CRD Best Practices Guide for Meetings

Legislative Services

Capital Regional District | May 2024

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Principles of Parliamentary Procedure

1. **Organization:** organization is first, no individual decision-making
2. **Fairness:** equal rights for all Members
3. **Quorum:** minimum number of voting Members required to do business
4. **Singularity**: only one motion and one speaker at a time
5. **Debate:** allow for full discussion before voting on any proposal
6. **Professionalism:** speak through the Chair not to an individual person
7. **Democracy:** Majority has the right to rule
8. **Inclusion:** Minority has a right for their voice(s) to be heard
9. **Silence:** is considered consent to allow others to make decision
10. **Defeated Motions:** limitations on when a decision may be presented again

Responsible Conduct of Elected Officials

The foundational principles of responsible conduct of local government elected officials are integrity, accountability, respect, leadership and collaboration. For more information, please visit the Province of British Columbia's webpage - Responsible conduct of locally elected officials.

The CRD Procedures Bylaw, more specifically, addresses the conduct of Members when speaking at a meeting such as addressing the Chair, using respectful language, and speaking only in connection to the matter being debated.

Parliamentary Procedure Hierarchy in Local Governments

Local Government Act
& Community Charter

CRD Bylaw

RRO
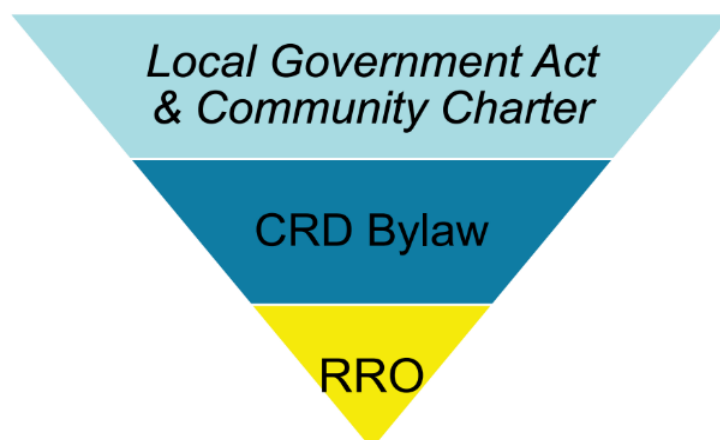
1.0 Types of Main Motions

Under Robert's Rules of Order ("RRO"), the main motion is a motion whose introduction brings business before an assembly for a decision. The CRD Board makes decisions by passing motions, also known as resolutions, to take a specified action.

Members of the CRD Board may move one of the following types of main motions:

- Main Motion: the recommended or alternative motion in a staff report, or the recommendation from a Committee.
- Motion Arising: a new motion asking that further action be taken on the business matter being considered.
- Notice of Motion: a motion to bring new business before the Board for consideration at a future meeting. The CRD Procedures Bylaw ("Procedures Bylaw" or "Bylaw") allows for same day consideration in very limited situations.

1.1 Main Motion

The CRD practice is to move the recommendation published on the meeting agenda. Recommendations most often originate from the staff report on the meeting agenda. If the report has been to Committee, the Committee may endorse the staff recommendation or submit an amended or different recommendation for the Board's consideration. The staff recommendation is only a recommendation. It is in the purview of the Board, and its Standing Committees, to either:

a) move the recommendation [from Committee or staff] as published on the agenda; or
b) move one of the alternatives in the report; or
c) if there is no interest in the presented options, move a new alternative motion.

The challenge with moving a new alternative motion is determining whether it is feasible and within the scope of possibilities of the regional district from a regulatory and operational lens. The Chair should confirm with staff that the new recommendation is feasible.

Best Practice: All new recommendations are provided in writing to the Corporate Officer (or Deputy).

Best Practice: Where a new recommendation is of major import, staff be directed to report back on implications of the decision before the Members endorse the main motion.

A common challenge for Members is being able to differentiate whether the motion they wish to put forward is an amendment to the main motion, a new motion that is arising from business matters before the Board, or a notice of motion to consider taking on a new action.

