

Delegate Orientation - Participant Agenda - 2 hours

NOTE: There is pre-work packet w readings on Proposed NYSNA Convention Resolutions & Roberts Rules and a quiz on Roberts Rules.

Welcome, Agenda Review, and Introductions
(pair-share ice-breaking introductions) 15 mins

Introducing Delegate Convention, Delegate Roles 20 mins

In this section we will provide a brief history of the delegate convention, and how it helps expand democracy, putting control of the direction of the union in the hands of hundreds of members that are elected by their peers. We will briefly review the structure of convention (how many delegates, LBU delegates, retiree delegates, etc.) and the role of delegates, both in setting the overall direction and agenda for NYSNA, but also serving as a vital connection between the statewide organization and the local bargaining units. Delegates will also play an important role in carrying out the decisions of the convention, including regional coordination.

How Convention Will Work 15 mins

In this section we'll review the structure of the two-day agenda, highlighting where debate and decision-making will occur, and the role of committees like the credentials and resolutions committee. We will also review the timetable leading up to convention, including deadlines for submitting resolutions and the timetable for pre-convention discussions and inter-regional meetings.

NYSNA's Vision 20 mins

In this section, we will review the overall strategic plan put forward by the Board of Directors, and the initial resolutions designed to implement this work. This section will also probably include 10-15 minutes of the background on the healthcare landscape in New York, so people become familiar with the analysis that led to the strategic priorities.

Conducting Business at Convention 60 mins

This section will provide a brief review of Roberts Rules of Order, and give participants hands-on practice in debating, amending and voting on Resolutions, using Roberts Rules of Order.



Delegate Orientation Agenda

Welcome, Agenda Review, and Introductions	15 mins
Introducing Delegate Convention, Delegate Roles	20 mins
How Convention Works	15 mins
NYSNA's Program and Priorities for 2019	20 mins
Conducting Discussion and Debate at the Convention	60 mins



Role of Convention Delegate

- Attend the annual Convention in New York City, December 7-8, 2018.
- Attend the Convention in 2019 and 2020, once the dates and locations are determined.
- Participate in the delegate orientation like you're doing today.
- Review pre-Convention materials, some of which we'll do today, and discuss the issues with your co-workers.

Role of Convention Delegate

- Join a pre-Convention inter-regional meeting to hear from NYSNA members in your area.
- Bring your co-workers' perspectives and priorities to the Convention and actively participate in the discussion and debate.
- Report back to members in your local bargaining unit after the Convention, so they know what happened and what our plans are.
- Work with other delegates to carry out the decisions you make at Convention, both in your facility and in your local area.

2018 Convention Agenda

Day 1 – Friday December 7, 2018

- Morning Workshops
- Convention Kickoff
- Lunchtime Rally
- Topical Workshops
- Convention Business Session 1: ***Building Power on the Job and In Our Communities***
- Dinner

2018 Convention Agenda

Day 2 – Saturday December 8, 2018

- Morning Workshops
- Morning Plenary
- Convention Business Session 2: ***Building a Political Movement to Challenge the Status Quo***
- Lunch and Lunchtime Panel
- Convention Business Session 3: **Promoting Racial, Economic and Social Justice**
- Additional Workshops

Building Power in Our Workplaces and Our Communities

- On-the-Job Organizing and Aggressive Contract Campaigns
- Coordinated Bargaining in Public and Private Sector
- Organizing the Unorganized
- Recruiting and Developing Leaders
- Connecting with Allies in the Facility and in the Community

Creating a Political Movement to Change the Status Quo

- Winning Safe Staffing Ratios in Albany
- Adopting the New York Health Act to Establish Medicare for All in New York
- Fighting Corporate Control of Healthcare
- Expanded Funding for Public Healthcare Systems and Other Essential Services
- Protecting Our Scope of Practice

Promoting Racial, Economic, and Social Justice

- Addressing the Social Determinants of Health that Contribute to Racial and Class Inequalities
- Identifying the Public Health Risks of Climate Change
- Providing Disaster Relief through the NYRN
- Addressing the Incidence and Root Causes of Violence in Our Workplaces and Communities
- Defending Immigrant Workers on the Job and in Our Communities

Resolution: Building NYSNA's Power through Member Education and Organizing
(Approved by the NYSNA Board of Directors 9/18/18 and recommended for consideration by Delegated NYSNA Convention)

Whereas NYSNA's goal is to build a powerful, member-driven, democratic union;

