

THE VIRGINIA GAVELETTER



Volume 66, Issue 1, June 30, 2024
Vivian A. Minor, CAP – Editor-in-Chief
Donald Garrett, PRP – President



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Greetings from the VSAP President

Dear Esteemed Members of the Virginia State Association of Parliamentarians,

As the golden rays of summer brighten our days and the gentle breezes whisper through the verdant leaves, we are reminded of the joyful simplicity and vibrant growth that this season brings. It is a time for rejuvenation and reflection, a perfect backdrop to celebrate the fruitful outcomes of our recent convention in April.



Summer teaches us the value of clarity and purpose, mirroring the principles we uphold in our parliamentary practices. Just as the sun nurtures the earth, fostering growth in every corner, we, as parliamentarians, cultivate understanding and cooperation within our assembly. Through clear communication and structured meetings, we ensure that every voice is not only heard but also valued.

Let us carry the energy and success of our last gathering into these long, luminous days. May we strive to create

an atmosphere where ideas blossom under the careful tending of our parliamentary skills. In doing so, we echo the sentiments of Helen Keller: "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."

As you enjoy this season of warmth and light, I hope you find time to relax, reflect, and prepare for the promising initiatives that lie ahead. Together, we will continue to strengthen our association and the values we cherish.

With warmest regards and continued parliamentary esteem,

Donald Garrett, PRP
President, Virginia State Association of Parliamentarians

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Hello Summer

From the Corner of Our Second Vice President - Flint H. Lewis, RP, JD

A Career in Rules and Procedure - Retrospective



When I retired from my job two months ago, nearly all my colleagues asked an expected question about how I planned to spend my time post-retirement. I gave the same answer in each instance, telling them that I planned to stay active in my local, state and national parliamentary units. But one individual asked an unexpected and thought-provoking question – looking back on your 40-year career, in which you held different positions in all three sectors (government, for profit and nonprofit)- was there a common thread in your job choices? Surprisingly, I hadn't given this idea much thought previously. When you are engaged in your working career, you are focused on the present and future, and rarely have the time or inclination to look backwards. Once I did so, though, I realized that my seemingly random movement between positions indeed had a guiding principle, or at least a commonality – in every position I became identified as a person who knew the (sometimes arcane) rules and who might be able to provide some insights to tricky organizational issues or questions.

Arguably, I became a lawyer because I had some predilection toward rules and procedure. After all, the law consists of nothing if not rules to govern behavior and procedures for ensuring their compliance. But in hindsight, this focus on the rules and procedures started nearly 40 years ago when I became active in local party politics. At each of our meetings, questions would arise about procedure, such as whether we were required to have a convention, and if so how would delegates be selected? In each instance the leaders turned to one person for the answers – Patsy Drain. I remember thinking – that's the role I want to have...that's a way in which, like Patsy, I can add value.

At the start of my career – like many young attorneys - I worked for a law firm, but the call of the legislative process beckoned, and my next position was working as a counsel in the U.S. House of Representatives. I read everything I could on legislative procedure – talking with authors of well-known books on Congressional procedures, reading the Congressional Record, and “hanging out” on the House floor whenever possible. My boss in Congress was also a party leader. By default, I became the person by his side during meetings of other members of Congress when they tried to use party rules to certain ends. Why? Merely because I made a point of knowing those rules. Also, when the free volumes of Deschler's Precedents came into Congressional offices they usually were placed on shelves, unopened. I read ours and thought that procedural knowledge could be useful. Next stop on my career journey was as Chief of Staff to the President of the American Red Cross. Again, I spent the first few months reading the ARC charter and bylaws. This allowed me a familiarity with the organization and made me a better resource for our President. It was there that I received one of the best pieces of advice I ever heard. Former Army Lieutenant General Bill Reno, who was a senior leader at the ARC, told me early on “When you are presented with any problem or opportunity, first review the fundamental documents.” I have passed on that sage advice to dozens of others throughout my career. Very often, the answers or at least a path forward, can be found there.

