

## **UUA GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2023 RULES OF PROCEDURE**

PURPOSE: The goals of the Rules of Procedure are:

- Decisions are based on the will of the majority in accordance with UU values, principles, UUA Bylaws and rules. Delegates have the chance to express a range of opinions as part of the decision-making process.
- Delegates know how they can participate in business discussions and voting at General Assembly in a respectful, transparent and inclusive way.
- Business discussions are predictable in order to be accessible and move smoothly to make the best use of everyone's time.
- Both online and onsite delegates have equitable opportunities to participate in discussion and voting on business items.

These Rules of Procedure apply to every item on the Final Agenda and are the same for both online and onsite delegates. They include separate rules for items that get added to the Final Agenda during GA. They do not apply to UUA elections, which are governed by separate rules.

As used in these Rules of Procedure, the term "Moderator" includes the people elected as Moderator, as well as any individual or team appointed by them to lead or facilitate the business discussion process, unless otherwise specified.

### **RULE 1: ADOPTING AND CHANGING THESE RULES OF PROCEDURE**

The first thing the General Assembly must do is adopt these Rules of Procedure. The Assembly will do this at the first General Session. Delegates may not debate or amend the Rules of Procedure before they are adopted. The Rules of Procedure require a 2/3 majority vote to pass.

If any proposed changes to the Rules of Procedure receive sufficient support at a mini-assembly prior to General Assembly (per UUA Rule 4.18.5), they may be considered after the initial vote to adopt the Rules of Procedure. Proposals to suspend the rules will be considered only if the Moderator believes it is essential for the business of the assembly. Once adopted, the Rules of Procedure require a 4/5 majority vote to be changed or suspended.

### **RULE 2: FINAL AGENDA AND ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The Final Agenda is set by the Board of Trustees, and the UUA Bylaws define how items can be added to the agenda. All business items listed on the Final Agenda that require a vote will be scheduled for discussion during a General Session. The Board of Trustees or the Commission on Social Witness will introduce the discussion of each item of business. The items of business on the Final Agenda may include:

- Proposed business resolutions
- Proposed changes to Article II of the UUA Bylaws, submitted by the Article II Study Commission under Bylaw Section C-15.1(c)(3)
- Proposed changes to a Bylaw or Bylaw G-Rule
- Proposed Statements of Conscience
- Other motions added during General Assembly.

The flow of discussion will be managed and led by a Moderator. The Assembly will consider the items on the Final Agenda in the order listed in that agenda. The Moderator decides the order in which amendments to items on the Final Agenda may be discussed.

### RULE 3: VOTING AND COUNTING VOTES

At least 300 accredited delegates representing at least 100 congregations located in at least 10 states or provinces must be present for discussion and voting to begin at General Assembly. When this is true, the Assembly has a “quorum,” per UUA Bylaws Section 4.10. Delegates must log in through the online delegate platform to receive their credentials in order to vote and be counted towards the quorum.

Delegates must vote on an electronic device, such as a computer or smartphone, which can access the delegate platform. Computer terminals will be available near the General Session Hall for onsite delegates to vote.

There will be a daily ballot on the delegate platform that lists the items delegates will vote on that day. Each item on the daily ballot will be scheduled for discussion that day (if discussion is needed). All business items and amendments may be voted on only after they have been discussed in a General Session.

The ballot will open after the General Session, and remain open until 10:00 PM ET / 9:00 PM CT / 8:00 PM MT / 7:00 PM PT. The Moderator may extend the time the ballot is open if they determine it is essential for the business of the assembly. The results will be available on-line promptly after balloting is closed.

The UUA Bylaws or these Rules of Procedure specify the percentage of affirmative votes needed for an item of business to pass. Only votes for and against a business item will be counted towards the percentage needed to pass.

The Moderator may ask for a straw poll on any question. Straw polls are not official votes, they are a tool to help the Moderator understand how delegates are currently feeling or thinking.

Delegates may not make a proposal to table (postpone), reconsider, move the previous question (end discussion), or take any other action related to a business item except

for those actions identified in these Rules of Procedure, unless permitted to do so by the Moderator.

#### RULE 4: MINUTES

The Recording Secretary and UUA legal counsel draft the minutes of the General Assembly General Sessions, which are the official record of the decisions made. The draft minutes remain in draft form until the Board of Trustees adopts them at a future Board meeting.

#### RULE 5: AMENDMENTS TO REGULAR BUSINESS ITEMS

The process for submitting amendments to regular business items Amendments to items on the regular business agenda will be considered if they receive sufficient support at the mini-assembly prior to General Assembly, per Rule 4.18.5 of the UUA Bylaws. Amendments will be scheduled for discussion and voting during a General Session, unless they are incorporated by the Board of Trustees into the final text of the item on the final agenda. Such discussion and voting for amendments will be scheduled as a separate business item at least one day before the item they are amending is scheduled for discussion and vote. This will allow time for approved amendments to be incorporated into the final version of the item. Proposed amendments require a 2/3 majority vote to be approved.

