



October/November 2024

President's Corner: Rethinking Basic Training

I love being a Parliamentarian. I love learning more each day, pondering the rules and going deeper into their interpretations. I am grateful to each of you and all the parliamentarians who accompany me on this journey.

So, it was rather shocking (ok, not really), to hear Steven Bolen, PRP, proclaim at the NAP National Training Conference (NTC) that not everyone wants to be a parliamentarian! What?!?

In his presentation, *The Parliamentarian Heretic*, Bolen went on to say that in a meeting of 100 people, on average, 95 will vote, 20 will speak, and 5 will make a motion. Yet, as parliamentarians, he continued, we tend to focus our training efforts on the 5% with how to make motions, rules about motions, etc.

He challenged us to instead focus on increasing participation. He suggested that we need to teach members how and what questions to ask when they do not understand what is happening. In short, how to use or better use Incidental Motions especially if they are not clear about what the motion is or if the vote was accurate.

For me, this is a wake-up call to go back to the basics and focus on the fundamentals; teaching topics such as *what happens at a meeting, the role of the chair, or rights and responsibilities of members*. Part of my initial experience and training years ago was attending meetings that were well-run with an experienced parliamentarian, Pat Reymann, present. Watching and learning from Pat gave me an amazing baseline education. She was and is my role model.

Who are the role models at today's meetings? Are trained parliamentarians even present? How can we at MSAP better train the average meeting attendee to understand at least the basics of RONR? Perhaps one day, Mr. Bolen will be proven wrong, and everyone will want to be a parliamentarian!

In this season of Thanksgiving, I want to thank each of you for being a member of MSAP and for your efforts in advancing the profession. MSAP has two new members. Henry Koerner became a parliamentarian on September 18, 2024 and is a student at the University of Minnesota. Keshuna Williams, a parliamentarian since 2022, transferred her membership from Arizona and is a member of the St. Paul Unit. Welcome Henry and Keshuna! We are excited that you joined us. Have a blessed holiday season.

Lucy Johnson, PRP, MSAP President 2024-2025



The Minnesota Parliamentarian

NAP National Training Conference Reports

Our MSAP President was privileged to attend her second NAP National Training Conference (NTC) in San Antonio, Texas in September. This truly is one of her favorite conferences for a variety of reasons. With a smaller number of attendees (about 250) there was a more intimate, friendly atmosphere. Yet, the sessions were very informative and productive. There was a wide variety of topics from beginning to more advanced subjects. One of her favorites was “The Parliamentarian Heretic” by Steven Bolan, PRP. She has already incorporated some of the information learned from him into a presentation. She was most impressed with the variety of presenters – very experienced speakers such as two of the RONR authorship team to first- or second-time speakers such as herself. Having the opportunity to present was an experience in and of itself. From this presenter’s perspective, she found the conference to be well organized. Perhaps the best part was the socializing and making new friends. Visits to a chocolate/ice cream shop located a block from the hotel, the Opening Reception at a whiskey distillery and a Riverboat ride on the canal in addition to the Alamo made San Antonio a great place to visit.

Lucy Johnson, PRP, MSAP President 2024-2025



Please find information in this, and future editions of the *Minnesota Parliamentarian* on our website at: <https://www.msap.us/>

Many organizations use proxy voting and parliamentarians may encounter them occasionally – but Robert’s Rules says very little indeed about this type of voting. This was part of the motivation for a workshop at the NAP NTC by Miriam Simmons and David Whitaker: “*Parliamentarians in Peril: Proxies.*” One key takeaway was from the Code of Professional Responsibility, section 3.3, “*Decline any appointment [that] the parliamentarian is not competent to handle.*” Pertinent sections of RONR include 45:70-71. The AIP Standard Code has more information about proxies and even includes a sample proxy form in Appendix C.

Miriam Simmons, PRP, MSAP Vice-President 2024-2025

As a 1st time attendee, Carrie Roach found the orientation to be casual, generously informal, and very well attended – not only by first timers, but also by longtime attendees as it seemed those regular attendees really wanted to know who they had drawn into this year’s event to make a point of getting to know the new attendees. And it worked. The entire event was very collegial and filled with a lovely balance between casual conversation and deep learning. She prefers this conference over the convention, and she encourages you to attend.

Carrie Roach, RP, MSAP Editor 2024-2025

Kevin Dahlman was able to attend his first ever NAP NTC. He had frequently wanted to go, but his job and work obligations always prevented his attendance. Now being semi-retired, Kevin told himself, “This is the year!” He absolutely loved it, and would highly recommend anyone interested in parliamentary procedure to go. The workshops covered a wide variety of topics, and provided an opportunity to expand his knowledge.