When I moved on to become director of government affairs for the American Chemical Society, a nonprofit devoted to science, I followed similar steps. I studied their bylaws, charter, and standing rules and began to study Robert's Rules in earnest. I realized that RONR was not just about procedure – it had much to say on how organizations should be run. I read a book on the history of the organization. That resource, alone, gave me knowledge about the organization and its committees that added value to meetings in which I participated. Soon, I was advising on how to get things done in the organization – a role which had little to do on paper with my government affairs job description. Ultimately, the organization elected me as its corporate Secretary (and then General Counsel) – positions I hadn't contemplated when first joining the organization.

If, as result of this retrospective, I have any wisdom to pass on to those starting or early in their careers, it is this – almost no one in your organization will take the time to study and understand its bylaws, policies and rules. If you do so, and apply that knowledge, you will quickly stand out as one who both cares about the organization and can add value. Your organization will undoubtedly have numerous people who have talent and expertise in specified areas. I will wager that few, however, will be able to answer this critical question – “Within the rule and procedures of our organization, how to we get this done?” That role is waiting for you. Good luck.

MY PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE PET PEEVE

Jacqueline W. Roundtree, Recording Secretary



Is there really such a thing as a “properly seconded” motion, or for that matter an “improperly” seconded motion? I've been annoyed over the years by presiding officers saying "It has been moved and properly seconded..."

Ergo, I began the quest to research the “second” in Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR) editions. The 10th, 11th, and 12th editions of RONR are silent on the issue of a properly (or improperly) seconded motion. RONR covers the main topic of “second” in Section 4 “Handling of a Motion.” A member simply seconds the motion **(4:2(2) and 4:9-13)**. The fourth Standard Descriptive Characteristics of motions listed in RONR is always whether or not the motion can be seconded.

This is my pet peeve and probably means nothing to most parliamentarians. Nevertheless, I asked several persons who love the subject of parliamentary procedure as much as I do about “properly seconded” and received some very interesting responses. Most were in line with my reasoning.

Darlene Allen, PRP, National Association of Parliamentarians (NAP) Past President, the current Chairman of the NAP Credentialing Commission, and my mentor, laughed when I asked her. She mused about it and said, “I would agree that the properly seconded is painful to hear and equally painful to correct. I have done workshops for groups and as part of the demonstration, scripted the correct language. ‘Properly’ always manages to be slipped in by participants.”

She added, “It may be necessary for you to research the earlier editions of RONR at least the 9th to find if ‘properly’ is used there. I've found that other organizations, especially where their members are active in several other organizations, bring this ‘properly’ baggage with them. It could be because in a previous edition, this wording was used and is carried from organization to organization. Or it could have originated from those who at one time were members of NAP and after a certain point no longer renewed their membership but held on to outdated practices and form.”

“I think it’s habit. Someone said ‘properly seconded’ thinking that they were informing people that the second was in order and it just stuck. I’m so used to hearing it that it rolls right over my head,” said Kendra Riley, PRP.

When I inquired of George Chavis, President of the Catherine Wittman Unit, he responded, “Ha! Ha! Ha! I'm sure in the (not-so-recent) past I may have unconsciously used the term ‘properly seconded,’ but I think you're right, RONR has no opinion on the accuracy or quality of a second; it only cares that one exists! But if I had to speculate on the term's origin, I'd say someone, a long time ago, probably had it in his/her head that there was (is) a strict process for seconding, and the chairman, having heard it, was obliged to report to the assembly that the second was ‘proper’ and thereby firmly hammering nails into a believed valid motion.”

“I say it's moved and seconded, or it's been moved and no second is needed because

Language matters. Learning parliamentary procedure ensures meetings are efficient and everyone understands the process. Meeting chairmen should ensure that when using terminology, it is clear and expresses intent. The members will appreciate the clarity,” said Crystal Lander, RP, president of a local graduate sorority chapter and past president of a local Rotary unit. “This is one of my pet peeves too. It is annoying when the wrong terminology is used,” she added.

