Debatable, amendable\*, may be referred, postponed or tabled.*

An amendment is a motion to change, to add words to, or to omit words from, an original motion.

The change is usually to clarify or improve the wording of the original motion and must not be contrary to the intent of that motion.

*\*Motions for amendments to amendments of main motions are in order but are not themselves amendable.*

7.2.i. (c) Refer to main motion with or without amendment.

*Debatable (only as to the propriety or advisability of referral), amendable (only as to instructions contained in the referral motion).*

A motion to refer must indicate the body to which the motion is to be referred, may empower action, or may require a report to a subsequent annual general meeting, to the Executive Committee, or to the Representative Assembly (STARA).

7.2.i. (d) Postpone main motion to a certain time.

*Debatable (only as the appropriateness of postponement), amendable (only as to time). Requires a two-thirds or larger majority vote because it has the effect of amending the agenda. Postponement can be to a later time in the same session or to a later session of the meeting.*

7.2.i. (e) Previous question (that the question be put).

*Not debatable, not amendable, requires a two-thirds majority.*

This motion may be moved only by a member who has been recognized by the chair. After the motion has been seconded, it must be voted on immediately. If it passes, all previous commitments to allow persons to speak are eliminated.

The chair will ask for a motion that the question be put if there has been debate on both sides of the issue, when the time on the agenda for the next item has arrived. If the assembly declines to put the question at that time, the matter automatically goes to unfinished business unless another procedural motion arises.

7.2.i. (f) Table.

*Not debatable, not amendable, requires a majority vote.*

A motion to table has the effect of delaying action on a main motion. If the motion is not lifted from the table later (see rule 8.1), the effect of the motion to table is to prevent action from being taken on the main motion.

7.2.ii Privileged motions (A privileged motion does not relate directly to the pending business, but has to do with special matters that, without debate, should be allowed to interrupt the consideration of anything else.)

7.2.ii. (a) Call for orders of the day.

*May interrupt speaker, not debatable, not amendable.*

If the adopted agenda is not being followed or if there is a deviation from the agenda, a single member can require that the agenda be followed.

A call for orders of the day must receive immediate attention from the chair. The ruling of the chair shall be subject to challenge.

7.2.ii. (b) Question of privilege (point of privilege).

*May interrupt speaker, seconder is required if a formal motion is made.*

The question or point must concern the welfare, reputation, right, privilege or physical comfort of a member, a group of members or the STA as a whole. The chair shall rule immediately on the validity of the point. The ruling of the chair shall be subject to challenge.

7.2.ii. (c) Recess.

*May not interrupt speaker, not debatable, amendable as to length of recess, cannot be reconsidered.*

A recess is a short intermission in the meeting's proceedings, after which business will immediately be resumed at exactly the point where it was interrupted. The privileged motion to recess is a motion that a recess begin immediately, made while another question is pending.

A motion to recess that is made when no question is pending is a main motion and follows the normal rules for handling a main motion. This applies whether the recess is to begin immediately or at a future time.

7.2.ii. (d) Adjourn.

*May not interrupt speaker, not debatable, not amendable, cannot be reconsidered. A motion to adjourn means to close the meeting.*

The privileged motion to adjourn can be made only where provision for another meeting or session exists.

7.2.iii Incidental motions (Incidental motions are incidental to the motions or matters out of which they arise. With few exceptions, they are related to the main question in such a way that they must be decided immediately, before business can proceed.)

7.2.iii. (a) Point of order.

*May interrupt speaker.*

The point must concern an alleged breach of standing rules and must receive an immediate ruling from the chair. The ruling shall be subject to challenge.

7.2.iii. (b) Appeal (challenge the chair).

*Debatable by challenger and chair only.*

An appeal or challenge of the chair is in order when another has the floor, but the challenge must be made at the time of the ruling. If any debate of business has intervened, it is too late to appeal. If any member is dissatisfied with any ruling of the chair, the ruling may be challenged. A motion to sustain the chair shall take precedence over all other business. When a ruling of the chair is challenged by a member, all other business shall be suspended. The member making the challenge shall have the right to present argument to the meeting as to why the ruling is in error. The chair shall have the right to defend the ruling. The vote on the motion to sustain the chair shall follow immediately without further debate.

7.2.iii. (c) Suspend the standing rules.

*May not interrupt speaker, not debatable, not amendable, cannot be reconsidered.*

A motion to suspend the standing rules shall require a two-thirds majority vote. Standing rules may be suspended provided that the suspension is not contrary to the constitution and by-laws. This applies only to meetings that have a quorum of at least 150 members.

7.2.iii. (d) Objection to the consideration of the question.

*Not debatable, not amendable, two-thirds vote against consideration is required.*

Can be reconsidered only if objection is sustained. A motion to object to the consideration of the question can be made when another member has been assigned the floor, but only if debate has not begun or a subsidiary motion has not been accepted by the chair.

7.2.iii. (e) Division of a question (Seriatim).

*May not interrupt speaker, not debatable, amendable, may not be reconsidered.*

When a motion relating to a single subject contains several parts each of which is capable of standing as separate proposition, the parts can be separated to be considered and voted on as if they were distinct questions. Such a procedure is consideration seriatim. When the decision has been made to consider a question seriatim, each part of the motion shall be separate and any procedural motion shall be applied only to the part being debated.

7.2.iii. (f) Requests and inquiries.

Note: These types of inquiry are responded to by the chair, or by a member at the direction of the chair; the other requests can be granted only by the meeting.

- (1) Parliamentary Inquiry—a request for the chair's opinion—not involving a ruling—on a matter of parliamentary procedure as it relates to the business at hand.
- (2) Point of Information—a question about facts affecting the business at hand—directed to the chair or, through the chair, to a member.