The Chair makes the ruling on whether a motion is an amendment, a motion arising, or a notice of motion. If a Member disagree with the Chair's ruling they may raise a point of order. If the Chair rules the motion is in order, the Member may appeal the Chair's decisions. For more information, refer to the section in this guide on *"Point of Order"* and *"Appeal the Decision of the Chair".*

1.2 Motion Arising
The Board's practice has been to treat motions arising as a stand-alone motion calling for an additional action to complement the main motion before the Board.

Best Practice: Motions arising are voted on separately once the main motion is voted on.

Best Practice: All motions arising are provided in writing to the Corporate Officer (or Deputy) to be visually displayed during debate and voting.

1.3 Notice of Motion
Members may bring forward a new matter for the Board's decision through a notice of motion process in accordance with section 22(6) and (7) of the Procedures Bylaw. The procedure requires that notice be read in at a meeting and provided in writing to staff for the minutes. The motion with notice is then published on the next agenda for discussion and voting.

Best Practice: The Procedures Bylaw provides the Chair with the ability to refer the Notice of Motion to another body if the Chair believes it would be better dealt with in that way.

The notice of motion procedure supports collaborative and transparent governance by providing:

- Directors sufficient time to give thought to the matter and prepare for a fulsome discussion at a future meeting;
- notice that the matter will be discussed on the published agenda; and
- providing an opportunity for the public to provide comments before a decision is made.

1.4 Same Day Consideration
The Procedures Bylaw provides an exception for same day consideration with a 2/3 affirmative vote provided that there is an urgent deadline, the issue is of minor organizational impact, or to support the position of a member local government.

For more information, see Appendix B: Notice of Motion Process (Flowchart).

Table 1.1: Procedure for Notice of Motion/Motion with Notice vs. Same Day Consideration

Notice of Motion (Meeting #1)	Motion with Notice (Meeting #2)	Same Day Consideration
No motion required	Mover and seconder required	2 motions required
Read motion into the record	Motion published on agenda	Move same day consideration If successful, move Motion
Notice recorded in Minutes	Vote recorded in Minutes	Vote(s) recorded in Minutes
No vote	Majority Vote	2/3 vote on Consideration Majority on Motion

2.0 Amendments

All types of main motions may be amended once they have been moved, seconded and are put before the assembly for consideration.

Amendments:

- only one amendment to the main motion at a time
- maximum of one further amendment to an amendment (for a total of 2 max)
- each amendment is voted on separately
- if successful, requires that a vote be taken on the main motion as amended

Best Practice: That amendments be strictly relevant to the main motion and not alter in a material way or be contrary in principle.

Best Practice: The proposed amendment is necessary to support the main motion.

Please note, it is not proper procedure to amend a motion to "grant funds" by inserting a negative word in order to change the intent of the motion to "not" granting those funds. The proper procedure is to vote down the main motion.

Best Practice: That significant amendments be provided in writing to the Corporate Officer (or Deputy) to be visually displayed when debating and voting.

Table 2.1: Types of Main Motions vs. Amendment

Motion Type (Procedures Bylaw)	Example(s)
Main Motion/ Recommendation s. 22(1)	That the Governance Committee recommends to the CRD Board: That staff be directed to conduct public engagement on the proposed design for…
Amendment s. 22(4)	That the motion be amended by adding the following after "public engagement": "including online and in-person opportunities"
Motion Arising s. 22(5)	That the report be forwarded to municipal councils for information… That the Board Chair send a letter to the Minister of Municipal Affairs… That staff provide supplementary information when the report is presented to the Board.
Notice of Motion s.22(6) & 22(7)	That staff be directed to report back through the Governance Committee on options to address ….

