

**SouthWest Iowa Narcotics Anonymous**  
**AREA SERVICE COMMITTEE**  
**GUIDELINES**

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**SWINA ASC APPROVED**

**March 2009**

**REVISED**

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## 1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

SWINA was formed in May 1985 by combining the Council Bluffs, Glenwood, Red Oak and Creston Areas of the Iowa Region of Narcotics Anonymous. The Areas joined together so the message could be carried to the small rural communities of Southwest Iowa. By uniting, the stronger groups were able to support and help the weaker groups. In June 1985 the SWINA ASC set its boundaries to include: Harrison, Pottawattamie, Cass, Adair, Montgomery, Mills, Adams, Union, Page, Taylor, Fremont, and Ringgold Counties. In April 1986 Shelby County was added; and in November of the same year Audubon and Guthrie Counties were included also. In July of 1995 Carroll County groups started to attend the ASC. This brought the total to the present count of 16 counties that SWINA serves.

The guidelines that follow are standards that will allow the ASC to function in a manner that is fair, reasonable, and equitable. It will allow the committee to reach the addict who still suffers without damaging controversy or confusion. These guidelines are suggested only; however, keep in mind that they were drawn up with the input and wisdom of group conscience. Consequently, these guidelines are to be followed by the ASC.

## 2. ABBREVIATIONS

- 1) ASC..... Area Service Committee
- 2) XC..... Executive Committee
- 3) IRSC.....Iowa Regional Service Committee
- 4) GSR..... Group Service Representative
- 5) GSRA..... Alternate Group Service Representative
- 6) RD..... Regional Delegate
- 7) RDA..... Regional Delegate Alternate
- 8) RCM..... Regional Committee Member
- 9) RCMA..... Alternate Regional Committee Member
- 10) ENNA..... Eastern Nebraska N.A.(Omaha, Nebraska)
- 11) WSC..... World Service Conference
- 12) IRSCM..... Iowa Regional Service Committee Meeting
- 13) WSO..... World Service Office
- 14) RSO..... Regional Service Office
- 15) CAR..... Conference Agenda Report
- 16) CAT..... Conference Agenda Track
- 17) PR..... .Public Relations

## 3. AGENDA FOR ASC

- 1) Open with a moment of silence followed by the Serenity Prayer:
- 2) Readings of:
  - a) Service Motivation: (*Addendum 2*)
  - b) The Twelve Traditions: (*Addendum 3*)
  - c) The Twelve Concepts: (*Addendum 4*)
- 3) Roll Call: XC, Sub-Committee officers/ Coordinators, GSR & GSR Alt, Visitors
- 4) Corrections and approval of the last ASC minutes:
- 5) Reports:
  - a) Executive Committee:
  - b) Groups:
- 6) Sub-Committee (Reports and Services)
- 7) Financial Requests:
- 8) Break
- 9) Open with moment of silence followed by serenity prayer
- 10) Open Forum: (15 minutes) (Solution-based discussion on issues raised)
- 11) **Unfinished Service:**
  - a) ...
- 12) **Current Service**
  - a) ...
- 13) Announcements:
- 14) Flood Meeting Location:
- 15) 7th Tradition:
- 16) Next ASC:
- 17) Adjournment (Just For Today, Gratitude Prayer, 3<sup>rd</sup> Step Prayer or Serenity Prayer).