Each of the seven workshops he attended were given by quality presenters who knew their material, and offered time for questions along with audience participation. The plenary sessions were interesting, and the food was good. There was even enough down time to mix with other attendees. Besides, where else can you be gathered with three to four hundred other parli nerds and feel right at home? He highly recommends attendance to everyone, and he knows he will attend again!

Kevin Dahlman, PRP, MSAP Member, NLP Member



Proposed amendments to the MSAP Bylaws and Standing Rules initiated by a member or members are due to the Bylaws and Standing Rules Committee, Bylaws@msap.us no later than **Wednesday, January 15th, 2024.**

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Dahms-Bierbaum Workshop Report

The six SPU members pictured below attended the Dahms-Bierbaum Workshop held in Bloomington, MN on November 1-3, 2024. The workshop explored the rights, duties and responsibilities of organizations, members, stakeholders, and their inter-relationships. The three presenters, Craig Henry, Evan Lemoine, and Colette Collier Trohan moved seamlessly from one topic to another and from one speaker to another, while keeping the presentations on-topic and allowing for a great deal of discussion and input from attendees. There were several



[Left to Right] Jeanette Williams, Miriam Simmons, Carrie Roach. Gloria de Meireles. Dave Whitaker. and Lucv Johnson

opportunities to work in small groups and exchange ideas with participant comments about all the topics covered during the workshop. The highlights of the workshop were the discussions on case-studies drawn from the presenters' actual experiences. Helpful information on how to understand complex financial statements, along with a presentation by scholarship recipient Julianne Henry who explained how a professional pharmacy association she belongs to has benefitted from her knowledge and participation in parliamentary procedures were especially good. Additionally, having time to network and socialize with colleagues was invaluable.

Gloria de Meireles, MSAP Bylaws Committee Chairman

More photos here:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1i9E-JRuvyhHrUmzt4DK7hd_mwg5MWiTs?usp=drive_link

* SAVE THE DATE *

Saturday, April 12th

MSAP Convention
{more information to come}



<https://comicskingdom.com/rhymes-with-orange/2024-11-17>

Everything you need to know about **membership** with the National Association of Parliamentarians (NAP) is found at:

<https://www.parliamentarians.org/membership#apply>

Everything you need to know about **the RP exam** is found at:

<http://www.parliamentarians.org/credentialing/rp>

Information on **the PRP exam** is found at:

<https://www.parliamentarians.org/credentialing/prp>

The Commission also published a revised version of the *Criteria for Credentialing* in August (8/4/2024). It lists the performance expectations for RPs and PRPs along with the resources to meet the standards. Find this document at https://www.parliamentarians.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/2024-08-05-Criteria-for-Credentialing_Final.pdf

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Veterans Day Observances

MSAP Immediate Past President, NLP Treasurer, and SPU member at large David Staehlin had a busy Veterans Day weekend by attending the official Minnesota Veterans Day Observance in Arden Hills, MN when his photo was taken and published in the Minnesota Star Tribune. To the right, Staehlin, commander of the Minnesota VFW greets the Minnesota State Commander of the Jewish War Veterans of the United States.



In the afternoon Staehlin was the guest speaker at the Veterans Day observance at the Minneapolis State Veterans Home and a photo of Governor Walz thanking Commander Staehlin for speaking is below.



MSAP Audit Committee: The 2023-2024 MSAP Audit report will be completed after the end of the fiscal year which ends on November 30, 2024. The MSAP Audit report will be prior to the January 2025 MSAP BOD meeting.

Darleen A. Harens, PRP

MSAP Youth Judging Committee: Members will be contacted for judging of youth parliamentary procedure teams after the committee chairman receives notice from the Business Professionals of America (BPA) and the Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FFCLA) organizations. Typically, the judging begins in January with the BPA regional competitions.

Darleen A. Harens, PRP

Nov. 11, a day of gratitude

Minnesota's Department of Veterans Affairs held a Veterans Day breakfast in Arden Hills on Monday to honor those who served. Above, Stew Mednick, left, department commander of the state Jewish War Veterans, greets David Staehlin, commander of the Minnesota VFW.

BE THANKFUL

Be thankful that you do not already have everything you desire. If you did, what would there be to look forward to?

Be thankful when you do not know something, for it gives you the opportunity to learn.

Be thankful for the difficult times, during those times you grow.

Be thankful for your limitations, because they give you opportunities for improvement.

Be thankful for your mistakes, they will teach you valuable lessons.

Be thankful when you are tired and weary, it means you have made a difference.

It is easy to be thankful for the good things, a life of rich fulfillment comes to those who are also thankful for the setbacks.

Gratitude can turn a negative into a positive, find a way to be thankful for your troubles and they can become your blessings.

Submitted by Darlene Harens
from NAP's, *Ceremonies for Your Meetings*

Gratitude
Appreciation

The Minnesota Parliamentarian

T'was The Night Before Christmas Parli Style

T'was the night before Christmas, and all through the land, most meetings were chaos; they'd get out of hand. Henry Robert decided, and wrote some new rules, and business was now fine, they had the right tools.