**8. Meeting**

The following three motions will be the only ones accepted by the chair to bring a question again before the meeting.

8.1 Take from the table.

*Not debatable, not amendable, cannot be reconsidered.*

A motion to take from the table must be passed before any motion that has been tabled can be reconsidered. Because the motion will have the effect of amending the agenda, it shall require a two-thirds or larger majority vote to pass. If passed, the motion shall be dealt with at the earliest opportunity.

8.2 Rescind something previously adopted.

*Debatable (including discussion on the motion to be rescinded or amended). Amendable. Two-thirds or larger majority vote required because the effect is to amend the agenda. Negative votes only can be reconsidered.*

A motion to rescind is a proposal to cancel or annul an earlier decision. A motion to rescind, if passed, cancels the earlier motion and makes it possible for a new motion to be placed before the meeting

8.3 Reconsider

*Debatable (provided the motion to be reconsidered is debatable, in which case debate may also go into the original motion). Not amendable. Cannot be reconsidered. Two-thirds or larger majority vote required because the effect is to amend the agenda.*

A motion to reconsider has the following unique characteristics:

- (a) It can be made only by a member who voted with the prevailing side - i.e., voted in favor if the motion involved was adopted, or voted contrary if the motion was defeated.
- (b) The motion can be made and seconded at times when it is not in order for it to come before the meeting for debate or vote. In such a case it can be taken up later, even after it would be too late to move it in the first place.
- (c) A motion to reconsider is in order at any time, even after the meeting has voted to adjourn provided that the mover of the motion has addressed the chair before the chair declared the meeting adjourned.

**9. Calling the question**

- 9.1 The chair will ask for a motion for the question to be put if there has been debate on both sides of the issue, when the time on the agenda for the next item has arrived. If the meeting declines to put the question at that time, the matter

automatically goes to unfinished business unless another procedural motion arises.

## **10. Committee of the Whole**

- 10.1 The meeting may, when considering any item on the agenda, resolve itself into a committee of the whole. The procedure shall normally be used for either of two reasons:
- (1) The topic is sufficiently complex to warrant interim decisions that will become binding only after passage of a final composite resolution recommended to the meeting by the committee of the whole.
  - (2) The matter is a sensitive one and it is the opinion of the meeting that only STA members should be in attendance.
- 10.2 The procedure shall be for members to move and second that the meeting resolve itself into a committee of the whole, naming the chairperson of the committee. After discussion, during which the standing rules may be waived, the committee of the whole shall move to rise and report to the meeting.
- 10.3 A motion that repeats the words of the report of the committee shall then be placed before the meeting. Only the motion carried by the meeting in regular session shall appear in the minutes.

## **11. Voting**

- 11.1 Every member of the STA in good standing, including any member on leave of absence, is entitled to vote at a general meeting.
- 11.2 Call for a count.
- When a member considers the chair to have erred in discerning the result of a vote, the member may call for a count.
- 11.3 All counts of votes shall be taken by scrutineers assigned to clearly defined areas

## **12. Election of Officers and Committees Members**

- 12.1 Election of Officers shall be conducted by secret ballot.
- 12.2 The election shall be conducted according to 9.02.A of the Constitution and Bylaws, followed by the election of the Resolutions Committee members.
- 12.3 Nominations for officers shall be announced to the meeting. Further nominations may be made from the floor.
- 12.4 When there is more than one candidate for any full time office position of the Association, an opportunity for a speech of up to two minutes will be provided for each candidate before any elections occur. (See 2.6)
- 12.5 After the final call for nomination, all nominees shall be introduced at the close of nominations, and all candidates for an office shall be introduced as a group immediately preceding the balloting for that office.
- 12.6 Candidates for Local Representative to the BCTF who have not had an opportunity to address the meeting as part of the earlier speeches will be offered an opportunity to address the meeting for up to one minute. (See 2.7)
- 12.7 A ballot for election shall be valid if marked for at least one candidate, but shall not be valid if marked for more candidates than the number of vacancies to be filled.

- 12.8 Should the validity of any ballot be questioned by any person assigned to count the ballots, it shall be the sole responsibility of the chairperson of the scrutineers to decide whether or not that ballot is valid.
- 12.9 On the completion of each ballot the chairperson of the scrutineers shall report to the meeting the number of votes received by each candidate, without attaching names to the numbers. Following an indecisive ballot, and before each candidate is identified with his/her vote count, the candidate receiving the fewest votes shall be dropped from the ballot. At this time the meeting may at its discretion order the dropping of additional candidates from the next ballot. If at the time of balloting for a particular office there is a sole nominee for that office, that person shall be declared elected.
- 12.10 No candidate shall be declared elected unless he/she receives more than 50 per cent of the number of valid ballots cast. Blank ballots and any ballots declared by the chairperson of the scrutineers to be spoiled, pursuant to rule 12.8, shall not be valid ballots. If at the time of balloting for a particular office there is a sole nominee for that office, that person shall be declared elected.
- 12.11 Candidates defeated in an election for any office shall be deemed to have been nominated for the office next to be filled. At any time prior to the conducting of a ballot any candidate may, by giving notice to the meeting, withdraw from the contest.
- 12.12 Ballots from elections will be automatically destroyed unless there is a motion to retain them.

**13. Motion to Amend Standing Rules**

*Debatable, amendable; but cannot be referred, postponed or tabled.*

- 13.1 A motion to amend the Standing Rules of Order shall require a two-thirds majority.

**14. Matters Not Covered in Standing Rules**

- 14.1 When the chair is required to make a ruling not covered by these rules, guidance shall be sought from Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

**These Standing Rules were amended by the General Membership in June 2023, January 2025.**