#### **4. QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS.**

1. CHAIRPERSON
  - a. Suggested minimum of three years continuous clean time.
  - b. Be able to follow and understand the short form of the rules of order.
  - c. Previous service experience as a GSR and on the XC
  - d. Set up an agenda to be sent out within two weeks of business conclusion.
  - e. Co-signer on the Area Checking Account.
  - f. Is responsible to see that the ASC is reserved and set up. (Set up is to include making coffee, setting up tables & chairs, etc.)
  - g. Contact Executive Committee members absent from ASC.
2. VICE CHAIRPERSON
  - a. Suggested minimum of two years continuous clean time.
  - b. Be able to run the ASC in the Chairperson's absence.
  - c. When possible, the Vice-Chairperson will become the next Chairperson.
  - d. Previous service experience as a GSR.
  - e. Oversees subcommittees as outlined in the WSC "A Guide to Local Service"
  - f. Co-signer on Area Checking Account.
  - g. Assist the Chairperson in ASC setup.
3. SECRETARY
  - a. Suggested minimum of one-year continuous clean time.
  - b. Previous service experience as a GSR.
  - c. Keep accurate minutes of the ASC meeting & prepare for their annual addition to the archives.
  - d. Updates Area directory
  - e. Sends out minutes of ASC *at least* 14 days before the next ASC.
  - f. Is responsible to obtain the mail from the area post office box prior to each ASC meeting. If the secretary does not reside in Council Bluffs the Secretary shall designate a member of the ASC to check the mail. This member must be approved by the ASC.
  - g. Update Group registrations with the World Service Office.
4. TREASURER
  - a. Suggested minimum of three years continuous clean time.
  - b. Previous service experience as a group treasurer and/or GSR.
  - c. Keep accurate records & give written report of expenditures and contributions at each ASC meeting.
  - d. Make payments and deposits on behalf of ASC.
  - e. Give annual report at end of term.
  - f. Co-signer on Area Checking Account.
  - g. Cannot hold any other Treasurer positions without the prior approval of the ASC.
  - h. All monies will be deposited within 2 business days after each ASC.
5. RCM
  - a. Suggested minimum of three years continuous clean time.
  - b. Previous service experience as a GSR and on the XC
  - c. Represents and votes for SWINA at the IRSC, and gives a report of the same at the next ASC.
  - d. Files a written report at the IRSC on what SWINA is doing.
  - e. Maintains correspondence with the Iowa Region of NA and surrounding areas.
  - f. Stimulates discussion on issues that arise within the area offering all viewpoints.
  - g. Sits in on Subcommittee/s of their choice as well as Open Floor at the IRSC.
  - h. Attend all IRSC's & ASC's.
  - i. Attend CAR Zonal, pending ASC approval of detailed expenses prior to travel
  - j. Estimates of travel & lodging to the IRSC must be included in report prior to travel.
6. ALTERNATE RCM
  - a. Minimum of two years continuous clean time.
  - b. Previous service experience as a GSR.
  - c. When possible the Alt will become the next RCM (i.e. 2 year commitment)
  - d. Attend all ASC meetings and all IRSC's.
  - e. Carries on the RCM responsibilities when the RCM is absent.
  - f. Sits in on Subcommittee/s of their choice as well as Open Floor at the IRSC.

- g. Attend CAR Zonal, pending ASC approval of detailed expenses, to be combined with the RCM expenses.

#### 7. ALL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- a. Must have working knowledge of the Twelve Traditions.
- b. XC members should hold no more than one Executive service position at our ASC. No member should serve more than two consecutive terms in a single position.
- c. Failure to uphold the responsibilities of Executive position *will* result in removal of said position. (i.e. loss of clean time.)
- d. All XC members will be responsible for passing along guidelines of their position to their successor and remain available as a resource.
- e. Attend *all* ASC meetings. (Missing 2 consecutive meetings or frequent absences may result in loss of position, subject to group conscience.)
- f. Should not hold a GSR or Alternate GSR position at the same time as their XC position.

#### 6. GROUP REGISTRATION

1. All groups are requested to have registered with the Area before they can be recognized for a vote in matters involving the Area.
2. Groups can register with the Area by being present at two consecutive ASC meetings. At the second meeting they will have a vote.
3. Groups without ASC Representation will receive Area minutes at their place of meeting or through a designated contact.
4. Groups should be established for three months before being added to the AREA meeting list.

#### 7. VOTING

1. The following shall be voting members:
  - a. Each group with voting rights will have one vote each. That group's GSR or a duly designated member of that group shall cast the vote.
  - b. The chairperson will break a tie.
2. How to make a motion:
  - a. A motion can be made by any group voting member, Subcommittee Representative, or a XC member; however, Chairperson must step down to make said motion.
  - b. A voting member must second a motion or it is tabled until the next area. At which time if no second is made the motion dies. (This will allow GSRs a chance to run it pass their groups.)
  - c. All motions shall include an intent and must be explained by the maker.
3. Chairperson's Rule: (In case of non-productive discussion)
  - a. Chairperson's Rule is; Two alternating pros/cons, then a vote on the motion on the table.
  - b. A call for the end of debate can be made by the chairperson or any GSR with voting rights.
  - c. A simple majority vote will rule the question.
  - d. Once invoked only a GSR may participate from that time, till voting is done.
  - e. If debate is revoked an immediate vote will be taken on the original motion.
  - f. This rule can be invoked by the Chairperson of the meeting or a GSR.