I followed Allen’s advice and checked the “Question and Answers” part of the Robert's Rules Association website. My search was in vain. However, I have ordered a copy of the 9th edition of RONR, which will not arrive until well after the deadline for submission of this article. I will follow-up and report how “properly seconded” is explained.

Do you have a parliamentary pet peeve? Let us know about it!

A Snapshot of the 67th Annual Convention

Bridging Traditions: The Evolution of Parliamentary Law



Virginia State Association of Parliamentarians
April 20-21, 2024
Promenade Ball Room Double Tree Hotel Charlottesville, Virginia
Jacqueline W. Roundtree, Recording Secretary

APRIL 19, 2024

VSAP Members and Guests enjoyed an insightful lecture on Thomas Jefferson's *Manual of Parliamentary Practice* and the Rules of Modern Legislatures at the David M. Rubenstein Center and Smith Center at Monticello, Charlottesville, VA.

Sponsored by VSAP, the lecture was presented by Brian Alexander, PhD, of the Washington and Lee University, Department of Politics. The lecture was followed by a late afternoon repast. Donald Garrett, VSAP President, gave a small talk on Selected Quotes from Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised regarding *Jefferson's Manual*.

APRIL 20, 2024

- Opening
- Called to Order by President Donald Garrett, PRP
- Presentation of Colors by the Albemarle County Cavalier Battalion Army JROTC
- Greetings from:
 - The Honorable Katrina Callsen, Member of the Virginia House of Delegates (54th District)
 - The Honorable Diantha McKeel, Vice Chair of the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors

BUSINESS MEETING 1

Proposed Bylaws Amendment 1

Amend Article XIV, Section 3 of the VSAP Bylaws by striking "unanimous" and inserting "three-fourths."

Adopted 23 yes, 0 no

Proposed Bylaws Amendment 2

Amend Article XIV, Section 3 of the VSAP Bylaws by adding "in the form of a written hard copy."

Adopted as amended in the following form by 22 yes and 1 no vote:

Amend Article XIV, Section 3 of the VSAP Bylaws by adding "in the form of a written copy."

Proposed Bylaws Amendment 3

Amend Article VI, Section 5A by 1) striking "by ballot" and 2) adding "If there is more than one nominee for a position, the election shall be by ballot."

Adopted 19 yes and 2 noes.

Proposed Bylaws Amendment 4

Amend Article VI, Section 1 by striking "The election shall be by ballot. A plurality shall elect and the member receiving the largest number of votes shall serve as chairman. In the event of a tie, the committee members shall meet prior to the adjournment of the Convention and elect the Chairman."

Adopted 20-2

Notice of Amendment

Flint Lewis gave notice of this amendment: Proposed Bylaws Amendment: Amend Article VII, Section 4 of the VSAP Bylaws by 1) striking “a majority” and inserting “at least four” and 2) adding ‘For purposes of the preceding sentence, the Parliamentary Law Club and the Members at Large as a whole shall be deemed a unit.’”

Assembly elected the 2024-2025 VSAP Nominating Committee:

The following members were elected:

Steve Berke, PRP
George Chavis
Cynthia Mayo, PRP
Donna Simpson, PRP
Dr. Willie Watson, PRP

THE FOLLOWING WORKSHOPS WERE PRESENTED:

- Bring Back Motions by Jacqueline W. Roundtree, PhD., JD, PRP
- Fairy Tales and Fables Through the Lens of RONR by Beatrice Squire, PRP
- You Can’t Do that, Can You by Donald Garrett, PRP
- Nominations and Elections by Joyce Henderson, RP

BUSINESS MEETING 2

Flint Lewis moved the adoption of this proposed bylaws amendment: Proposed Bylaws Amendment: Amend Article VII, Section 4 of the VSAP Bylaws by 1) striking “a majority” and inserting “at least four” and 2) adding ‘For purposes of the preceding sentence, the Parliamentary Law Club and the Members at Large as a whole shall be deemed a unit.’”