Table 2.2: Amendment Examples

		Example(s)
Main Motion		*That the CRD host a public celebration for Canada Day in Centennial Square.*
Primary Amendment(s)		*That the motion be amended by...*
Example **A**	✔	inserting *"and invite City of Victoria to participate"* after the words *"Centennial Square"*
Example **B**	✔	inserting *"with outreach booths, food trucks, and live entertainment"* after the words *"public celebration"*
Example **C**	✔	striking *"Centennial Square"* and inserting *"Elk/Beaver Lake Regional Park"*
Example **D**	X	inserting *"not consider"* before the word *"host"* [Changes intent of the motion] *BP: Vote against the main motion*
Example **E**	X	striking *"Canada Day"* and inserting *"BC Day"* [Alters main motion in a material way] *BP: Vote against the main motion* *BP: Serve Notice of Motion for new event*
Example **F**	X	Inserting *"That the number of attendees be tracked and used to evaluate the success of the event."* [Not directly related to the decision of whether or not to host the event] *BP: Move as a Motion Arising if the main motion is carried*
Secondary Amendment(s)		<u>Primary Amendment using Example B</u> inserting *"with outreach booths, food trucks, and live entertainment"* after the words *"public celebration"*
Example **G**	✔	*That the motion be FURTHER amended by...* inserting *"and that free cake be served"* after the words *"live entertainment"*
Example **H**	X	*That the motion be FURTHER amended by...* inserting *"from 12 noon to 6 pm"* after the words *"live entertainment"* [Not directly related to amending wording of the amendment on the floor] *BP: Wait until current amendment is voted on before moving another amendment*

3.0 Moving of Recommendation(s)

In practice, a Member may move the recommendation (from staff report or Committee); or one of the alternatives presented in the report; or move a different motion which they should provide in writing at the meeting.

The first time a report is presented, the Chair may allow Members to move the staff recommendation before any alternative motions or amendments can be raised. This would allow for a fulsome discussion on the staff recommended course of action before discussion is redirected to alternatives.

Best Practice: That the Standing Committee Chair first recognize a Member that wishes to move the recommendation in the staff report before considering other alternatives.

When applied at Board, Members should be made aware of the context of any amendments made at Committee to ensure Committee input is presented before the Board's consideration of the issue. To accomplish this, a note is published on the Board agenda highlighting any changes to the staff recommendation at Committee. The recommendation published on the Board agenda will be the recommendation from the Committee.

Best Practice: That the Board Chair first recognize the Standing Committee Chair to move the recommendation from Committee.

3.1 MOTION PROCESSING AT COMMITTEE *(or when a report is direct to Board)*

1. First the Chair seeks questions from Members on the report before a motion is put forward.

2. The Chair recognizes a Mover and Seconder on the staff recommendation.

3. If there is no interest in moving the staff recommendation, the Chair recognizes a Mover and Seconder on one of the Alternatives in the staff report.

4. If there is no Mover or Seconder for the recommendation or alternatives presented in the staff report, the Chair recognizes a Member who wishes to Move a new motion arising that is directly related to the report subject matter and issue.

5. Comments are only permitted once a motion has been put on the floor for debate.

3.2 MOTION PROCESSING AT BOARD *(when a report has been to Committee)*
1. The Board Chair recognizes the Committee Chair to move the Committee recommendation as published on the agenda.
2. Questions and comments are permitted once the motion has been put on the floor for debate.

3.3 Receive for Information

Historically, the staff reports to the Board have included a recommendation to *"Receive for Information"* when no decision is required.

The recommendation is to move away from the practice to *"Receive for Information"* for the following reasons:

- Report was received when it was published on the meeting agenda
- Passing a motion to receive does not endorse the taking of any specific action
- If defeated, the report was already received at the approval of the agenda

Staff have identified a need to update staff report recommendation practices to move away from a recommendation to *"Receive for Information"*. Instead, staff reports will include a statement under recommendation stating that, *"There is no recommendation. This report is for information only."*

If there is further action being taken by staff, for example, the development of a plan, the recommendation would be more appropriate as, *"That staff proceed with community consultation on the draft plan."*

Best Practice: For information reports, Chair invites staff to present the report and address any question. At the conclusion of the question period, the Chair announces the completion of the agenda item and introduces the next item.

4.0 Delaying the Vote on a Motion

4.1 Postpone Indefinitely vs. Objection to the Consideration of the Question

To drop the main motion without a direct vote is the motion to *"postpone indefinitely"*. Only before debate has commenced can an *"objection to the consideration of the question be raised"*.

4.2 Lay on the Table

A common misconception is that tabling a motion puts the matter off to another day or kills the motion. In both cases, this is an improper use of the motion in RRO *"to lay on the table"* or simply to *"table"*. To table is to temporarily pause consideration of a matter in order to address a more urgent matter before returning to pending question <u>in the same meeting</u>.

4.3 Postpone to a Certain Time

Unlike a motion to lay on the table, the motion to *"postpone to a certain time"* must specify the period of time (e.g. next meeting).