#### 8. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

1. All nominations, excluding the Activities Chair, will take place during Current Service at the March ASC.
2. The person nominated should give a written report at the March ASC listing their:
  - a. Amount of clean time.
  - b. Service experience.
  - c. Willingness and time to do the job.
3. The person nominated shall be present at the March ASC for a Questions and Answer session.
4. Qualifications for all positions shall be read at the March ASC and included in the March minutes.
5. Nominations for the XC shall be brought to the March ASC.
6. Any member of the ASC can make nominations.
7. A voting member must second all nominations.
8. Elections take place as Unfinished Service at the April ASC by a simple majority vote.. Chairperson can request secret ballot vote at any time.
9. New officers will take office at the May ASC.

## **9. FINANCES**

1. Chairperson shall break any ties. When secret ballot voting takes place the Chairperson will give vote in written form to the Vice-Chairperson prior to the vote being taken. All financial requests should be made in writing along with the receipt.
2. All financial requests will be voted on in the month they are submitted.
3. The treasurer shall delegate moneys for the normal operating expenses. Normal operating expenses include but are not limited to:
  - a. Cost of minutes and agenda (postage and printing with receipts included)
  - b. PO box rent
  - c. ASC rent (Currently the ASC rent is being paid by 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition funds taken at the ASC.
  - d. Coffee for ASC
  - e. Literature for the GSR Handbooks.
  - f. The Area Post Office box rent shall be paid annually in August
4. All treasury positions shall balance the checkbook monthly and receipts shall be attached to the bank statement and will be available at each ASC.
5. The area's prudent reserve shall be based on the estimated upcoming expenses, to be determined by the area treasurer and approved by the ASC.
6. All ASC checking accounts must have two (2) signatures on each check that is written.
7. The Literature Subcommittee shall maintain a separate checking account with these guidelines.
  - a. Two signatures required to sign checks
  - b. Chairperson of subcommittee, Chairperson of ASC, Treasurer of ASC will be signers on this account.
  - c. This account will have no prudent reserve, and is used to replenish the SWINA ASC Literature Stockpile.
  - d. All money shall be deposited within two business days.
8. The Activity Subcommittee shall maintain a separate checking account with these guidelines.
  - a. Two signatures required to sign checks.
  - b. Chairperson of subcommittee, Chairperson of ASC, Treasurer of ASC will be signers on this account.
  - c. Any monies over the start-up fund will go to the ASC after bills are paid with the exception of SWINA Campout planning starting in April.
  - d. All money shall be deposited within two business days
9. Audit:
  - a. An annual audit will be done by a non-SWINA trusted servant, and approved by the ASC prior to the audit being done.
  - b. This audit will be done for **ALL** SWINA bank accounts within a 2 month time period.

## **10. SUBCOMMITTEES**

1. HOSPITALS AND INSTITUTIONS
  - a. This committee is responsible for coordination of carrying the message of recovery to addicts in Hospitals and Institutions.
  - b. It shall follow the guidelines of the WSC "Guide to Local Service" and the H&I Handbook & SWINA H&I Guidelines.
  - c. The Public Information (PI) committee should make the initial contact to the Hospital or Institution.
2. PUBLIC RELATIONS
  - a. The PR Committee will be formed by combining the H&I Sub-committee, the PI Sub-Committee, the Web-Site Coordinator and the Phone Line-Liaison.
  - b. The PR Committee will meet at least four (4) times per year in the months of June, September, December and March to discuss and submit short and long terms goals for ASC approval.
  - c. Must submit budgets for H&I and PI along with goals to be approved by the ASC on a quarterly basis.
  - d. It shall follow the guidelines of the WSC "Guide to Local Service", the PR Handbook and the SWINA Public Relations Guidelines.
3. PUBLIC INFORMATION
  - a. This committee shall follow the guidelines of the WSC "Guide to Local Service" , the PR Handbook & SWINA PI Guidelines.
3. PHONELINE LIASON
  - a. This person shall follow the guidelines as outlined in the WSC "Guide to Local Service".
  - b. This person shall attend ENNA/SWINA phonenumber subcommittee meetings held the 2nd Wednesday of each month, & submit a written report to the Public Information Committee.
  - c. Is nominated within the PI Subcommittee and approved by the ASC.