The members were nestled all snug in their chairs to take care of business and all its affairs. The treasurer and I had just settled our brains, for a super short meeting is all that remains.

When out in the room, there arose such a clatter, I sprang from my chair to see what was the matter. "Point of order," I shouted, "he was not recognized, we know not who he is, he looks quite disguised."

Away to the window I flew like a flash, tore open the shutters and threw up the sash. "Personal privilege," I hollered, "it's too cold in this room! I demand all my rights, and then we'll resume."

The figure just smiled, "Your request is denied, it's Christmas right now, so put your head back inside."



The moon, on the crest of the new fallen snow, gave luster of midday to objects below, when what to my wondering eyes should appear, but a mini agenda with eight rules to adhere.

"Lay the motion on the table, urgent business just came," I urged the assembly, "for he was to blame." But this was denied, and was not allowed, and he continued his journey, for which he seemed proud.

So with a little old chairman so lively and quick, I knew at a moment, this was no picnic, I stood in amazement, how can it be so, with him in control, everything just seems to flow?

More rapid than debates, his courses they came, and he whistled and shouted and called them by name:

"Now Recess, Appeal, Reconsider, and Main; on Division, Rescind, Amend, and Abstain! To the top of the chart, precedence shall reign high, now vote on, and vote on, majorities comply."



Motions yelled through the room, like the force of a gale, when they meet with a division, majority prevails, so up to the podium, the president flew, with the new parli rules, starts the meeting anew.



And then, in a twinkling, I heard in the crowd, a new item of business, and a second aloud. As I drew in my head, and was turning around the members were speaking, each speaker allowed.

They were orderly, civil, polite, and respectful; they were getting stuff done, it seemed quite successful. The chairman was happy, he seemed in control, and I wondered, just wondered, is he from the North Pole?

He spoke few, few words, and stayed right at his work, and dispensed all the motions, then turned with a jerk, and laying his gavel aside where he stood, said "It's time to adjourn, it all looks quite good."

The members then shouted, "Let's fix the time for next year," so they passed the high motion, they weren't cavalier. Christmas next year, and there was no debate, on the calendar it went, so he wouldn't be late.



The chairman again to the podium he rose, to the motion he signaled and the crowd all arose, and I heard him exclaim, ere he motioned forthright, "This meeting's adjourned, and to all a Good Night."

by Kevin A. Dahlman, PRP

SUBMISSION DEADLINE

for the
MARCH 2025 Issue
of

The Minnesota Parliamentarian is:

Friday, March 14, 2025

Please submit to Carrie Roach at Editor@MSAP.us Photos are always welcome. <https://www.MSAP.us>

Editor's Note: the MSAP Standing Rules stipulate that the October/November issue of *The Minnesota Parliamentarian* shall include the *Minutes of the 57th Annual Convention of the Minnesota State Association of Parliamentarians* which was held on Saturday, May 4, 2024, at the Cottage Grove VFW Post in Cottage Grove, MN. Rather than including this document within the newsletter (which would make the newsletter inordinately long), it is attached to the email sent with this newsletter.

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Northern Lights Parliamentarians

Northern Lights Parliamentarians (NLP) continues to meet by Zoom on the second Tuesday evening of each month, beginning at 6:30 PM.

We are pleased to have new provisional members Tim Held and Kevin Peterson. Welcome Tim and Kevin!

Recent education programs were led by Richard Skimland on 'Previous Question', Beverly Kennedy, RP, on 'Meeting Myths', David Staehlin on 'Short Cuts', and Robert Vokes on 'Minutes.'

St. Paul Unit

The St. Paul Unit (SPU) meets on the third Monday of the month (except February) at 9:30 a.m. via Zoom and in-person. A study session precedes the meeting at 8:30 a.m.

We are pleased to welcome our new members, Keshuna Williams and Kathy Panek!

The education portion of the meeting recently included 'Parliamentary Principles,' the review and discussion of the NAP National Training Conference by SPU members who attended in-person and remotely, 'Creating and Filling a Blank,' as well as responses from the SPU members who attended the Dahms-Bierbaum Foundation Workshop.

Guests are always welcome at our meetings. Please contact President Carrie Roach, RP for further information at President.SPU@MSAP.us.

FUTURE EVENTS

MSAP Board Meeting
Thursday, January 9, 2025
Zoom

MSAP Education Seminar
Saturday, January 25, 2025
Zoom

MSAP BOD Meeting
Thursday, March 13, 2025
Zoom

MSAP Annual Convention
Saturday, April 12, 2025
VFW, Maple Grove

**** CALL FOR ****
High School Contacts for MSAP
to initiate
Parliamentary Procedure
education with students
President@MSAP.us

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