4.4 Refer

If the Board is seeking advice from a Committee, the proper motion is to *"refer"* the business matter to the Committee, along with any directions, and ask that they report back.

4.5 Referrals to Other Standing Committees

Section 26(3) of the Procedures Bylaw states that a Board Standing Committee will carry out any matter referred by the Board or the Chair of the Board. The role of the Standing Committee is not to delegate referrals to other Standing Committees. The challenge with sending a matter to multiple Committees is the possibility of contradictory recommendations from two Committees converging on the Board agenda.

Best Practice: Standing Committees should not refer items to other Standing Committees without Board approval, except for service planning reports advancing to Committee of the Whole.

Please note, recommendations of referrals to additional Committees would take up to two months to proceed through Committee to Board, to another Committee, and back to board for final consideration.

Table 4.1: Motions to Delay Consideration of a Matter

Motion	Script	Effect	When to Use
Objection to the Consideration of the Question – *before debate*	*"I object to the consideration of the question."*	• To drop [defeat] the main motion without debate • **Two-thirds vote**	• To stop discussion on an undesirable matter • When consideration of a matter is not the best use of time • To avoid debate and vote on an undiplomatic matter
Postpone Indefinitely – *after debate begins*	*"I move to postpone the question indefinitely."*	• To drop [defeat] the main motion without a direct vote • Motion will not be considered for six months, except with the unanimous consent of the Board *(Procedures Bylaw)* • **Majority vote**	• To avoid a vote on an undiplomatic matter
Postpone to a Certain Time	*"I move to postpone the question until …"*	• Delay a vote on a matter until a future meeting • **Majority vote**	• When more information is indirectly forthcoming (e.g. Provincial announcement) • Invite a guest presenter • Following a decision to be made in the future
Lay on the Table	*"I move to lay the question on the table"*	• Delay further consideration of a matter until a later time in a meeting • **Majority vote**	• When emerging business matters on the agenda needs to be addressed immediately • Accommodate a guest presenter (i.e. solicitor) • Make a decision on another agenda item which will impact the pending question.
Refer	*"I move to refer the matter to …"*	• Delay a vote until a recommendation is received. • **Majority vote**	• When an expert opinion on a matter is favourable.

5.0 Limiting or Extending Time Limits

5.1 Time Limits in Procedures Bylaw

The Procedures Bylaw does not set an overall time limit for debate on each question, instead it has limits on the speaking times for Members. In addition, the Procedures Bylaw includes a number of time limits and specifies that extension to the prescribed times may be done by majority or two-thirds vote as outlined in the below Table. As the Procedures Bylaw is silent on limiting of time, the RRO will apply with any time limitations requiring a two-thirds vote.

Best Practice: A motion to reduce meeting limits will require a two-thirds vote.

Table 5.1: Time Limits in Procedures Bylaws

Bylaw Section	Subject	Maximum Time	Vote to Extend Time	Related Notes
6.1	Meeting	3 Hours	Majority	*Based on scheduled start time*
13(1)	Delegation	3 Minutes	Two-Thirds	*Late Delegation = unanimous vote*
14(3)	Presentation	10 Minutes	Majority	-
24(7)	First Time Speaker	15 Minutes	Majority	-
24(8)	Second Time Speaker – with time remaining	Remaining Time	Majority	-
24(8)	Second Time Speaker – spoken for 15 minutes	5 Minutes	Two-Thirds	*Vote required before speaking*

5.2 Closing Debate

The Procedures Bylaw gives the Chair the discretion to announce the closure of debate and the putting of a question to a vote.

5.3 Previous Question

The Procedures Bylaw states that a motion to adjourn the debate will always be in order regardless if there are Members wishing to speak. Under RRO, the motion to immediately close debate and vote without the making of new subsidiary motions is referred to as the *"Previous Question"*. The motion can only be made when the speaker has the floor, requires a seconder, is not amendable or debatable, and requires a two-thirds vote.

Best Practice: In accordance with RRO, moving the "previous question" is not allowed in Committee to facilitate fulsome discussion of agenda items.

6.0 Emerging Issues and Questions

6.1 Point of Order

A point of order must be raised immediately when a Member believes that the rules of order are being violated and wish for the Chair to enforce the rules or make a ruling. A point of order does not require a seconder and can interrupt another Member who is speaking.