The question was divided.

- Part 1 was adopted as amended in the following form by a vote of 18 yes, and 1 no: striking “a majority” and inserting “at least one-third.”
- Part 2 was adopted as amended in the following form by a vote of 19 yes, and 1 no: For purposes of the preceding sentence, the Parliamentary Law Club and the Members at Large as a whole shall each be counted as a unit.\

DINNER

VSAP members and guests enjoyed a wonderful meal. Music was provided by the Tyler Burkhardt Quartet, a group of University of Virginia students and alums.

SUNDAY APRIL 21, 2024

Silent Gavel Ceremony conducted by Cynthia Mayor, PhD., PRP. The ceremony honored:

- Dr. Cora Slade Salzberg
- Gladys White Jordan
- Jacqueline Anderson Cameron
- Mary Grant

Breakfast and Keynote Address

Speaker/lecturer. Kay Crews, PRP, Immediate Past President of the American Institute of Parliamentarians (AIP). Her topic, “What You Need to Know about the New Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure. Ms. Crews provided a detailed comparison between RONR and the New Code.

BUSINESS MEETING 3

- The assembly heard updates on District 2 from Tamara Harris, NAP District 2 Director.
- Dalene Allen, NAP Past President and Chair of the NAP Credentialing Commission provided updates on the new exams.

Adjourned at 11:15 a.m.









CONVENTION PICTURES
Courtesy of Sala Powell-Dabney



In Loving Memory of **Silent Gavel**



Dr. Cora Slade Salzberg

June 27, 1942 – July 19, 2023

Virginia Lewis Dalton and Eloise Engledove Richmond Unit
(VDEER)-(Richmond)

Tyya Turner – President



Gladys White Jordan

February 6, 1938 – October 10, 2023

Parliamentary Law Club – Richmond, Virginia

Bonnie Atwood, JD, President



Jacqueline Anderson Cameron

November 15, 1928 – February 24, 2024

Parliamentary Law Club – Richmond, Virginia

Bonnie Atwood, JD, President



Upcoming EVENTS

- Learn and Sharpen Essential Skills at the 2024 NAP Virtual Leadership Conference August 9-10
Topics include:

- ✓ Planning Conventions & Events
- ✓ Promoting Units, Associations & Events
- ✓ How to Volunteer & Encourage Others
- ✓ How to Network & Make the Most of Your NAP Events
- ✓ Soft Skills for Leaders
- ✓ How to Use Scripts in Teaching
- ✓ How to Plan Your Year
- ✓ How NAP HQ Can Support You

Register now and join us August 9-10 to help shape the future for NAP and you. More information here.
Dane Petersen

- Don't Miss the 2024 NAP Training Conference September 5-8, 2024 in San Antonio, Texas



Make plans now to be part of the 2024 NAP Training Conference! This year's event will once again be available virtually or in person with your fellow members in San Antonio. Dozens of workshops will be led by some of the top parliamentarians in the field, with topics ranging from amendments to best practices for managing your own parliamentary business. In addition, Parliamentary Learning Labs will allow in-person attendees a chance to practice presiding and serving as a parliamentarian with constructive feedback from experienced parliamentarians.

These sessions are sure to expand your understanding of parliamentary procedure. Visit **NAP University** to see full workshop details, view the schedule, and register for the training conference. Register by July 1 to receive the early bird discount.

Dane Petersen

ELECTION INFORMATION

Key date:

- General election: Tuesday, November 5, 2024.

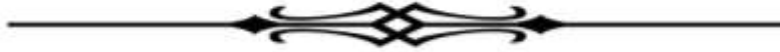
Voting at a Glance

- **Absentee voting:** All registered voters can vote [absentee by mail](#), but you'll need to apply to do so.
- **Early in-person voting:** You can [vote early and in person](#) at your local registrar's office or other satellite location.