Whereas this will require recruiting active leaders on every unit and every shift;

Whereas these leaders will need to enforce existing contract standards and move their co-workers into action;

Therefore, as NYSNA member-leaders we will:

- Take advantage of educational opportunities to develop our leadership skills, including, but not limited to, Member Leader Training, advanced workshops such as 'Organizing a Successful POA Campaign', and hand-on-training such as the union leave leadership program;
- Learn to do rounding and teach colleagues how to do it;
- Learn how to turn issues into escalating organizing campaigns and train colleagues how to build these campaigns as well;
- Learn best practices for serving on a Bargaining Committee or Contract Action Team;
- Identify other potential member-leaders and recruit them to become active in NYSNA;
- Mentor those potential member-leaders;
- Integrate training and education into on-going organizing and campaign planning activities inside their facility;

Resolution: Creating Strong Nursing Standards and Defending Nursing Practice
(Approved by the NYSNA Board of Directors 9/18/18 and recommended for consideration by Delegated NYSNA Convention)

Whereas collective bargaining is one of the best ways to establish strong nursing standards;

Whereas strong nursing standards are essential to recruitment and retention of highly-skilled RNs;

Whereas many hospitals are restricting the ability of bedside nurses to apply their professional judgement;

Whereas new technologies like electronic medical records software are hampering the delivery of quality care;

Therefore as NYSNA leaders we will:

- Tap the collective power of our membership through regionally coordinated contract negotiations, starting with private sector hospitals in New York City;
- Use contract negotiations to push for essential standards such as enforceable staffing ratios and retiree healthcare;
- Recognize that internal organizing and mobilization are essential to building power in contract negotiations, up to and including building for a credible strike threat;
- Spread common standards across the industry, both through coordinated bargaining and collaboration across the public and private sector;
- Defend RN autonomy and discretion in the practice of nursing through enforceable contract standards;
- Oppose any legislation that erodes RN scope of practice.

NYSNA Political and Policy Platform - 2018-2019

Guiding Principles

(Approved unanimously by Legislative Committee on September 17, 2018 and recommended to full Board)

(Approved unanimously by NYSNA BOD, as amended, on September 18, 2018)

1. Protecting Patients and Maintaining the Quality of Health Care in New York and Nationally

- A. Pass legislation to require minimum nurse-to-patient staffing ratios in all patient care settings
- B. Maintain professional and patient care standards and patient safety regulations, including the provision of requisite technology and equipment
- C. Fight against de-skilling, barriers to the scope of practice and erosion of standards of professional nursing practice
- D. Oppose the expansion of for-profit health care and stand against the treatment of patients and people in need of medical care as commodities or means for profit - patients must take precedence over profits
- E. Maintain proper and adequate financial support for rural, urban and community safety-net hospitals
- F. Target funding for indigent and low-income patient care to facilities that is proportionate to the actual amount of such care provided by each institution
- G. Maintain and expand the role of the public hospital and health care system

2. Access to High Quality Medical Care and Treatment is a Human Right - NYSNA Supports Universal Access to Health Care Regardless of Socio-Economic Standing or Ability to Pay

- A. Implement a "Medicare for All" health care system to provide universal access to health care for all
- B. Eliminate barriers and maintain equality of access to care on the basis of need, regardless of socio-economic status, ability to pay or immigration status
- C. Address social determinants of health as a core element of providing health care to our patients and communities
- D. No For-profit corporate or investor control or operation of hospitals and other health care providers
- E. Moratorium on the closure of hospitals and other vital health care services
- F. Maintain strong regulation of the market activity and business practices of all health care providers
- G. No erosion or elimination of existing Certificate of Need (CON) regulations
- H. Expand Certificate of Need (CON) regulations applicable to licensed primary care facilities to cover unregulated physician practices and other facilities that currently operate with minimal oversight and control

3. Protect the Rights, Working Conditions and Economic Security of Nurses, Health Care Providers and all Working People

- A. Maintain and improve the ability of nurses and other health workers to properly exercise their professional duties to patients as defined by their scope of practice