Point of Order Examples:

- limiting comments to the motion on the floor
- prioritizing first time speakers
- objecting to the validity of a motion or amendment

A point of order is often confused with the motions raising a question of privilege, parliamentary inquiry, and point of information.

6.2 Question of Privilege

Raising a *"Question of Privilege"* is allowed to interrupt the pending business to state an urgent request or motion if a Member or the Board's rights or privilege are being affected.

Question of Privilege Examples:

- interfering noise
- malfunctioning audio-visual equipment
- discussion of confidential subject matters in an open meeting
- request visual display of a motion

6.3 Parliamentary Inquiry

A parliamentary inquiry is made when a Member has a question about the rules and how they apply to the current proceeding or to something that the Member would like to propose. Unlike a Point of Order, a Member may only interrupt a speaker if the question requires immediate attention such as before the calling of a question.

Parliamentary Inquiry Examples:

- to clarify the question that is being put to a vote
- confirming the voting threshold needed for a motion to be carried
- the result of a vote

6.4 Point of Information

A request for information, commonly referred to as *"point of information"*, is very similar to a parliamentary inquiry. A request for information is to ask a non-procedural question on the facts of business matter before the Board. The question must be directed to the Chair who will then direct the request to the appropriate individual to respond.

Point of Information Examples:

- the budget for the matter under consideration
- the previous time a decision was made on the same matter
- the timing of other decisions that may impact the current matter under consideration

Best Practice: The Chair opens the floor for questions before seeking movers and opening a matter for debate to hear comments.

For clarity, having a question period before moving a motion or opening the floor for debate does not negate the ability for Members to raise more questions during the course of debate.

7.0 Reconsideration

7.1 Appeal the Decision of the Chair

In addition to preserving order and professional conduct during a meeting, the role of the Chair is to rule on all points of order. Once a Member has interjected with *"Point of Order"*, the Chair will recognize the Member to hear their point of order. The Chair will then state the reason they agree or disagree with the point of order by continuing with the current process or correcting it.

Any Member may appeal a decision of the Chair if they do not agree with the Chair's ruling. In accordance with the Procedures Bylaw, an appeal will be dealt with forthright and without debate by the Chair putting the question, *"Shall the Chair be sustained?"*. The Chair is excluded on the vote on sustaining the Chair and requires a simple majority of 50% to be successful.

7.2 Reconsideration of a Previous Decision

In rare cases, new information on the facts of a matter come to light after a decision has been made by the Board. In accordance with the Procedures Bylaw, only the Chair may initiate a reconsideration by the next regular meeting, if the decision has not already been acted on.

Best Practice: The Chair must state the reason for reconsideration and after moving the motion advise on any recommended amendments.

Table 7.1: Reconsideration Process for CRD, Regional Districts and Municipal Councils

Board Procedures Bylaw	Local Government Act	Community Charter
Section 23	Section 217	Section 131
Chair is only Member who may initiate reconsideration	Chair initiated at same meeting or at next regular meeting	Mayor initiated at same meeting or within 30 days
Limited to matters that have not been acted on		
Conditions that applied to original decision apply to its rejection (i.e. notice and voting threshold)		

7.3 Withdrawal of a Motion

From time to time, the mover of a motion may change their mind once they hear from other speakers on the matter. Under RRO, after a motion has been stated by the Chair and debate opens the motion belongs to the assembly. If it appears that a decision on the matter is not a good use of the assembly's time, the mover may request of the Chair that the motion be withdrawn.

Best Practice: When a mover requests withdrawal of a motion, the Chair will confirm there is unanimous consent from the assembly for the motion to be withdrawn. Withdrawn motions and debate are not recorded in the minutes.

8.0 Electronic Meetings

8.1 Attendance

In accordance with Procedures Bylaw, the Chair, Vice Chair, or presiding Member, must be physically in attendance at the meeting location provided in the Notice of the Meeting.

Attendance will be taken when there is a Member participating electronically to ensure that the Member can hear the meeting and be heard.

Best Practice: After calling the meeting to order, the Chair calls upon the Members participating electronically to vocalize their attendance, then the Chair introduces the Members present in the room.

Best Practice: A Member participating electronically must log-off the online meeting platform when they have to leave or step-away from the meeting. This is crucial for counting the vote on a Board with 24 Members.