- **Voting at the polls:** Polls are open from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. You'll need to show an [acceptable form of identification](#), such as a Virginia driver's license, or sign an ID confirmation statement at the polls.

Virginia's 45-day early voting period has begun for the June 18 primary election, and AARP Virginia wants to make sure you have all the information you need to cast your ballot. You can find out more information on the where, when and how to vote by checking out our [2024 Election State Voting Guide](#).



PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE TRIVIA

1. When a meeting is following parliamentary procedure, the _____ rules.
2. During a business meeting, the minority has the right to be _____.
3. True or False: A group can consider more than one item of business at the same time.
4. Do this when you want to be recognized by the presiding officer.
5. This is typically the first item on an agenda.
6. True or False: A motion is required to approve minutes.
7. Which reports should be first on the agenda --- officer reports, standing committee reports or special/ad-hoc committee reports?
8. The minimum number of members needed to conduct business is called a _____.
9. To make a motion, a member should start with these three words.
10. Motions coming from these groups do not require a second.
11. Once a motion is open for discussion, who has the right to speak first?
12. The minutes of a meeting are a record of _____, not opinions.
13. True or False: All treasurer's reports require a motion to be accepted.
14. This group is charged with identifying and recommending eligible candidates for elected leadership positions.
15. True or False: Voting during elections must always be done with a paper ballot.

Answer Key: Page 12



Word Search



See how many of these newspaper related words you can find in the puzzle. The words can be forward, backward or diagonal.

Created by Sue Lindlauf
Grand Forks Herald 2012

- | | | | |
|-------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------|
| 1. VOTING | 5. PRESIDENT | 9. DEMOCRACY | 13. ADS |
| 2. ELECTION | 6. LEADERS | 10. CANDIDATES | 14. TV |
| 3. POLLS | 7. SENATOR | 11. CAMPAIGNS | 15. RADIO |
| 4. BALLOT | 8. REPRESENTATIVE | 12. SIGNS | 16. POLITICS |

Answer Key – Parliamentary Procedure Trivia

- Majority
- Heard [Speak is also an acceptable answer.]
- False
- Stand [Raise your hand is also an acceptable answer.]
- Call to Order
- False – Once the presiding officer requests corrections, he or she can state that the minutes are approved as read or as corrected. A motion is only required if there is a dispute or debate about wording or a proposed correction.
- Officer Reports
- Quorum
- I move that
- Committees
- The person who made the motion
- Facts
- False – Only the final financial report at the end of the fiscal year requires a motion and vote.
- Nominating Committee
- False – Voice votes can be used, especially when a candidate is unopposed. If bylaws provide specific guidelines for taking votes, those should always be followed.

Virginia State Association of Parliamentarians

UNITS and CLUB AS OF APRIL 2024 and CHARTER DATES



Catherine Wittman Unit: (March 1977)

George M. Chavis – President

Chesapeake Unit of Parliamentarians: (March 2004)

Michael Wagner-Diggs, PRP – President

Fredericksburg Parliamentary Unit: (February 2016)

Angela Chance Wilson – President

M. Stanley Ryan Unit of Parliamentarians: (December 1974)

James Carney – President

Northern Virginia Marching & Gavel Society (NOVAMAGS): (January 1983)

Chris Marston, RP – President

Parliamentary Law Club of Richmond, VA: (Formed 1951)

Certified by NAP on May 24, 1957

Bonnie Atwood, JD – President

Roanoke Valley: (March 1963)

Marquitta Joyce – President

Silver Gavel Unit of Parliamentarians: (January 1991)

Charlotte Bailey – President

Virginia Alpha Unit of Registered Parliamentarians: (September 1976)

Steven J. Berke, PRP – President

Virginia Lewis Dalton and Eloise Engledove Richmond (VDEER): (April 1980)

Tyya Turner – President

Virginia Peninsula Unit of Parliamentarians: (1951) (1951)

Gloria Mercado – President



Wishing You a Beautiful Safe Summer