- B. Provide a safe working environment for nurses, health care workers, and patients
- C. Provide fair terms and conditions of employment to all nurses, health care workers, and other workers
- D. Provide all nurses, health care workers and other workers with high quality health care benefits
- E. Provide all nurses, health care workers and other workers with economic security in retirement or in the event of disability or inability to continue working
- F. Recognize and expand the right of all nurses, health care workers and other workers to organize and engage in collective activity, to effectively engage in collective bargaining, and reject all efforts to restrict or constrain the exercise of workers' rights, including so-called "right to work" laws, restrictions of the rights to free speech, to strike and to engage in other public action, and attacks on wages, health care benefits and pension rights

4. Ensuring Democratic Input and Control of the Allocation of Health Care Resources In Our Communities

- A. Support the establishment of democratic regional health planning councils or other bodies composed of elected or representative members to provide democratic input in and real power to determine the allocation of health resources in their communities
- B. Expand the role of the public and of direct care providers in the Certificate of Need regulatory process at the State and local level
- C. Increase the transparency of the CON and other regulatory processes to ensure that the public is informed and has the ability to effectively monitor and participate in the process
- D. Provide for a rational and democratic planning process to oversee and prevent disruptive and destructive market practices that result in the misallocation of medical care resources on the basis of monetized demand rather than unmet health care needs

5. Actively Address Social Determinants of Health and their Impact on Health Outcomes of Patients and Communities

- A. Engage in efforts to eliminate environmental and social factors that contribute to racial and class disparities in the health, safety and well-being of local communities and populations, including income inequality and access to equal educational opportunity
- B. Mitigate climate change and address its contribution to causing superstorms and natural disasters, the jeopardizing the quality and availability of food supplies, and otherwise negatively affecting the health and well-being of our communities
- C. Reduce environmental pollution and contamination of our air, water, soil and food
- D. Ensure the availability of safe housing for patients in need and protect the affordability and quality of the housing stock in our community
- E. Ensure that all patients and members of our communities are food secure and have access to healthy foods and proper nutrition
- F. Address the incidence and causes of violence in our communities, schools, homes and health care facilities
- G. Address the growing mental health crisis and improve the availability of services to identify impacted individuals and provide necessary support

6. Participate in Initiatives and Support Legislation that Promotes Campaign Finance Reform to Level the Playing Field for Labor and Community-Based Candidates

campaign. Wasn't that proof that no matter the progress, corruption is inevitable? Many disgusted rank and filers voiced the sentiment "they're all alike."

Reform suffered a major setback. But the problem was not inevitable. Carey relied on unscrupulous consultants for much of his 1996 campaign, and they hatched the illegal fundraising scheme. If TDU had been bigger—if reform forces had been stronger—they would have been much more the core of the Carey campaign. Corrupt consultants would never have had such influence in the campaign or the union.

What's more, even with this setback, which led to a chance for the old guard to reassert itself, the culture of the Teamsters had changed. No future Teamster international official, reformer or old guard, will dare to bargain major contracts in secret as was the practice until 1992, nor impose contracts voted down by the majority, as happened several times in the 1980s. Teamsters have come to expect a higher level of democracy, and TDU remains active to give voice to that expectation. The net result of the reforms is positive and long-lasting.

In fact, as much as we can cite evidence for the inevitable forces of bureaucratization or corruption, time and again new struggles and new organizations arise to fight for the original union goals. People want decent lives, and that requires continued effort. If TDU didn't exist today, Teamsters would be forming it, just as members of other unions are starting reform groups every year.

The "iron law" is not a neutral theory. It masquerades as objective academic science, telling us that some form of dictatorship is inevitable, and that we are powerless to do anything about it. As such, the "law" becomes a powerful weapon for those who want to keep people cynical and disorganized—the very conditions required for a dictator to rule.

When people give up on struggle and accept the "iron law," it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. If dictatorship is inevitable, then you might as well pick the dictator you like best. Michels' own logic led him to be an ardent supporter of Mussolini and Italian fascism.

Guidelines for Rules and Procedures in a Democratic Culture

A dictatorship requires only one rule: whatever the boss wants. A democratic union seeks to involve as many members as possible in decision making, so it needs many more rules and procedures for how this should happen fairly.

Of course, rules and procedures are just the connecting devices between the essential elements of democratic culture: membership information and involvement, real power, and a healthy give-and-take between leaders and members. Rank and file organizing is the key to building these elements.

