# Consultation: Proposed Amendment to Meeting Procedure Rules

November 6, 2026

This consultation closes **November 23, 2026**.

## Proposal

The MVMA Council is seeking member feedback on a proposal to amend General By-Law No. 1 to remove the requirement that unresolved procedural disputes be resolved under *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* (RONR). The proposal would replace RONR with accessible, MVMA-specific meeting rules that preserve order, fairness, and accountability while better supporting member participation.

The current bylaws require RONR to be used where a procedural dispute at a Council meeting, general meeting, or Annual General Meeting (AGM) is not addressed by *The Veterinary Medical Act* or the bylaws. Council is considering whether this default reliance on RONR remains appropriate for the MVMA.

## Current provisions

The relevant provisions are:

- **Division 4, Council Meetings, section 2-4-12:** A procedural dispute at a Council meeting not provided for in the Act or bylaw must be resolved in accordance with the current edition of RONR.
- **Division 5, Meetings of Members, section 2-5-14:** A procedural dispute at an annual meeting or general meeting not provided for in the Act or bylaw must be resolved in accordance with the current edition of RONR.

## Why change is proposed

RONR is a detailed parliamentary manual originally developed in the United States. While it can provide structure for formal meetings, Council has heard concerns that its rules may be overly complex, rigid, and intimidating for members who do not regularly use parliamentary procedure. Critics have also raised concerns that RONR can be difficult to

apply consistently, may not adequately support consensus-based decision-making, and may be used strategically by those familiar with its technical rules.

There are also practical concerns. If an unanticipated procedural dispute arises and no person present is sufficiently familiar with RONR, a Council meeting or member meeting could be delayed or adjourned while the issue is resolved. The availability of trained parliamentarians, particularly in Manitoba, has also declined; the Manitoba Association of Parliamentarians is no longer a chartered member of the National Association of Parliamentarians.

Finally, the MVMA has for several years adopted Special Rules for its AGMs. These rules are permitted under RONR and override many of its usual requirements. As a result, many procedural questions at the AGM are already resolved under MVMA-specific rules rather than RONR. The proposed change would align the bylaws with that practical reality.

## Proposed approach

Council is considering removing RRONR from the bylaws and replacing it with concise MVMA meeting rules. These rules would address matters such as:

- The Chair's role and authority;
- Making, seconding, debating, amending, and voting on motions;
- Member speaking rights and respectful participation;
- Points of order and procedural questions;
- Conflict-of-interest disclosures and abstentions;
- Adjournment, recess, and closing debate;
- Recording decisions in minutes.

Where a procedural issue is not addressed by the Act, the bylaws, or the new MVMA meeting rules, the Chair would be able to make a procedural ruling. That ruling could be challenged or appealed by the meeting or Council, as appropriate. This approach is intended to prevent meetings from becoming stalled while retaining a clear mechanism for resolving disputes.

The Special Rules used at last year's AGM provide a useful starting point and can be reviewed here (please note that you need to be logged in to access the document).

## What would not change

The proposal would not reduce member rights or remove core procedural protections. The Act and General By-Law No. 1 would continue to govern notice, agendas, quorum, voting, elections, member attendance and participation, and the introduction of new business.

## Feedback requested

Members are invited to provide written comments on the proposal, including:

1. Whether RRONR should be removed as the default procedural authority.
2. Which procedural protections should be expressly retained in replacement MVMA rules.
3. Whether simplified rules would make members more likely to participate in AGMs and other meetings.
4. Concerns about how unresolved procedural disputes should be handled.
5. Any suggested wording or alternative approaches.

Please submit comments in writing to **Corey Wilson, MVMA Executive Director and Registrar**, registrar@mvma.ca, no later than **November 23, 2026**. Submissions will be reviewed by the MVMA Council.