



Maryland Student Legislature, Inc.
Board of Directors
Standing Rules of Order

Ratified: July 10, 2005; Amended: April 5, 2008

All adopted amendments incorporated as of April 6, 2008

RULES (§) Enumerated:

- I. Scope and Precedence
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I. Scope and Precedence

These Standing Rules of Order (herein also referred to as the standing rules or SRO) shall be the method by which the Board of Directors (herein also referred to as the Board or BOD) of the Maryland Student Legislature (herein also referred as MSL) shall conduct business meetings and other pertinent business. The purpose of these rules shall be to promote scholarly debate and propagate productive discourse on the matters of business before the Board.

The Standing Rules of Order shall be governed by the Articles of Incorporation, By-Laws of the Maryland Student Legislature, Incorporated and the Statutory Code. Any rule contained herein shall be deemed null and void in either whole or part should it conflict with any of these documents. Any rule which contains a section that is deemed null or void by virtue of this clause shall not be found to have any other section deemed as such without proper consideration and meritorious findings.

The Modus Operandi of the Maryland Student Legislature, Incorporated – Board of Directors shall be as set forth in Robert's Rules of Order, most recent revised edition (herein also referred to as RRO). The Presiding Officer and the Board shall be guided by rules of parliamentary practice for organizations as set forth in RRO except where they conflict with the rules contained in the Standing Rules of Order or the governing documents of the Maryland Student Legislature, Incorporated which shall supersede any rules contained in RRO.

The Scope and Precedence of the Standing Rules of Order as well as any rule that comes directly from the Articles

of Incorporation, By-Laws or Statutory Code, as well as any rule that specifically states as part of the rule that it is not suspend-able shall not be suspend-able by any motion to suspend a rule and may only be amended through an amendment to the Standing Rules of Order or applicable governing document. Any motion to suspend such rules shall be deemed dilatory by the Presiding Officer.

II. Organization and Officers

§1. Committee of the Whole

- (a) The Board of Directors, when assembled with a majority of its members at a properly announced and agreed upon meeting shall be the Committee of the Whole.
- (b) The Board of Directors may meet without a majority of its members or for the purposes of discussion, debate or the formulation of business at a committee meeting or quasi-committee meeting. These meetings shall not have the right or power to act on behalf of or as the Committee of the Whole without proper endorsement or assignment of such powers by the Committee of the Whole
- (c) The Committee of the Whole shall be presided upon by the proper officer of the Board and only in the manner of the succession of officers (Art IV, Section 11; By Laws)
- (d) The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may participate in debate provided that the Chairman still provides equal opportunities for all opinions including opinions different from the Chairman's.
- (e) The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may vote in all actions of the Board at the Chairman's will and discretion without the need to step down from the Chair in order to exercise these rights.

§2. Staff, Officers and Members

- (a) Motions or actions of the Board may only be brought forth for consideration by Members of the Board.
- (b) The Secretary of the Board shall not have the right to speak on any motion or action of the Board unless also a member, when asked to testify or upon the approval of a simple majority of members present and voting.
- (c) The Vice-Chairman of the Board shall serve as the Parliamentarian. The Vice-Chairman may appoint a different member to serve as Parliamentarian should that be desirable to the Vice Chairman.
- (d) The Presiding Officer may appoint other staff as necessary, but their authority shall not supersede that of the Presiding Officer or other members of the Board.
- (e) Non-members of the Board shall not have the right to speak on any motion or action of the Board unless asked to testify or upon the approval of a simple majority of members present and voting.

III. Daily Business

§3. Call to Order

The Presiding Officer (Chairman of the Committee of the Whole) shall take the chair every day at precisely the hour to which the Board is scheduled to convene and immediately call the Committee of the Whole to order. Divine Services may be performed, after which the Presiding Officer shall cause the roll of members to be taken. If a quorum is present, the Presiding Officer shall proceed with the business of the day. With the consent of the members present, the reading of the Journal of the previous meeting may be omitted

§4. Business of the Day

The Business of the day shall be as set forth in the published agenda. The Business of the Day may be amended by addition, subtraction or a change in the order thereof by a majority vote of the Board or, unless 2/3 of the members object, by the Chairman of the Board.

§5. Order and Decorum

- (a) The Presiding Officer shall preserve order and decorum during meetings of the Board.
- (b) If a member violates any of these rules, the Presiding Officer shall call the member to order, and any member of the Board may request the Presiding Officer to do so. The Presiding Officer may take any reasonable action necessary to compel the member to observe the call for order. All questions of order shall be determined by the Presiding Officer without debate.
- (c) The Presiding Officer shall have general supervision over the Chamber and its adjacent areas while the Board is in session.

§6. Prerogatives

The Presiding Officer may speak on points of order in preference to other members and shall decide all points of order. The decision of the Presiding Officer is final unless, upon appeal, it is reversed by a 2/3 vote of the members present.

§7. Executive Session

- (a) Business Meetings may be moved to executive session.
- (b) Business shall be conducted in an executive session for:
 - 1. Legal matters of the corporation;
 - 2. Personnel matters of the corporation;
 - 3. Other issues as determined by the presiding officer or by a simple majority of those present and voting.
- (c) All members of the Board of Directors and any individuals deemed necessary by the Board of Directors may be present during an executive session.
- (d) A meeting may be moved to executive session by the presiding officer or by a simple majority of those present and voting.
- (e) In the event that the committee of the whole disagrees with the decision of the chair on the matter of going into executive session, the committee of the whole shall supersede the presiding officer by a simple majority of those present and voting.
- (f) The executive session shall be concluded and the meeting shall be opened by the presiding officer or by a simple majority of those present and voting after the conclusion of all business in the executive session.