Look at two unions that were both pressured, by the Justice Department, to change their election procedures: the Teamsters and the Laborers. Both held rank and file, monitored elections for international officers. In the Teamsters, the constitutional changes would not have mattered much if it weren't for the work done by TDU before and after the election. TDU provided what new rules could not: a coordinated movement to define issues, train rank and file leaders, and back up campaigners on their rights. Without this organization, no reformer could have won the first direct election in the Teamsters in 1991; and if a reformer had won without this network of rank and file activists, he could not have led the union, most of whose 600 locals were still governed by supporters of the old guard. In the Laborers, no strong rank and file organization existed, incumbents were reelected, and little changed (see box).

When evaluating the union's rules, remember that different circumstances call for different procedures; democracy takes many forms. Holding a debate on a political endorsement in the middle of a strike, for example, may undermine the union's power by diverting energy from the immediate crisis; or it may strengthen that power if the politician, once elected, plays a hand in the strike. During the early phases of organizing a union, for another example, the emphasis may be on practices that make the union as open as possible to new people—holding small, informal meetings by work group, for instance. As the union develops, more emphasis is needed on developing leaders. Larger, more structured meetings might be organized with several members giving reports and leading discussions.

Or consider a large workplace like a factory where most mem-

bers are in one or two big job classifications. Should each of the smaller classifications—skilled trades, clerical, professional, janitors—have its own bargaining representative? If so, the ratio of representation for the small groups will be much higher than for the large classifications. Perhaps instead the rule should be one bargainer per a certain number of members. The answer will depend on the unit's history and situation: are the concerns of the smaller classifications sufficiently addressed under the second scheme? Have the higher-skilled classifications traditionally had more voice in the union than their numbers warrant? The key question is which procedure will increase member involvement and the power of the union. Either fails within the realm of democracy.

The point is not to get hung up on procedures and bylaws if the

Rank and File Organization Makes the Difference

In 1996, the Laborers union held its first-ever direct election for international president and secretary-treasurer. Only about 15 percent of the members voted (compared to around 30 percent turnout in the Teamsters). Some observers said the low turnout reflected the lack of a real choice in this historically corrupt union. Incumbent President Arthur Coia, reputed to be an associate of a New England crime family, was challenged by Bruno Caruso, himself believed to have ties with the Chicago mob. One activist said it looked to members like the organized crime version of "Family Feud." Coia won, by about two to one.

Those voting did choose by about 78 percent to change the constitution: starting in 2001, all international officers, not just the top two, are to be directly elected by the members. But without an organized reform network, future elections are likely to replay the 1996 contest.

The federal government also took action against the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees, an international with a similar long history of apparent corruption. Under an agreement with the Justice Department, HERE had an independent monitor for 30 months in 1995-98, but no new elections. Federal investigators quietly pushed several corrupt officials to resign, and a new, clean president took over. But there was no established reform group strong enough to take advantage of these minimal changes, and the monitoring did not alter union's top-down culture.

members and the leaders are in touch and the union is strong. That said—although procedures are neither the substance of democracy nor the route to achieving it—they are important tools. They can either reinforce democratic values or get in the way of members' power. We offer here some guidelines for evaluating union procedures and how they contribute to a democratic culture.

1. Members must have the right to organize for a viewpoint.

Organizations *within* the union are critical for its democracy. Caucuses, slates, or networks are ways for members to hold leadership accountable. Few union constitutions provide for or mention union caucuses. Yet it is the ability to easily form such organizations that is the most important pressure for democracy within the union.

The right to speak your mind is not worth much if you don't also have the right to organize for your point of view. Therefore the right to join and promote a caucus without redistribution is a priority. A union does not have to have an opposition caucus in order to be democratic. But in a democratic union members can easily form caucuses, if only temporarily around some issue, such as a rank and file Pension Improvement Committee.

2. Members must have the right, ability, and self-confidence to act on their own behalf.

Members should have the right to initiate and write their own grievances, and to form a committee to go to the boss about it. If a violation is not even recognized until an officer happens to see it, and nothing is done unless an official takes formal action, the union is weak. An active membership demands more of its leaders and therefore pushes them to a higher level of performance.

3. Members must have ways to hold leaders accountable.

Ultimately the election process is the main accountability mechanism. Between elections, the pressure on officers to appear democratic is still great, if only because too many clearly undemocratic actions will be remembered at election time. So a large group of members speaking out at a meeting, or circulating petitions and distributing flyers, will often inspire officials to reassess their actions. These informal mechanisms require the right to organize mentioned above.

A healthy union will also have mechanisms of accountability that can deal formally with smaller issues and do not require waiting

for the next election. The ability of the membership meeting to reverse or direct an action by the officers is an example of such a mechanism. The right of members to initiate a bylaws change is another.