8.2 Use of Video

Members are required to have their video cameras turned on at minimum when speaking and voting, or as required by the Chair. The exception to using a video camera will be when there are technical issues such as limited bandwidth. It is recommended that Members setup a video background filter for confidentiality purposes and to protect the image of people who may walk by in the background, and ensure they are in a private location for discussion of closed meeting matters.

Best Practice: That Members participating electronically have their video turned on at all times when the meeting is in session and avoid any outside distractions.

Best Practice: That Members participating electronically keep their audio on mute except when speaking.

8.3 Use of Chat

The use of chat box is limited to raising issues with the viewing or hearing of the meeting, or to indicate that a Member would like to speak. The chat box should not be used for commentary on the proceedings of the meeting or to discuss matters between Members. Members are not to carry on private conversation with other Members in the meeting. Any questions or concerns should be sent to "EVERYONE" in the group so the matter can be rectified forthright and brought to the attention of the Chair.

8.4 Conflict of Interest

If a Member needs to recuse themselves due to conflict of interest, the Member will be placed in a lobby (waiting room) until the next agenda item. Before leaving a meeting, a Member will raise a point of

privilege and announce they will be recusing themselves from discussion on a matter due to conflict of interest. The Member will be placed in a separate waiting room within the online meeting platform so that they may not hear or view meeting proceedings.

Best Practice: The Member will declare a conflict of interest by stating the nature of the conflict before recusing themselves from the meeting during discussion of the matter.

APPENDIX A: CRD Meeting Rules Cheat Sheet

Motion Type	Script	Interrupt Speaker	Seconder Needed	Debate	Amendable	Vote Needed
Motion	"I move that…"	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority[1]
Objection to the Consideration of the Question	"I object to the consideration of the question."	Yes	No	No	No	2/3
Postpone Indefinitely	"I move to postpone the question indefinitely."	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
Amend	"I move to amend the motion by… - Inserting - Striking out - Substituting"	No	Yes	Yes	Yes[2]	Majority
Refer	"I move to refer the matter to…"	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Postpone to a Certain Time (future meeting)	"I move to postpone the question until…"	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Limit or Extend Debate	"I move that debate be limited (or extended) to…"	No	Yes	No	Yes	2/3
Previous Question	"I move the previous question…"	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
Lay on the Table (same meeting)	"I move to lay the question on the table"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Point of Order	"Point of Oder"	Yes	No	No	No	-
Appeal the Chair's Decision	"Shall the Chair be sustained?"	Yes	No	No	No	50%[3]
Point of Information/Parliamentary Inquiry	"Point of Information"	Yes	No	No	No	-
Question of Privilege	"Question of Privilege"	Yes	No	No	No	-
Recess	"I move that we recess until…"	No	Yes	Yes[4]	Yes	Majority
Adjourn	"I move to adjourn"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Adjourn to a Fixed Time	"I move that the meeting be adjourned until…"	No	Yes	Yes[5]	Yes	Majority

