

June/July 2020

Robert's Reflections

Congratulations to Gloria de Meireles (St. Paul Unit) and Satise Roddy (Northern Lights Parliamentarians) who have recently passed the National Association of Parliamentarians (NAP) membership exam and are new members of both the NAP and the Minnesota State Association of Parliamentarians (MSAP).

To state that these are unusual times is certainly an understatement. The emergency COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic has had a huge impact on our lives. Things such as dining at a restaurant with friends, going to movies, even attending a sports event are no longer possible for some time to come.

During this pandemic, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued recommendations such as social distancing, use of face masks, and thorough hand washing, and Minnesota's governor has issued emergency stay-at home executive orders, including prohibiting gatherings of large groups of people. This has impacted attendance at parliamentarian conventions and meetings, of course.

For perhaps the first time, the Board of Directors of the Minnesota State Association of Parliamentarians met by telephone conference to cancel the 2020 MSAP Annual Convention scheduled for April 25th. One of the consequences of canceling the is that, because no elections were held and the MSAP bylaws stipulate that officers serve ". . . until their successors are elected.", our officers and the nomination committee must serve for another year until elections are held at the 2021 Convention on April 24th.



Electronic meetings may be much more common in the future: meetings of the Board of Directors of the NAP have been held via Adobe Connect for some time. We will need to review our MSAP bylaws to determine how they can be amended to allow electronic meetings. NAP has provided several initiatives to help us: NAP provided a one-page document with suggestions as to how to amend bylaws to include electronic meetings; NAP included on its web site the portion relating to electronic meetings from *RONR 12th ed.* which was generously shared by the Robert's Rules Association; and NAP sponsored a town hall meeting and two webinars on the topic of electronic meetings.

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Robert's Reflections [Cont'd]

So where does this leave us? There have been many suggestions from many individuals and organizations as to how to cope when sequestered at home, either alone or with family members 24/7. But what can we do as parliamentarians?

I am pleased to report that both units of MSAP, the Northern Lights Parliamentarians and the St. Paul Unit, have met electronically via Zoom to share information and conduct education sessions, the core purpose of our organizations, *education*. And both units are thinking of creative ways to hold in-person meetings while ensuring social distancing. But are there things that MSAP can also do for its members and others during this challenging time? Please share your suggestions with me or with Lucy Johnson, Chairman of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Added Value. Contact information is on page 11.

Robert Vokes
President

***Ad Hoc* Committee on Added Value**

The NAP is currently offering free webinars until June 30 on a variety of topics. One which I think has applications to adding value to the MSAP membership is entitled "Will your organization be here in 10 years?" by Adam Hathaway (click [here](#)).

This webinar presents both statements indicating that the future of an organization could be in trouble and a list of remedies. Some questions ask for example: Is your membership staying the same or decreasing? Are the same people taking turns holding office? Do your committees meet? The remedies include knowing your mission statement, improving recruitment efforts, having a strategic plan, and focusing on retention, to name a few.

Mr. Hathaway suggests that this current pandemic could provide opportunities that have not be considered before. Could MSAP use an electronic platform to offer educational programs or group study sessions? What about an electronic open mic or forum once a month to discuss parliamentary questions or issues that members may have? Could MSAP reach members living in Duluth or Rochester or even locally who aren't able to attend meetings in person but could electronically?

Embracing change is often hard to do, but I am hoping that the Ad Hoc Committee will propose ideas based on this webinar. MSAP may look differently in 10 years, but with an eye to the future, MSAP will still be in existence.

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Ad Hoc Committee [Cont'd]

One of Minnesota's and my favorite parliamentarians is picture in this webinar. Bonus points if you can spot him/her.

Lucy Johnson, Chair

2020 Report of the Historian (draft)

Eleven Members and a guest attended the 53rd Annual Convention of the Minnesota State Association of Parliamentarians on Saturday, May 4, 2019, at the Hilton Minneapolis/ Bloomington Hotel, 3900 American Blvd West, Bloomington. President Josh Martin was in the chair. Jeanette Williams spoke on Secondary Amendments.

During the Convention:

- Bylaws Article XIII (Dissolutions) was amended so that it reads:
"Section 1. Upon the dissolution of this association, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code. If at the time of dissolution NAP meets the criteria of the aforementioned Code, the assets shall be liquidated and distributed to NAP.
Section 2. The association charter shall be returned to NAP Headquarters."
- Lucy Johnson (Chair), Richard Skimland, and Judy Twisk were elected to the Nominating Committee.
- Robert Vokes, Lucy Johnson, and Robert Williams were elected as delegates to the 2019 NAP Biennial Convention. Past NAP President Jeanette Williams would also be attending from Minnesota.
- Officers elected were President Robert Vokes, Vice President Miriam Simmons, Secretary Beverly Kennedy, and Treasurer Judy Twisk.
- President Vokes appointed an *Ad Hoc* Committee on Added Value to better understand the MSAP membership, to increase attendance at the MSAP Fall Seminar, and to explore possible opportunities for growth and advancement which could add value to the MSAP membership. Lucy Johnson was appointed committee chair.