4. The union needs to protect both majority rule and minority rights.

Majority rule, that key to democracy, only works when the minority can organize for its point of view. For one thing, members have power to decide only if they have options to choose from. It is the minority of today, seeking to become the majority of tomorrow, that provides the democratic option to all members.

Second, when the majority respects the rights of the minority, the minority has every reason to support the organization as a whole—supporting a strike they voted against, for instance. If, on the other hand, minorities feel excluded, they have little incentive to act in solidarity with the majority's choice. Minority rights are essential to maintain the unity that gives the union (and therefore the majority) its strength.

The rights of minorities can be a thorny question for reformers who have won office over an "old guard" that then becomes a well-organized minority. See Chapter 6 for more on dealing with political opponents when in office.

Finally, it's especially important to respect the concerns of racial and gender minorities. Management can easily see and exploit such divisions, and the danger to unity is great.

5. Procedures should help to level the playing field.

Democracy works best on a level playing field where everyone has equal resources and equal opportunity. But our society is no level playing field. Every union member brings different resources, experiences, and skills to the organization.

Therefore union procedures should be evaluated for whether they level the playing field or increase the tilt. For instance, a group of registered nurses may tend to dominate a union they share with non-professional nurse aides; should the aides have a minimum number of seats on the board? In elections, incumbents generally have the advantage over challengers; how can challengers get a leg up? We will sort out some of these issues in Chapter 5.

The sharpest divisions in the workforce are typically based on race and gender job stratification, along with age, sexual orientation, and physical disabilities. While some unions have distinguished themselves in the fight for equality, others have a sad history of racial and other discrimination—one of the commonest crimes against democracy. The results of this history are to tilt the playing field inside the union in favor of white people and men. To ignore this history and insist on race-blind or gender-blind rules means that the playing field stays tipped. Unionists need to back affirmative action in hiring and promotion to get past obstacles to fairness in our own organizations.

Each section of the membership may have a different agenda of strongly felt needs, which must then be combined into a union agenda. To make this happen, all sections of the union need to be brought into the leadership. We consider this issue in Chapter 3.

6. The rules must be clear and simple.

Think of the many members who have come to a union meeting because there's an issue they want to deal with, but then can't get through the complex rules on motions and "points of order." Will they ever come back?

Properly used, rules make it easier for members, especially new ones, to get involved. Rules can let everyone know how things are supposed to work. For example, having a simple rule on how to introduce a motion means that a member with a concern is encouraged to bring it up.

The best constitutions, bylaws, and rules are brief, clear, and uncomplicated. TDU is a lively democratic group whose members vie for leadership positions within it—and its constitution fits on a sheet of legal paper. Examine almost any undemocratic organization and it is likely to have very complicated formal rules, and in practice abide by them only when they're useful to the leadership.

A clear set of rules reveals how decision-making works in the union—what can the staff or board decide, and what can membership meetings determine? If the union meeting is the highest authority, it should be clear how to bring questions there that are appropriate to that authority.

7. Surprise and secrecy are enemies of democracy.

Without the opportunity to gather information, talk to others,

and organize a response, the right to vote has little meaning. Yet in many unions the membership meeting announcements posted at work list the agenda as "Old Business" and "New Business." How does that help members know what issues are up for discussion? Or in the name of preventing rumors, leaders do not give members advance copies of the contract before the ratification meeting.

One of the most insidious aspects of labor-management cooperation programs is the requirement of "confidentiality." Although one of the touted benefits of such programs is access to corporate information, access is limited to "team members" on a project, who are not allowed to discuss the information with union sisters and brothers. Unions should refuse participation in any activity with management that requires advance agreement to confidentiality.

Sometimes officers justify the usual secrecy around bargaining in the name of "not showing your hand to management." But the bargainers are certainly revealing their demands to management; that's what bargaining is. The only ones not shown the demands are the members. Leaders who rely on secrecy keep little from the employer but do build a huge barrier between themselves and the rank and file.

More commonly the secrecy around bargaining is acquiescence to the company's request not to "bargain in the press." Many unions, though, have found that the more members know about management's stance—through frequent bulletins, reports, and rank and file observers—the easier it is to mobilize support for bargainers.