Items added to the Final Agenda during General Assembly, including Actions of Immediate Witness, Budget Motions and Responsive Resolutions, may not be amended.

The Moderator may make exceptions to this rule for technical amendments (to make things clearer or more consistent but do not change the meaning).

#### RULE 6: AMENDMENTS AND VOTING ON THE ARTICLE II PROPOSAL

The process for delegates to submit amendments to the Article II proposal is defined by Bylaws Section C-15.1(c) and Rule 15.1.1. Amendments may be submitted in advance, and must be submitted through the online delegate platform, with a limit of one amendment submission per delegate.

The mini-assembly on the Article II proposal will be held on Thursday, June 22, 2023 at 12:30 pm ET / 11:30 am CT / 10:30 am MT / 9:30 am PT. This will be an all-virtual mini-assembly, and the link will be posted on the delegate platform. The mini-assembly will be organized by the Moderator to offer opportunities to present and discuss amendments, and is the deadline for delegates to submit amendments for the Article II proposal. The Moderator will decide how proposed amendments are discussed. No voting on proposed amendments will be required during the mini-assembly.

The elected UUA Moderator will decide the order of amendments to be discussed in General Session, in consultation with the chair of the Article II Study Commission, parliamentarian and legal counsel, per Bylaws Section C-15.1(c)(3)(ii). The Moderator may decide to combine submitted amendments into one or more “combined amendments,” after consulting with the delegates who submitted the original amendments and identifying a primary sponsor for the combined amendment. Under these rules of procedure, only amendments that are considered in the General Session may be voted on. Proposed amendments to the Article II proposal require a majority vote to be adopted.

The Article II proposal, including any adopted amendments, will be voted on as a single package. This vote will be for preliminary approval. If the proposal receives preliminary approval, it will continue the process for Article II to be further considered as defined in the UUA Bylaws, with a final vote set for General Assembly 2024. Preliminary approval of the Article II proposal package requires a majority vote.

## RULE 7: HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN DISCUSSIONS

Delegates speak during the General Session through two lines of speakers, when they are recognized by the Moderator. Tellers from the Board of Trustees will monitor each line. Both onsite and online delegates will have the opportunity to speak.

### **Pro and Con Lines**

1. The first line is called the **Pro Line**. If a delegate wants to speak in favor of the item being discussed, they can join the Pro Line.
2. The second line is called the **Con Line**. If a delegate wants to raise a concern about the item being discussed, they can join the Con Line. Only concerns that would keep the delegate from voting in favor of the item being discussed are allowed in the Con Line.

Each delegate may speak only once in the Pro or Con Line on an item of business until everyone else who wants to speak has had the chance.

The Moderator will decide if a comment is appropriate, or “in order,” for each line. The Moderator may also allow other miscellaneous comments if the Moderator thinks it would be helpful to the Assembly.

### **Information Desk**

Delegates may ask clarifying questions during General Session or raise a procedural concern at the Information Desk. Tellers can relay issues raised at the Information Desk to the Moderator so they can be addressed.

## RULE 8: TIME LIMITS FOR DISCUSSION

There will be a time limit for each item scheduled for discussion during a General Session. The Moderator may make small extensions or changes to these time limits to help the meeting move smoothly and remain within the agenda.

- During discussion time, delegates may speak on the item up for discussion from the Pro or Con line for up to two minutes when it is their turn.
- The only time that counts against the time limit is when someone is speaking from the Pro or Con Line. Time spent by members of the Board of Trustees or Commission on Social Witness explaining the business being discussed does not count against the time limit.
- The Moderator will try to divide the time between Pro and Con speakers equally, and will alternate between speakers in the Pro and Con lines for both onsite and online delegates.

### **Time Limits**

- Regular business items that were added to the Final Agenda prior to General Assembly will have a discussion time limit of 20 minutes. This includes proposed bylaw changes, business resolutions, congregational study/action issues, and statements of conscience.
- Amendments to a regular business item under Rule 5 will be discussed in an order determined by the Moderator. The sponsor of each amendment will have up to two minutes to present their amendment with additional pro/con discussion time as determined by the Moderator. The overall time limit to discuss amendments for each regular business item will be 12 minutes.
- Amendments to the Article II proposal under Rule 6 will be considered in the order decided by the Moderator. The sponsor of each amendment will have up to two minutes to present their amendment, with additional pro/con discussion time as determined by the Moderator. There may be a total of 12 minutes to discuss each amendment. The overall time limit for amendments to the Article II proposal will be 45 minutes per General Session in which these amendments are on the agenda.
- The Article II proposal package will have a discussion time limit of 45 minutes.
- Actions of Immediate Witness, Budget Motions and Responsive Resolutions will have a discussion time limit of 10 minutes. The overall time limit for budget motions and responsive resolutions combined will be 30 minutes.