The Association continued to benefit from the MSAP website www.friendsofrobert.org.

Units thrived under the leadership of:

- Northern Lights Parliamentarian's President Richard Skimland, Vice President David Staehlin, Secretary Mike Orr, and Treasurer Judy Twisk;
- St. Paul Unit's President Miriam Simmons, Vice President Lucy Johnson, Secretary Mickey Nickelson, and Treasurer Ginny Altman.

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- **2020 Report of the Historian (draft) [Cont'd]**

The MSAP Fall Seminar was held on the morning of Oct 5, 2019, at the Hilton Double Tree Hotel, Bloomington. The 17 attendees heard speakers on the Bring Back Motions: Ginny Altman, PRP, on *Discharge a Committee*; Darleen Harens, PRP, on *Reconsider/Reconsider and Enter on the Minutes*; Michael Orr, RP, on *Rescind and Amend Something Previously Adopted*; and Miriam Simmons, PRP, on *Take From the Table*. In addition, President Robert Vokes reported on his experiences at the NAP Convention held in September in Las Vegas.

The 2020 Annual Convention was to be held on April 25 with District V Director Larry Martin, PRP, as the speaker. Because of the novel coronavirus, the meeting was cancelled. The officers and Nominating Committee members shall continue in their positions until the next Convention.

Pat Reymann, PRP
Historian

Judging and Education of Youth

MSAP members Darleen Harens, PRP, Lucy Johnson, PPR, and Robert Vokes assisted in judging eight BPA (Business Professionals of America) high school parliamentary procedure teams at the Hyatt Regency, Minneapolis in March. The top team overall was one of the two teams from Sebeka High School. The second- place team was from Watertown-Mayer High School. The top team was given medallions for each member. The school was sent a plaque for their display case indicating that their parli-pro team had achieved first place in state competition for the school year 2019-2020. Praises to all the teams for the work which they do to be able to enter at this level.

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, FCCLA cancelled all their state competitions. Looking forward to next year and again being able to work with them also.

Darleen A. Harens, PRP
Chairman

Web Site Committee

1. The website continues to request contributions and articles for the purpose of fresh content and attractive features.
2. Behind-the-scenes administrative work presently being conducted. Additionally, review is occurring toward procedures, policy, and bylaws recommendations.

Michael Orr, RP
Chairman

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Membership Committee

Thank you for your continued membership in MSAP. Your membership helps us promote parliamentary knowledge in Minnesota as well as providing you with numerous opportunities to learn, refine, or refresh your parliamentary knowledge. You also have the opportunity to meet some very kind individuals.

We will likely consider changes to our bylaws to permit MSAP meetings and events to be conducted in person, online-only, or a combination with some participants attending in person and others joining remotely using Zoom, WebEx, or similar online platforms. Remote participants could even join by phone with no video connection required.

Remote participation is an opportunity for you and other MSAP members to conveniently participate in MSAP events. Consider this likely expanded access to our meetings and learning opportunities as you continue your membership and promote the National Association of Parliamentarians and MSAP to your friends and colleagues.

David Staehlin
Chairman

Membership Study Questions – CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Multiple choice. Circle the letter to the left of the correct choice.

1. The quorum of an assembly
 - a. is the largest number that can be depended on to attend any meeting.
 - b. is two-thirds of the members present at the meeting.
 - c. is the minimum number of members who must be present for business to be legally transacted.
2. In the absence of a provision in the bylaws, the quorum of an organized society is
 - a. a majority of the entire membership.
 - b. the number most likely to attend a meeting except in bad weather.
 - c. a majority of those answering roll call.
3. The minimum essential officers for the conduct of business are
 - a. a presiding officer and secretary or clerk.
 - b. a president, secretary and treasurer.
 - c. the president and the treasurer.
4. In the standard order of business the reports of officers are presented
 - a. immediately after approval of the minutes.
 - b. only as time allows.
 - c. immediately before new business.

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Membership Study Questions – CONDUCT OF BUSINESS [Cont'd]

5. The main motion is one that
 - a. brings business before the assembly.
 - b. can be made while another motion is pending.
 - c. has the highest rank.