#### 4. WEBSITE COORDINATOR

- a. This person shall follow the guidelines of the WSC “

#### 5. ACTIVITIES

- a. This is **not a fund raising committee!**
- b. This committee will help the groups be responsible for conducting activities for the spiritual and social needs of the SWINA Area.
- c. Follow the guidelines as outlined in the WSC “Guide to Local Service” and the SWINA ASC Guidelines.
- ~~d.~~ All Area sponsored activities should have prior approval of ASC
- ~~e.~~ Nominations for Activities Chairperson will come from the Activities Subcommittee and be approved by the ASC.
- f. Nominations for Activities Chair will be made at the July ASC meeting for a vote at the August ASC meeting. The new Chairperson will take office after the outgoing Chair gives SWINA Campout Report at the September ASC.
- g. The Chairperson elect shall work with the Activities Chairperson during the SWINA Campout.
- h. Activities Chairperson shall have a minimum of 3 years clean time, or a must have a treasurer with 3 years clean time.
- i. If a treasurer is needed, the treasurer must have 3 years clean and be approved by the ASC.
- j. All monies collected at functions must be deposited with 2 business days after each event.
- k. The SWINA campout
  1. Labor Day Weekend every year and does not require a bid.
  2. This Function is the responsibility of the Area and the Activities Committee.
  3. Activities Committee is responsible to make arrangements for Chairpersons for campfire meeting, closing meeting, main speaker meeting & spirituality meeting when included in the weekend events.
  4. Workshops – two leaders for each workshop
    - a. Leaders may come from within the Area or outside of the area; no reimbursement
    - b. Leader suggestions solicited from ASC Groups and decision within subcommittee
    - c. Topic suggestions solicited from the ASC Groups and decision within subcommittee
  5. Speakers for both Meetings recommended to be from outside of SWINA Area; suggestions solicited from the ASC and decision with the committee
    - a. Main Speaker – to be reimbursed by Activities for travel & lodging, include registration & meal
    - b. Spirituality Speaker -- to be reimbursed by Activities for travel & lodging, include registration and meal.
- l. Function Hosting
  1. Chairperson will solicit groups to provide location, ensuring rotation of events throughout the Area.
  2. Hosting group will provide rent price, date and address, and secured a location.
  3. Upon multiple group interest, ASC will vote to determine location with recommendation from Activities Committee
  4. The Place of the function shall be secured before a bid can be accepted.
  5. The ASC will vote to approve bids. If two or more groups bid on the same function, determination will be made by the ASC vote.
  6. All functions contacts should be completed 3 months prior to the event.
- i. Responsibilities:
  1. Hosting Group:
    - a. Set up and clean up of the function.
    - b. Keeping coffee made and food ready (at functions serving food).
    - ~~e.~~ Provide people to take donations, sale raffle tickets and sell soda, with at least one person having 18 months or more clean time at all times.
  2. Activities Chairperson
    - a. Bookkeeping-unless an Activities Treasurer is elected by the ASC.
    - b. Chairperson and/or the treasurer shall be responsible to make money pickups every hour or as needed throughout the function. This responsibility can only be delegated out to other signers on the Activities checking account.
    - c. Reports to ASC
    - d. Keeps in contact with the group hosting the function. Make follow up calls the week before the activity.
    - e. Flyers for all functions.
    - f. Booking of the DJ for Dance functions.
    - g. Speakers and leaders of workshops. (Hosting Group can make suggestions.)

#### 4. LITERATURE STOCKPILE

- a. Keep the SWINA Area supplied with literature.

- b. Follow the guidelines as outlined in the WSO "Guide to Local Service". and the SWINA ASC Guidelines.
- c. To supply GSR's & XC Members with ASC handbook (formally GSR Handbook) at ASC to include the following, the WSO "Guide to Local Service" and the "12 Concepts for NA Service", SWINA Guidelines & abbreviated version Roberts Rules of Order. (Cost to ASC if members unable to obtain via web.)
- d. Provide a monthly inventory to the ASC.
- e. Provide a monthly financial report to the ASC.
- f. Two of the following signatures are required on checking account. The Literature Chairperson and two other XC members.
- g. A minimum of three year continuous clean time is required.