Tactical surprise may give the union an advantage vis-à-vis an employer; one tactic of the Detroit newspaper strike, for example, was surprise pickets and sit-ins against secret targets. But the advantage of surprise has to be weighed against the cost to democracy (as well as the difficulty of keeping a secret among large numbers of people). Do union leaders have such a record of accountability that members trust them for a few secret decisions? If not, a non-sneak attack may inspire more long-term membership involvement.

8. Look for the long-term results.

We shouldn't let a short-term gain disguise a longer-term loss, as when management proposes a long-term gain for the company (holding wages down) in exchange for a short-term gain for us (a bonus). The same sort of trap can occur with union procedures. Paying lost-time for union activities may boost membership partici-

pation initially, but over time, members may refuse to participate unless they're paid—a disaster for democracy. Or a discussion of goals may seem like a waste of time at the outset of a contract campaign, if most members already agree on priorities. But holding such a discussion might have a big effect on members' involvement over the course of the struggle.

The Culture of a Reform Movement

A caucus within a union and the union itself are two quite different animals. You wouldn't want your reform caucus to mimic the structure and procedures of a union. But a democratic culture is indeed needed in a reform caucus.

One common pitfall of new organizations, including new reform caucuses in unions, is to over-structure a small group—to immedi-

How Does TDU Set National Policy And Strategy?

Formally, TDU is governed by annual conventions open to all members. The conventions elect an International Steering Committee which meets five times a year to guide the organization between conventions. But that's only part of the story; these bodies are not guaranteed to represent the views of most TDU members.

In general they do, and that's by conscious effort: TDU lives or dies by its ability to voice the concerns of most of its members and supporters—to act democratically. The organization's leaders are able to do that through frequent, informal communication with and among activists in local TDU chapters. The most common kind of question a TDU national leader asks a local organizer is "What are people saying about _____?" The activists who can answer that are the best recruiters—in closest touch with other Teamsters—and the most influential in the national organization.

They are also the most successful in building a local reform caucus. Local activists distribute TDU information and bulletins, talk up the issues among members, hear what they think, and communicate responses and new concerns back to the national leaders. Based on this local organizing, they have ideas for national strategy.

arely formulate long bylaws and reporting procedures, elect six officers and four standing committees. Is all that really helpful? An elected steering committee and simple financial reports may be plenty of organizational structure. The caucus's culture is more important.

For one thing, modeling a democratic culture within the caucus helps people learn how that can work—how members taking initiative can generate creative strategies, how active inclusion of racial or gender minorities can strengthen the whole group, how encouraging new leadership can also encourage new activism.

Second, a caucus depends as much on member involvement as the union does—maybe more, since dues payments are totally voluntary. So to organize a caucus, its leaders have to be in close touch with members and potential members to be sure the caucus is taking on problems that people think are important and fixable. The same interchange between leaders and members that we discussed for unions has to happen within a caucus.

To stay relevant and avoid burn-out, a caucus needs to continually bring in new leaders. Bringing new leaders along can be harder than it sounds. It requires asking a lot of different people to volunteer in a lot of different ways. The difficulty is not just that sometimes volunteers don't get their assignments done, which can be upsetting for the committed caucus leader who asked them to help. So often it's just easier to do the work yourself, coordinating a newsletter committee is a lot more time-consuming than simply sitting down and typing it out. Caucus leaders, like union leaders, should be very careful about how much they put getting work done ahead of getting new people involved in doing it.

The main reason, of course, for building a democratic culture in your reform caucus (as in the union) is to make it more effective!

Notes

- 1 For one explanation, see Chapter 2 of *A Troublemaker's Handbook*, by Dan La Boiz, a Labor Notes book.
- 2 For more information on such programs, see two Labor Notes books: *Inside the Circle: A Union Guide to OJVL*, by Mike Parker, and *Working Smart: A Union Guide to Participation Programs and Reengineering*, by Mike Parker and Jane Slaughter.
- 3 *4th Bundle*, a publication of the NALC New Vision caucus, 1997.