[Answers on page 10]

Northern Lights Parliamentarians

We continue to have educational sessions at our unit which is currently meeting on Zoom. There have been some challenges, such as not being able to conduct business, but there have been benefits, such as members are now attending that could not travel to the meeting before. We invite everybody to join our meeting, which meets every second Tuesday of the month. Please e-mail me to request a zoom invite at: skimlandr@gmail.com.

Richard Skimland
President

St. Paul Unit

Due to the pandemic, the St. Paul unit has not been meeting. We have had informal educational sessions via Zoom. Because our bylaws do not permit all member electronic meetings, a plan has been developed to amend the SPU bylaws to include this, and then to resume our meetings once or if the bylaws are amended.

Normally we would meet every third Monday at 9:30 a.m. at the Holy Family Residence on 330 South Exchange Street in St. Paul. Normally this would be preceded with a study review session at 8:30 a.m. Once the group is able to meet we will have to decide on a new location and when, if possible within 2020, we can meet in person.

Meanwhile, the group is keen to obtain the new copy of RONR. The 12th edition is available for order now on the NAP website and books will be shipped in September.

Officers this year are: President, Miriam Simmons, PRP; Vice President, Lucy Johnson, PRP; Secretary, Mickey Nickelson; and Treasurer, Ginny Altman, PRP.

Miriam Simmons, PRP
President

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RP Study Guide – MOTIONS AND RELATED PROCEDURES

Multiple Choice: Circle the letter to the left of the correct choice.

1. A main motion and the motion to postpone indefinitely are pending. A motion to refer the main motion to a committee is adopted. What happens to the motion to postpone indefinitely?
 - a. It goes to the committee with the main motion and is considered when the committee reports back to the assembly.
 - b. It is ignored whether or not the motion to postpone indefinitely will be recommended back to the assembly.
 - c. The committee votes on whether or not the motion to postpone indefinitely will be recommended back to the assembly.
 - d. A motion cannot be referred to a committee while the motion to postpone indefinitely is pending.
2. In ordinary societies, an amendment to a motion which introduces an independent question not related to the motion:
 - a. is declared out of order as not germane.
 - b. is accepted only if the maker of the main motion approves.
 - c. is opened for discussion but requires a two-thirds vote.
 - d. is considered a substitute for the main motion.
3. A main motion “that we purchase a computer” and a motion to postpone the main motion indefinitely are pending. It is moved and seconded to amend the main motion by adding the words “at a cost not to exceed \$2000.00.” The chair should:
 - a. rule that the amendment is not germane to the pending question.
 - b. rule the amendment out of order because it has lower rank than the pending motion.
 - c. state the amendment as pending.
 - d. put the amendment to vote without debate.
4. Debate on a primary amendment:
 - a. includes the merits of the main motion.
 - b. is confined to the merits of the amendment.
 - c. may include peripheral issues.
 - d. cannot involve proposing a hostile amendment.
5. An amendment to an amendment:
 - a. opens the main motion to further discussion.
 - b. may be amended with the consent of the seconder.
 - c. may not be amended.
 - d. may not be debated.

[Answers on page 10]

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SAVE THE DATE!

Fall Seminar

Saturday, October 3, 2020

Arrangements Pending

Miriam Simmons, PRP
Education Chairman

SAVE THE DATE!

Annual Convention

Saturday, April 24, 2021
Hilton Hotel, Bloomington
3900 American Blvd. West

Miriam Simmons, PRP
Education Chairman

Standing Rules for Electronic Meetings

As organizations begin to amend their bylaws to allow for electronic meetings, you may be asked for help. NAP has provided resources recently to assist in this process. In March, NAP published summary guidelines for units and associations that wish to meet electronically. Sample rules for electronic meetings with scenarios were provided by the authors currently revising RONR. NAP has also hosted webinars which can be viewed on-line through the NAP store.

One webinar that I found useful was, “Electronic Meetings that Pass Parliamentary Muster” by Lawrence Taylor, PRP. If electronic meetings are authorized in the bylaws, there are several standing rules that may be necessary. Mr. Taylor listed 8 of them to consider. Some address verification, credentials, and allowing for bidirectional aural communication.

He stressed that members should be self-muted so that they can object or raise a point of order. In one meeting where he was a participant, the chair muted everyone, and no one could appropriately interrupt. Other standing rules address the way the Chair recognizes members, how votes are cast, and the displaying of written motions. He concluded with a rule that the Chair would instruct the members at the beginning of the meeting about the technology and appropriate behavior.

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Standing Rules for Electronic Meetings [Cont'd]

Addendum for informational purposes only:

Electronic Meeting Standing Rules by Lawrence Taylor, PRP listed in *“Electronic Meetings that Pass Parliamentary Muster”* presentation.