## **11. SUBCOMMITTEE OFFICERS**

1. The Chairperson of each subcommittee is nominated within that subcommittee and voted on at the ASC.
2. Specific clean time requirements shall be found in the specific subcommittee guidelines with the exception of Activities Chairperson and the Literature Stockpile Chairperson.
3. Each subcommittee can nominate and elect other officers as they see fit.
4. All subcommittee Chairpersons will submit a written report to the Secretary at each ASC.
5. All subcommittee Chairpersons are responsible to attend subcommittee meetings held previous to the ASC meeting.
6. When subcommittee Chairpersons cannot attend subcommittee meetings or the ASC, an appointed representative must attend. or the Vice-Chairperson of the ASC must be notified prior to the ASC.

## **12. MISCELLANEOUS**

1. It takes 2/3 majority to rescind a motion or to change Area Guidelines.
2. All designated members who are to vote for a group are requested to have a working knowledge of these guidelines.
3. Any two voting members can call a recess during an ASC meeting.
4. The ASC meeting will last a maximum of two hours. If needed a 15 minute extension will be approved by a simple majority vote, and any other extensions that is needed must receive a 2/3 majority vote in order for the ASC to continue.
5. Fiscal year shall start in May of each year. Quarters begin at the May, August, November, and February ASC meetings.
6. These Guidelines will be printed or amended as needed.

## **ADDENDUM 1**

A past calendar of events is included here as a sample. All these functions do not have to be listed or held. They are just suggestions.

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Halloween .....           | October (Even Years – Agreement with ENNA in the metro area) |
| The Gratitude Dance ..... | November   |
| New Year's Eve .....      | December (Odd Years - Agreement with ENNA in the metro area) |
| Service Learning day..... | April  |
| Anniversary Dance.....    | May  |
| Memorial Day Campout..... | May  |
| 4th Step Retreat .....    | June   |
| Luau .....                | July   |
| Basic Dance.....          | August   |
| SWINA Campout.....        | Labor Day Weekend  |

## **ADDENDUM 2 - Service Motivation** *(Reprinted from Basic Text, Narcotics Anonymous, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. p.xxvi)*

Everything that occurs in the course of NA service must be motivated by the desire to more successfully carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers. It was for this reason that we began this work. We must always remember that as individual members, groups, and service committees, we are not and should never be in competition with each other. We work separately and together to help the newcomer and for our common good. We have learned, painfully, that internal strife cripples our fellowship; it prevents us from providing the services necessary for growth.

## **ADDENDUM 3 - The Twelve Traditions** *(Reprinted from Basic Text, Narcotics Anonymous, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. p. 60-61)*

We keep what we have only with vigilance, and just as freedom for the individual comes from the Twelve Steps, so freedom for the group springs from our traditions.

As long as the ties that bind us together are stronger than those that would tear us apart, all will be well.

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on NA unity.

2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or NA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.
6. An NA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the NA name to any related facility or outside enterprise lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every NA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. NA, as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the NA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Understanding these traditions comes slowly over a period of time. We pick up information as we talk to members and visit various groups. It usually isn't until we get involved with service that someone points out that "personal recovery depends on NA unity," and that unity depends on how well we follow our traditions. The Twelve Traditions of NA are not negotiable. They are the guidelines that keep our fellowship alive and free.

By following these guidelines in our dealings with others and society at large we avoid many problems. That is not to say that our traditions eliminate all problems. We still have to face difficulties as they arise: communication problems, differences of opinion, internal controversies, and troubles with individual and groups outside the fellowship. However when we apply these principles, we avoid some of the pitfalls.

Many of our problems are like those our predecessors had to face. Their hard-won experience gave birth to the traditions and our own experience has shown that these principles are just as valid today as they were when these traditions were formulated. Our traditions protect us from the internal and external forces that could destroy us. They are truly the ties that bind us together. It is only through understanding and application that they work.

#### **ADDENDUM 4 - The Twelve Concepts** *(Reprinted from The Twelve Concepts for NA Service, p. 1-2)*

1. To fulfill our fellowship's primary purpose, the NA groups have joined together to create a structure which develops, coordinates, and maintains services on behalf of NA as a whole.
2. The final responsibility and authority for NA services rests with the NA groups.
3. The NA groups delegate to the service structure the authority necessary to fulfill the responsibilities assigned to it.
4. Effective leadership is highly valued in Narcotics Anonymous. Leadership qualities should be carefully considered when selecting trusted servants.
5. For each responsibility assigned to the service structure, a single point of decision and accountability should be clearly defined.
6. Group conscience is the spiritual means by which we invite a loving God to influence our decisions.
7. All members of a service body bear substantial responsibility for that body's decisions and should be allowed to fully participate in its decision-making processes.
8. Our service structure depends on the integrity and effectiveness of our communications.
9. All elements of our service structure have the responsibility to carefully consider all viewpoints in their decision-making processes.
10. Any member of a service body can petition that body for the redress of a personal grievance, without fear of reprisal.
11. NA funds are to be used to further our primary purpose, and must be managed responsibly.
12. In keeping with the spiritual nature of Narcotics Anonymous, our structure should always be one of service, never of government.