### **Close of discussion**

Discussion on a business item ends when the time limit is up, or when no one is waiting to speak in either the Pro or Con line. The Moderator may end the discussion before the time limit if one of the Pro or Con lines has no one waiting to speak.

### **RULE 9: BUDGET MOTIONS**

A **Budget Motion** is a request to consider a change in the amount of money in an area of the UUA operating budget. Any motion to spend more money in one area must also say which area(s) of the budget will receive less money equal to the amount of the

requested increase. All Budget Motions must include a title, and text of up to 200 words explaining the requested change. The UUA Financial Secretary or Treasurer may provide commentary to delegates on any Budget Motion. Budget Motions will be reviewed by the UUA Board of Trustees to ensure the proposed motion meets the requirements stated above (see UUA Bylaws Rule 10.1.4). These motions are non-binding.

A discussion about the budget for 2023–2024 will take place online at 12:30 PM ET/ 11:30 AM CT / 10:30 AM MT / 9:30 AM PT. Any delegate can submit a Budget Motion to be added to the Final Agenda, and all submissions must be made in writing. Delegates may submit budget resolutions through a form on the delegate platform. Budget motions will be reviewed by UUA legal counsel to ensure they meet the qualifications for consideration.

The deadline to submit 2023–2024 Budget Motions is 5:30 PM ET / 4:30 PM CT / 3:30 PM MT / 2:30 PM PT on Friday, June 23, 2023. Budget motions require a 2/3 majority vote to be affirmed.

## RULE 10: RESPONSIVE RESOLUTIONS

Per UUA Bylaw Rule 4.16.2:

*Responsive resolutions are brief, advisory statements that express the sentiment of the delegates. They must be in response to a substantive portion of a report by an officer or committee reporting to a regular General Assembly. Responsive resolutions are not binding and do not set policy for the Association. They may not act as a substitute for other types of business items, such as business resolutions, budget motions, study/action issues, bylaw amendments, or actions of immediate witness. The Moderator will determine whether a proposed responsive resolution may be added to the final agenda under this rule.*

Any delegate can submit a Responsive Resolution to be added to the Final Agenda, and all submissions must be in writing. All Responsive Resolutions must include a title and body text of up to 200 words.

Delegates may propose Responsive Resolutions through the form on the delegate platform. The deadline to submit Responsive Resolutions is 5:30 PM ET / 4:30 PM CT / 3:30 PM MT / 2:30 PM PT on Friday, June 23, 2023. Responsive Resolutions require a 2/3 majority vote to be affirmed.

## RULE 11: ACTIONS OF IMMEDIATE WITNESS (AIWs)

An **Action of Immediate Witness** (AIW) is, per Bylaw 4.16(b), a statement about a significant action, event, or development in the world that needs immediate engagement and action from UU member congregations and groups. The process for

submitting an AIW, including criteria for eligibility, is set by the Commission on Social Witness (CSW) and published online: <https://www.uua.org/action/process/planning-aiw-ga>.

Per the UUA Bylaws, up to three AIWs can be considered by the General Assembly. If more than three proposed AIWs are eligible, the CSW will follow its published process which may include a delegate poll.

### **Discussion and voting on AIWs**

Delegates must vote on whether to add each proposed Action of Immediate Witness to the Final Agenda in order to discuss and consider it.

- Only AIWs that have been put forward by the CSW through its selection process may be admitted to the final agenda.
- The sponsor of each proposed Action of Immediate Witness has two minutes to speak in favor of it before the Assembly votes to admit it to the Final Agenda.
- The motion to add a proposed Action of Immediate Witness to the Final Agenda is not otherwise debatable and requires a 2/3 majority vote to pass.
- If the motion to admit fails, the AIW will not be considered.

Delegates will discuss and vote separately on each Action of Immediate Witness which is admitted to the final agenda. AIWs require a 2/3 majority vote to be affirmed.

### **RULE 12: PRECEDENCE OF THE BYLAWS AND RULES**

If these Rules of Procedure and the Bylaws or Rules of the UUA are in conflict, the Bylaws and Rules of the UUA take precedence. If these Rules of Procedure do not address an issue that arises, the Bylaws and Rules of the UUA will be the basis of any decision.

### **RULE 13: END OF BUSINESS**

The final business session of General Assembly 2023 ends at 4:30 PM ET / 3:30 PM CT / 2:30 PM MT / 1:30 PM PT on Sunday June 25, 2023.