1. Members will be credentialed by verification of identity after calling in. Verification may be done visually or aurally by a credentials committee member (if available) or another designated person.
2. The list of credentialed members will be made available to all members and alternates in the meeting before the agenda is adopted.
3. The electronic meeting will allow for bidirectional aural communication while the meeting is in session.
4. Members will self-mute, except when speaking or making a motion which is in order when another has the floor.
5. Other than motions referenced in #4, the Chair will recognize members by electronic “raised hands” or other appropriate method in the order raised, to the best of the Chair’s ability.
6. Unless an alternate solution is provided for documenting votes cast by delegates, voting conducted during electronic meetings will be roll call votes, unless the vote is by unanimous consent.
7. The language of all motions will be displayed so members and alternates in the meeting can view the words, whenever possible.
8. At the beginning of each meeting the Chair will instruct members and alternates present at the meeting methods of raising hands and casting votes and keeping themselves self-muted as a courtesy.

Lucy Johnson. PRP
Parliamentarian

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All references are from *RONR*, 11th Ed.

MEMBERSHIP STUDY ANSWERS

1. c: Page 345, l.3-5
2. a: Page 346, l.11-13
3. a: Page 22, l.1-5
4. a: Page 26, l.5-7
5. a: Page 27, l.24-25

RP QUESTIONS ANSWERS

1. b: Page 128, l.12-15
2. a: Page 131, l.15-18
3. c: Page 131, l.24-26
4. b: Page 133, l.9-13
5. c: Page 133, l.15-17

Darleen Harens, PRP
Compiler



The Minnesota Parliamentarian

CONTACT INFORMATION

President

Robert Vokes
952-237-4371
hisfootness@comcast.net

Parliamentarian

Lucy Johnson
651-224-7102
lucyhjohnson@msn.com

Membership Committee

Dave Staehlin
651-261-5802
david@staehlin.us

Vice President

Miriam Simmons
651-439-2062
mgsimmons52@hotmail.com

Audit Committee

Darleen Harens
952-435-6910
daharens@gmail.com

Nominating Committee

Lucy Johnson
651-224-7102
lucyhjohnson@msn.com

Secretary

Beverly Kennedy
612-237-6866
millie0712@comcast.net

Budget & Finance

Judy Twisk
612- 819-8064
judytwisk@aol.com

Public Relations

Treasurer

Judy Twisk
612-819-8064
judytwisk@aol.com

Bylaws Committee

Gloria de Meireles
651-483-2551
franglo8@msn.com

Seminars Committee

Miriam Simmons
651-439-2062
mgsimmons52@hotmail.com

Immediate Past President

Josh Martin
763-688-3191
Jcmartin7872@gmail.com

Convention Committee

Miriam Simmons
651-439-2062
mgsimmons52@hotmail.com

Web Site Committee

Michael Orr
763-576-9743
orrx0012@umn.edu

Editor

Robert Vokes
952-237-371
hisfootness#@comcast.net

Education Committee

Miriam Simmons
651-439-2062
mgsimmons52@hotmail.com

Northern Lights Parliamentarians

Richard Skimland, President
763-703-3776
skimland4@gmail.com

Historian

Patricia Reymann
651-454-4702
patreymann@comcast.net

Judging & Youth Educ.

Darleen Harens
952-435-6910
daharens@gmail.com

St. Paul Unit

Miriam Simmons, President
651-439-2062
mgsimmons52@hotmail.com

Ad hoc Committee on Added Value

Lucy Johnson
651-224-7102
lucyhjohnson@msn.com

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FUTURE EVENTS

MSAP BOD Meeting
August 27, 2020
7:00-9:00 p.m.
Perkins, 4201 W 78th St
Bloomington

NAP Nat'l Training Conf.
August 28-30, 2020
Hilton Palacio del Rio
San Antonio, TX

MSAP Fall Seminar
October 3, 2020
Location TBD

MSAP BOD Meeting
October 22, 2020
7:00-9:00 p.m.
Perkins, 4201 W 78th St
Bloomington

Dahms-Bierbaum Workshop
November 6 –8, 2020
Hilton Hotel
3900 American Blvd W
Bloomington, MN

THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING ARTICLES FOR THE October 2020

The Minnesota Parliamentarian is
September 1, 2020.

Please submit to Robert Vokes at
hisfootness@comcast.com

Photos are always welcome.

MSAP: www.friendsofrobert.org

Editor's Note: the MSAP Standing Rules stipulate that the June/July issue of *The Minnesota Parliamentarian* shall include the MSAP *Bylaws & Standing Rules* and a Membership List. Rather than including these documents *within* the newsletter (which would make the newsletter inordinately long), they are attached to the email sent with this newsletter.