**ADDENDUM 5-SWINA Yearly Calendar**

SWINA ASC Calendar of Yearly Items

| <b>Month</b> | <b>Yearly Items</b>   |
|--------------|---|
| January      |   |
| February     | 1) IRSC   |
| March        | 1) PR Sub-Committee Meets,<br>2) Open Nominations for ASC Officers  |
| April        | 1) ASC Elections,<br>2) Auditors of ASC Checking Accounts to be approved  |
| May          | 1) New Officers Take Place,<br>2) Memorial Day Campout  |
| June         | 1) PR Sub-Committee Meets,<br>2) IRSC,<br>3) Audits of ASC Checking Accounts due  |
| July         | 1) Activities Chairperson Nominations,<br>2) IRCNA Convention   |
| August       | 1) SWINA Campout,<br>2) IRSC  |
| September    | 1) New Activities Chairperson takes place,<br>2) Activities Yearly Calendar due to be approved,<br>3) PR Sub-Committee Meets,<br>4) Auditor of Activities Checking Account needs approval |
| October      | 1) Halloween Dance (every other year)   |
| November     | 1) Gratitude Dance, IRSC,<br>2) Audit of Activities Checking Account Due<br>3) P.O. Box Rental Due,   |
| December     | 1) Holiday Party<br>2) New Year's Eve Dance (every other year),<br>3) PR Sub-Committee Meets  |

## **ADDENDUM 6- Robert's Rules of Order**

### **Rules of Order**

On the following pages, you will find a simple set of rules of order. They have been adapted from Robert's Rules Of Order, which in turn are based on the Rules of the U.S. House of representatives. These sample rules differ in some details from Robert's Rules Of Order; to cover such differences, your committee may wish to make a blanket decision to accept these rules as authoritative. Service Committees may want to consider adapting these rules so that they conform to those commonly used.

### **Decorum Statement**

Meetings will be conducted according to these rules of order, adapted from Robert's Rules Of Order. This time-honored system for conducting business is the clearest way yet devised for getting a maximum amount of business done in minimum amount of time, and get it done regardless of the degree of disagreement among the participants. By following these rules of order, we strive to be sure that we are making our decisions on the basis of principle, rather than personality. In keeping with that spirit, we encourage all participants to become familiar with these rules of order and conduct themselves accordingly. Once the meeting is under way, only one matter will be before the committee at any one time, and no other discussion is in order. Please respect the chairperson's right to be in control of the process of this meeting, so that you can have maximum benefit of its content.

### **Debate Limits**

Debate is the formal exchange of views on an idea. Unless otherwise specified, debate on both main motions and parliamentary motions is usually limited to two or three pro's and two or three con's (speakers for and against the motion) Speakers addressing a motion in debate; usually have two or three minutes in which to speak their mind.

### **Motions**

There are two basic types of motions. It is important to understand the difference between them. The two kinds are main motions and parliamentary motions.

### **Main Motions**

A motion is a statement of an idea by a committee member wants the committee to put into Practice. After being recognized by the chair, the member says "I move that such and such be done by (this committee, one of its committees, or a particular individual) under these terms" The person making the motion then speaks briefly about why he feels the idea is important this is called speaking to the intent of the motion.

Because the exact wording of all motions must be recorded in the minutes, the maker should Write it out whenever possible. This is especially important for complicated or long motions. Every motion requires a second – the backing of another person who also wants the idea put into practice, or who simply wants to see further discussion of the idea take place. The Chairperson will ask, after one person makes a motion, whether the motion has a second. The person seconding the motion simply raises his hand and, when recognized by the chair, says, "I second that." If nobody seconds a motion, the chair will say, " The motion dies for lack of a second." This means that the idea will not be discussed any further because there is not enough interest in it. The committee then moves onto other business.