FOOTNOTES: CRD Procedures Bylaw

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[1] **Motion:** Adoption of Bylaw at same meeting as third reading requires at least 2/3 vote
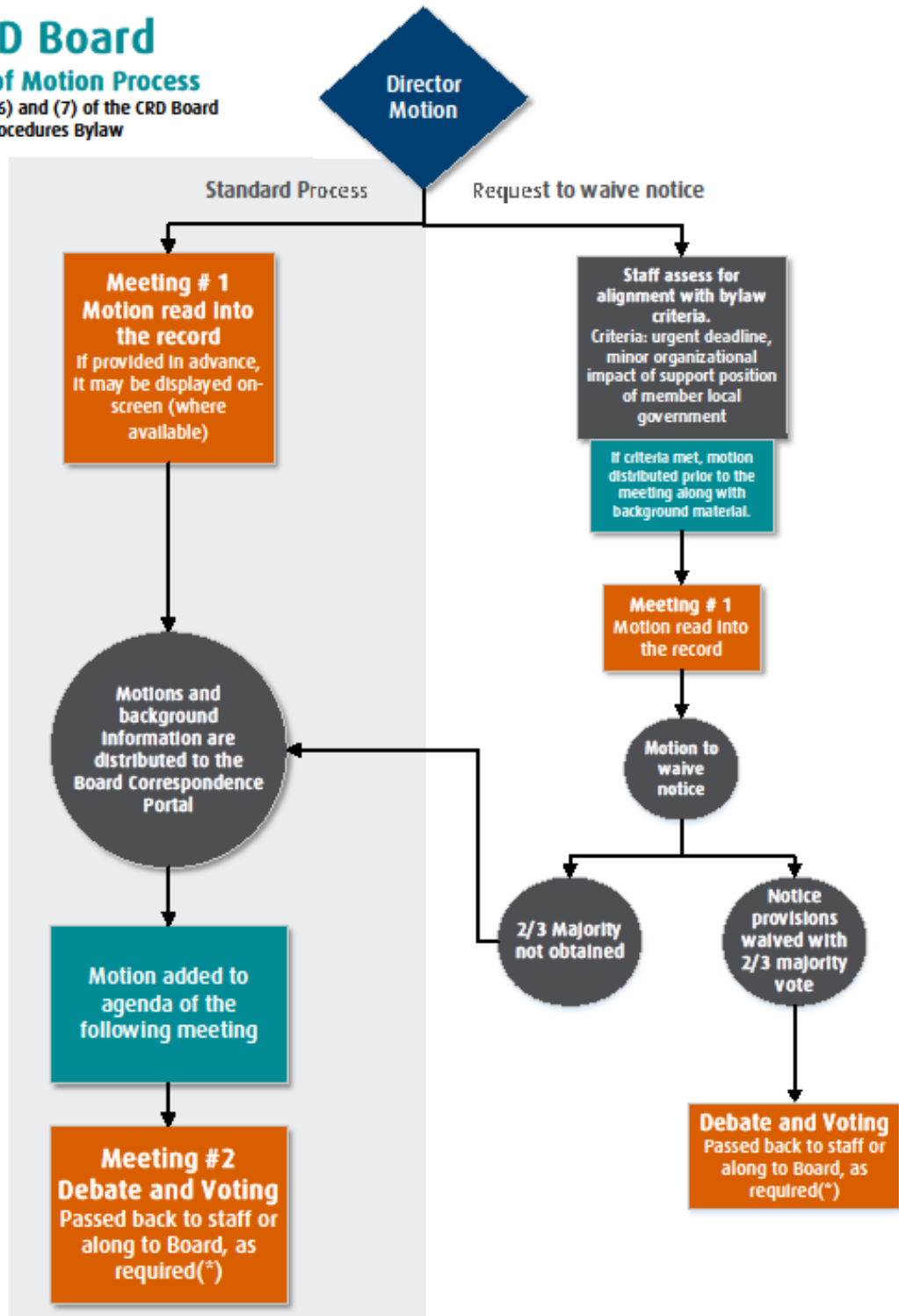[2] **Amend:** Maximum of 2 amendments
[3] **Appeal Chair's Decision/Sustaining the Chair:** Chair does not vote
[4] **Recess:** Not debatable when there is a question pending
[5] **Adjourn to a Fixed Time:** Only debatable when there is no other motion on the floor

APPENDIX B: Notice of Motion Process Flowchart

CRD Board
Notion of Motion Process
As per s. 22 (6) and (7) of the CRD Board Procedures Bylaw

Director Motion

Standard Process | Request to waive notice

Meeting # 1 Motion read into the record
If provided in advance, it may be displayed on-screen (where available)

Staff assess for alignment with bylaw criteria.
Criteria: urgent deadline, minor organizational impact of support position of member local government

If criteria met, motion distributed prior to the meeting along with background material.

Meeting # 1 Motion read into the record

Motions and background information are distributed to the Board Correspondence Portal

Motion to waive notice

2/3 Majority not obtained

Notice provisions waived with 2/3 majority vote

Motion added to agenda of the following meeting

Meeting #2 Debate and Voting
Passed back to staff or along to Board, as required(*)

Debate and Voting
Passed back to staff or along to Board, as required(*)

(*) Guidelines on when items should stay at committee/go to Board: Motions that request more information from staff but do not take a position, require significant revision of staff work plans or commit the Board to a political position can stay at the committee level. Items that do require significant work, take advocacy or political positions, or those that commit the organization to a position should go to the Board prior to reports back or implementation.