IV. Attendance and Quorum

§8. Quorum

Quorum shall be set as prescribed (Article IV, Section 9; By Laws).

V. Resolutions

§9. Single Subject

No amendment to a resolution or an action of the Board on a subject different from that under consideration may be offered.

§10. Change of Purpose

No amendment to a resolution or an action of the Board may by said amendment or series of amendments have the effect of changing the preponderance of the original purpose of the resolution or an action of the Board.

VI. Debate

§11. Procedure in Debate

Every Member desiring to present a petition or other matter, to make a report or a motion, to question another member who has the floor, or to speak on any matter, shall signify such by raising his or her hand, address the presiding officer, and proceed further only when or recognized by the presiding officer. If two or more members seek recognition at the same time, the presiding officer shall determine who is entitled to the floor.

§12. Order During Debate

No member may:

- (a) While the presiding officer is putting a question or addressing the Board, walk across the chamber or converse privately; or,
- (b) Hold private conversation in a manner to interrupt debate.

§13. Limit of Debate

No Member may speak except upon the subject under debate.

§14. Personal References

A Member during debate may not make personal references about other Members and shall refer to them by some respectful designation other than their proper names.

VII. Motions

- §15. **Majority Vote**
Except otherwise specifically provided in these Rules or the Bylaws of the Maryland Student Legislature, Incorporated, each question shall be determined by a majority vote of the votes cast by persons legally entitled to vote, excluding blanks and abstentions, provided that there is a quorum present.
- §16. **Motions in Writing**
If requested by a member of the Board, a motion shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary before it is debated.
- §17. **Division of a Question**
If a motion contains more than one substantive proposition, the presiding officer or any member supported by at least one other may call for a division of the question into separate propositions.
- §18. **Withdrawal**
After a motion is stated by the presiding officer or read by the Secretary, it is in the possession of the Committee of the Whole; however, it may be withdrawn by its sponsor at any time before the question is put thereon.
- §19. **No Motion During Voting**
No motion may be received after a vote upon any question before the Board has been called for by the presiding officer.

VIII. Voting

- §20. **Voting by Proxy**
- (a) Pursuant to the Bylaws of the Maryland Legislature, Incorporated, members may cast a vote by proxy on any matter before the Board of Directors.
 - (b) A director may submit a proxy vote that recognizes the director's opinion only on specific matters before the board at its next meeting. A director may not submit a proxy that provides a general power of attorney to vote in the director's stead to another member or non-member of the Board of Directors.
 - (c) A valid proxy shall be submitted to the Chairman of the Board of Directors not more than one month prior to any Board of Directors meeting.
 - (d) A valid proxy may be submitted to the Chairman of the Board of Directors via letter, hand delivery, facsimile, or electronic mail.
 - (e) A valid proxy shall be considered signed if said proxy bears a wet signature, facsimile signature presented as part of a facsimile or by electronic means, or through submission of said proxy via the electronic-mail address used by the member.
- §21. **Explanation of Vote**
The vote of a Member on any resolution, action of the Board or other question may be explained by that Member at his or her request.
- §22. **Yeas and Nays**
The vote on any question, except as otherwise provided for within these Rules, shall be decided upon by yeas and nays and entered in the Secretary's minutes. Upon the request of any Member a roll call vote shall be taken.
- §23. **Finality of Votes**
After the vote has been reported, a member may not change his or her vote except in the instance of a reconsideration of the question.

IX. Suspension of a Rule

- §24. **Motion to Suspend a Rule**
A motion to suspend a Rule:
- (a) Must be offered separately for each proposition.

- (b) Is debatable for a reasonable period.
- (c) Does not permit discussion of the main question
- (d) In order to be adopted, requires the concurrence of at least two-thirds of the members present.
- (e) Cannot be reconsidered.

X. Amending the Rules

- §25. These Rules shall be adopted by a majority vote. Thereafter, these shall be considered standing and as such any amendment to them, shall require a two-thirds vote for adoption. This rule and its contents are not suspend-able.

XI Decorum et Miscellany et al;

- §26. Dilatory motion
The presiding officer shall entertain no motion which is intended to cause a delay, or where the purpose is to obstruct or thwart the will of the Board as clearly indicated by the existing parliamentary situation.
- §27. Question of Privilege
A member may signify and have precedence on all other matters except when a vote is being taken or a question is being put in order to respond to an offense of personal conduct, reputation, or rights.
- §28. Censure
- (a) A Member may be censured by the Board for violating these Rules or for otherwise bringing harm or disrespect to the Maryland Student Legislature, Incorporated or any member thereof by a two-thirds majority vote of those present provided a quorum is in attendance.
 - (b) The motion to censure is debatable for a reasonable period, may not be amended or reconsidered, and may not be offered when any other question is before the Board.
 - (c) A Member, having been censured, shall be subject to penalties up to and including the removal of rights as a member, or other lawful penalties.
- §29. Objection to Consideration of the Question
The Maryland Student Legislature, Incorporated does not recognize the motion for Objection to Consideration of a Question.