Once a motion has been made, the chairperson may rule it out of order. A motion may be ruled out of order for any one of a number of reasons: the motion goes against the committees standing policy, clearly contradicts one of the Twelve Concepts for N.A. Service, or the Twelve Traditions, or is inappropriate at that particular point in the meeting. Robert's Rules of Order can be consulted for more specific examples of motions that are out of order at any given time. Any member of the committee who wishes to challenge a ruling made by the chairperson may appeal that ruling, as described below. If no appeal is made, the decision of the chair is upheld and the committee moves on to other business.

## **Parliamentary Motions:**

Parliamentary Motions can be best understood as “sub motions” that are made during debate on a main motion, which affect in some way the main motion. There are many more of these than space and practicality permits us to include here, but a few that seem to be the most practical are discussed here.

### **1) MOTION TO AMEND**

#### **Simply majority required Is Debatable**

This is perhaps the most commonly used parliamentary motion. During debate on a motion, if a member feels that the motion would benefit from a change in its language, she can say, “I move to amend the motion...” and suggests specific language changes in the motion. If an amendment has been moved and seconded, debate then turns to the merits of the amendment. The debate resumes on the merits of the main motion. (As amended, if the amendment carried) When debate is exhausted on the merits of the main motion itself, a vote is then taken and the body moves onto the next item of business.

### **2) Motion to call the PREVIOUS Question.**

#### **TWO-THIRDS majority required. IS Not Debatable.**

For our purposes, this may be the most important parliamentary motion. Use it often. This motion is made by a member saying, “I call for the question” or “I move for the previous question.” It is another way of saying, “I move that debate stops right now and that we vote immediately.” This is one of the many ways that can be used to prevent needless, lengthy debate once an issue is clearly understood. This motion is in order after any speaker is finished. You need not be called on. The chair must recognize you when you make this motion, and a vote must be taken with no debate. If two-thirds majority of the body feels that no more debate is necessary, then it is time to vote and move on.

One point worth making about this motion is that you must be careful not to squelch debate before an issue has been thoroughly aired. Be sure to vote NO to this motion if you are still confused about the issue, or if you are unsure of how to vote. By allowing debate to continue, we avoid half-baked decision about half understood questions. On the other hand, the liberal use of this motion makes it unnecessary for the chair to be heavy handed in stopping discussion because he knows it will stop soon enough.

### **3) Motion to Table**

#### **Simple Majority required. Is NOT DEBATABLE.**

One way of disposing of a motion that is not ready for a vote is to table it. This is done by saying, “I move to table this motion until such and such date/meeting.” This motion is not debatable: if it is made and seconded, it is voted on immediately. If it fails, debate continues on the motion itself. Of it passes, the committee moves on to its next item of business. The tabled motion will be included in the committee agenda on the date specified.

### **4) Motion to REMOVE FROM THE TABLE.**

#### **SIMPLE majority required Is Debatable**

A motion that has been tabled can be taken up before the time originally set in the motion to table. This is done by saying, “I move to remove from the table the motion such and such.” If this motion passes, the motion that had been tabled becomes the main motion, and debate on it begins again. If the motion to remove from table fails, the body moves on to the next item of business.

### **5) Motion to REFER**

#### **Simple majority required Is NOT Debatable**

Sometimes the committee does not have enough information to make an immediate decision on a motion. Such motions can be removed from debate and sent to one of the subcommittees for further study; or, it can be sent to a special ad hoc committee. This can be done by

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a member saying, “ I move to refer the motion to such and such committee.” If the motion to refer passes, the committee assigned will take it up at its next meeting. The subcommittee will report back on what it has come up with at the next meeting of the full committee.

#### **6) Motions to RECONSIDER or RESIND**

##### **TWO THIRDS majority required Is Debatable**

Sometimes a member feels that a motion the committee has passed will prove harmful. He can move to either reconsider (reopen for debate and voting) or rescind (void the effect of) the original motion. There are a few conditions on motion to reconsider or rescind: .

1. The motion must have been passed in either last quarter or current meeting.
2. The member making the motion must have information on the issue that was not available in the original debate on the motion.
3. The member must have been with the winning side in the original vote.

These limits are placed to protect the committee from having to reconsider again and again the motions it passes, while still allowing it to examine potentially harmful situations it has created inadvertently. If any of the requirements are not met, the chairperson will declare the motion out of order.

#### **7) Request to WITHDRAW A MOTION**

##### **UNANIMOUS CONSENT required Is Not Debatable**

Once a motion is made and debate begins, the maker of the motion may move to withdraw it. The chair asks if there are any objections. If there is even one objection, the motion stays on the floor, and debate resumes. If there are no objections, the motion is withdrawn and the body moves on.

