Robert’s Rules of Order

Amending the Minutes

Minutes have been previously covered in past articles (see Minute Taking from E-News March 2012, Issue no. 34 and Minute Acceptance April 2012, Issue no. 35). However, one element that was not covered was the act of changing the minutes in the minute book.

*Robert’s* says this about correcting adopted minutes:

If the existence of an error or material omission in the minutes becomes reasonably established after their approval – even many years later – the minutes can then be corrected by means of the motion to *Amend Something Previously Adopted* (35), which requires a two-thirds vote, or a majority vote with notice, or the vote of a majority of the entire membership, or unanimous consent. (§ 48, p. 475)

Another instance where adopted minutes may need to be corrected is if a motion was repealed (also known as rescinded or annulled). In these cases, the “old” minutes do not need to be altered because the “new” minutes will reflect the changes; although my recommendation is to make a cross reference to the “new” minutes in the margin of the “old” minutes.

There is an exception, however and this is if the motion is made to *Rescind and Expunge from the Minutes* (which is rare and requires a majority vote of the entire governing body, not just those present). According to *Robert’s* the recorder “draws a single line through or around the offending words in the minutes, and writes across them the words, ‘Rescinded and Ordered Expunged,’ with the date and his signature. In the recorded minutes the words that are expunged must not be blotted or cut out so that they cannot be read, since this would make it impossible to verify whether more was expunged than ordered. In any published record of the proceedings, the expunged material is omitted.” (§ 36, p. 310)

Next month: the phrase that pays, words to use when making different motions.