- 4 See Irving Howe and B.J. Waddock, *The UAW and Walter Reuther*, New York, Random House, 1949; Jordan Sims, "Going for Broke," in Alice and Staughton Lynd, eds., *Runk and File: Personal Histories of Working Class Organizers*, New York, Monthly Review Press, 1988.
- 5 Robert Michels, *Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Organizational Tendencies of Modern Democracy*, New York, The Free Press, 1962, pp. 342, 379.
- 6 Steven Greenhouse, "Union Coalition Grapples with Troubles," *New York Times*, February 9, 1998, p. A16.
- 7 For some exceptions see Nelson Lichtenstein, *The Most Dangerous Man in Detroit: Walter Reuther and the Fate of American Labor*, New York: Basic Books, 1995; Farrell Dobbs, *Teamster Rebellion*, New York, 1972; Art Preis, *Labor's Giant Step, Twenty Years of the CIO*, New York, Pioneer Publishers, 1964.
- 8 Walter Reuther, quoted in "Statements of Liberal Americans and Labor on the Activities of the Un-American Activities Committee," UAW-CIO Local 600 "Ford Facts," Vol. 16, No. 7, February 16, 1952, p. 6.

quarters, unanimous) are intended to protect minority rights, but in practice, they multiply the power of already powerful minorities so much that they can thwart majority rule. In the long run, minority rights can be protected only by the care and respect of the majority. So in these Rules, instead of requiring a two-thirds vote to end debate, for example, a majority is allowed to do so, but only after the chair asks who and how many still wish to speak.

These same rules, slightly modified, can be used in very large meetings and conventions. The main changes would be (1) to require seconders for motions and when calling for a vote count, (2) to require submission of motions in advance, and (3) the use of a "convention committee" to sit throughout the convention and make recommendations for adjusting the agenda or other procedural problems. Teachers for a Democratic Union (TDU) has used such a set of rules at its national conventions for twenty years.

Simplified Rules of Order

I. Purpose

The purpose of these rules is to allow the maximum democratic participation in meetings.

In meetings, as in all phases of union democracy, leadership is an essential part. The chair is the leader of the meeting. Therefore the main job of the chair is to help the meeting and its members conduct business and accomplish goals. The rules are a way to achieve these goals and are not an end unto themselves. Therefore the chair and meeting attenders should be allowed considerable flexibility in proposing implementation.

II. Agenda Preparation

- A. The proposed meeting agenda will be made up by the executive board or through a procedure established by the board.

The proposed meeting agenda will include all motions submitted to the board by members in advance, unless the member withdraws the motion before the meeting. The board may recommend time limits and limits to debate on such motions as part of the agenda proposal. The executive board will set an order for the agenda as appropriate, except that items held over from previous meetings take precedence over any non-emergency new business.

Appendix 4. Simplified Rules of Order

Virtually all unions use Robert's Rules of Order. Yet few people who chair meetings understand and follow the rules, and only a tiny part of the membership understands more than the barest outline. This defeats the number-one democratic value of having rules—that everyone knows how to accomplish their goals and what to expect.

Here is a set of rules that will serve most local union meetings. They require only a few pages and can easily be distributed to all members. Although Robert's Rules is a whole book, the Simplified Rules include most of the rules and concepts that unions, in practice, actually use from Robert's. In addition, these rules emphasize democratic practices and remove some of the undemocratic features in Robert's. The emphasis is on helping members be involved.

It is usually not worth the effort to tradition to try to formally amend the local union bylaws to adopt these rules. Instead, the rules proposed here could be adopted as the informal "short form." In most locals, the interpretation of Robert's is quite loose anyway.

One way these rules are simpler than Robert's is through the consistent use of majority rule, rather than two-thirds or more, on all motions. (The exception is those issues on which the local bylaws require a larger majority, such as amending the bylaws.) Rules requiring more than a majority vote (two-thirds, three-fifths, three-

The proposed agenda should include the full text of short motions and brief descriptions of longer motions and reports. The agenda may include proposals for procedures, such as time limits for specific discussions and how to handle voting.

B. Availability

The main points of the meeting will be provided with the announcement of the meeting, and the full meeting agenda will be available before the meeting.

Committee reports and background material should be available before the meeting.

C. Approval

Adoption of the agenda is the first order of business at the meeting. A member may propose to amend the agenda to change the order of business or the procedures. There may be one speaker for and one against each such amendment. The chair may allow a second person for and against.

Amendments and adoption of the agenda will be by majority vote.

III. Voting

A. Methods

1. Voice vote
2. Standing or hand vote (on request of any member)
3. Count. Because a vote count takes so much time, this will only be done when the chair finds a standing vote too close to call, or when at least ten percent of the members attending second the call for a count.

B. Definitions

Unless otherwise provided, all motions, both substantive and procedural, require a simple majority for passage.

A simple majority is achieved when more than 50 percent of those voting vote yes. (Examples: if there is a tie, the motion is defeated. If 31 vote yes, 30 vote no, and 50 abstain or do not vote, the motion is passed.)