#### **8) Offering a SUBSTITUTE MOTION**

##### **Simple majority required Is Debatable**

A substitute motion is the same thing as an amendment to a main motion. The only difference is that it is offered to entirely replace the original idea instead of merely revising a portion of it. It is handled the same way an amendment is handled.

#### **9) Motion to ADJOURN**

##### **TWO THIRDS majority required Is NOT debatable**

Any voting member may move to adjourn at any time. This motion is always in order, is not debatable and requires two-thirds to pass. Obviously frivolous motions to adjourn may be ruled out of order. After all business is finished, the chair may declare the meeting adjourned without a motion.

#### **OTHER PROCEEDURES:**

In addition to parliamentary motions, there are many other ways in which members may alter or clarify the proceedings. Here are a few of the most common.

**ORDER OF THE DAY-** If a committee member feels that business is going to far astray from the original agenda; he can help get things back on track. He says, “I call for the order of the day.” This means, “ I move that the chair bring us back on track and conduct the meeting according to procedure, adhering to the agenda.” This does not require a second and is not debatable. Regardless of what else is going on at the time, it requires an immediate vote.

**POINT OF ORDER** -If a committee member feels that something that is happening is in violation of the rules of order, and if the chairperson does not appear likely to do anything about it, the member can raise a point of order. He need not raise his hand, but may simply say out loud, "Point of Order." The chairperson then says, "What is your point of order?" The member then states how he feels the rules of order are being violated. If the chair agrees with his judgment, he says "your point is well taken" and the situation is cleared up. If he does not agree, he says, "Overruled" This decision, as all others, may be appealed.

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**POINT OF APPEAL** – Any time the chair makes a decision, that decision may be appealed. Any voting member who wishes to appeal a decision may do so by saying, "I appeal the decision of the chair." The chair then says, "On what Grounds?" The member states his reasons. The chair then briefly speaks to the intent of his ruling. A vote is taken, requiring a two-thirds majority to override the decision of the chair.

**PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY** – If a committee member wants to do something, but doesn't know how it fits in with the rules of order, all he has to do is ask. Without raising his hand, he simply states out loud, "Point of parliamentary inquiry." The chairperson must immediately recognize him, so that he may ask how to do such and such. The chair will answer the question, possibly by referring to a specific passage in this document in his explanation.

**POINT OF PERSONAL PRIVILEGE**-If the smoke is getting to heavy for you, the air conditioner or heater is too high, or if there is too much noise in the room, you can ask that something be done about it. You may interrupt the proceedings by saying, "Point of personal privilege." The chair must recognize you immediately. State the situation, and ask that it be corrected. The chair will request that whatever needs to be done and is reasonable, be done to help make you comfortable.

## **VOTING PROCEDURES**

There are several ways that votes can be taken. Two of them are described here.

**SHOW OF HANDS** -This is the most commonly used method. With rare exceptions, votes will be taken by a request from the chair to see the hands of all in favor, all opposed, then all abstaining on each issue. The chair should ask for all three categories every time just to be thorough, even when the majority is overwhelming.

**ROLL CALL VOTE**-Sometimes when a vote is taken on a controversial issue, or is a very important one, members may call for a roll call vote. This request must be honored. Whether or not it is made after a show of hands vote was already taken. The secretary asks for the voice vote yes or no. Each person's vote is then recorded in the minutes by position title or group.

## **COMMITTEES**

There are two kinds of committees: Standing committees and ad hoc committees.

**Standing Committees**-These are the regular committees of the areas, such as H & I and P.I. The basic description of these, and how they relate to the committee as a whole, is detailed elsewhere under the description of each level of service.

**Ad Hoc Committees** – Sometimes a question or special project needs to be referred to a sub- committee, but the question does not fit in with the focus of the existing sub -committee. In such cases, the motion can be made to refer to a special committee. These special committees are set up for specific purposes, and they have limited lives – when they have finished their jobs and have reported back, they are disbanded. A motion to refer to a special committee should specify what the committee's purpose would be. The chair may then appoint an ad hoc committee in its entirety, or he may appoint just the ad hoc committee chairperson, who will put the committee together himself later.

These are only brief notes on Rules of Order for business meetings. For further information, see Robert's Rules of Order – Newly revised.