IV. Main Motions

Unless another arrangement has been made, one motion is considered at a time. If someone makes an amendment, it will be dis-

cussed and voted on before going back to the main motion or other amendment. (There may be an amendment to an amendment, but there may be no third-level amendments.) However, when two or more motions or amendments are directed to the same point, procedures may be proposed by the executive board or chair, subject to approval by the meeting, to consider two or more motions or amendments together.

V. Discussion

A. Individual

Unless otherwise provided, each speaker will be limited to three minutes. No speaker will speak twice on the same motion when others are waiting to speak for the first time. The chair may ask someone who has already spoken to answer a question if it would clarify matters, and the person who made the motion may be allowed to sum up.

B. Total

Where no time limit for the total discussion has been proposed as part of the agenda, the chair must propose one.

C. Content

The discussion should be relevant to the motion on the floor.

VI. Other Motions

Like all other motions, those below require only a simple majority to pass. Where a motion is normally non-debatable, the chair may suggest some limited discussion if there appears to be substantial confusion in the body.

To Table

Not debatable.

Postpones further discussion and decision indefinitely (can be reintroduced in a very short time, or never). (Tabling is not used for sending a motion to a committee or for changing the time for consideration. See *To Refer*.)

To Refer (for example, to a committee) or **To Postpone** (to a specific time)

Limited debate (e.g., two speakers for and two against a proposal).

To Reconsider

Must be made by someone on the winning side.

Limited debate unless the procedure is suspended.

Procedural

For suggesting a procedure to handle a certain point (for example, to extend the time for discussion, or to consider two motions together). Not debatable except on recommendation by chair.

To End Debate and Come to a Vote ("to call the question" or "to move the question")

Must be made by someone who has not yet spoken on this motion.

Not debatable.

Before taking the vote on ending debate, the chair must first ask for a show of hands of those who wish to speak, so members may make an informed decision.

To Adjourn or Recess

Not debatable.

The chair may ask or answer questions regarding pending business, to help members understand what they are cutting off if they adjourn the meeting.

The chair may entertain non-debatable motions for referring pending business before holding the vote on whether to adjourn.

The chair may entertain motions for setting the next meeting, if not already scheduled.

The chair must first ask for a hand showing of those not wishing to adjourn before taking the vote.

To Overrule the Chair (also called "to overturn" or "appeal the ruling of" the chair)

Must be called out immediately after the chair's ruling, before other business is conducted.

The chair does not have to step aside.

The chair should explain her ruling, the person appealing speaks, the chair responds. If the matter looks very controversial, the chair may take speakers for and against before her final reply.

The vote is then immediately taken in the following way: All those in favor of upholding the ruling of the chair, please say *aye*. Opposed, say *no*.

The chair plays an important role in keeping the meeting moving along by suggesting procedures and making rulings in ambiguous situations. Normally the chair should be allowed this authority and flexibility. The check on this authority is the motion to overrule.

VII. Quorum

The required quorum will be established in the bylaws. (If one is not specified, there is no quorum requirement.) A call for a quorum may not be shouted out or interrupt a speaker, but must come after being recognized by the chair. The chair will check for a quo-

rum by show of hands or count, in the same manner as voting. A call for a quorum is out of order for ten minutes after a previous quorum call. If a quorum is lacking, the following business is still in order:

Motions directed toward getting enough members for a quorum

Motions about when to meet again

Motions to refer business to the executive board

Good and welfare

Motions to adjourn or recess

VIII. Miscellaneous Points

Normally, people will speak in the order that they are recognized, by raising hands. Certain circumstances make it necessary to get recognized more quickly. This is accomplished with one of the following points. All may be made by shouting out. However, you may not interrupt someone while they are talking except for Personal Privilege and a Point of Order to appeal a ruling of the chair. If the chair feels an individual is abusing these points, she does not have to recognize the abuser.

A. Point of Personal Privilege

To be used only when there is difficulty in participating in the meeting, such as inability to hear, too much commotion, smoke, etc. May not be used as a way of getting the floor to answer a criticism, even if you believe you were misunderstood or misquoted.

B. Point of Procedure

To be used to move to change the procedure (e.g., to propose that we have two speakers for and two against this motion).

C. Point of Order

To be used to call attention when it is felt that the chair or the body is deviating from the previously adopted procedure (for example, "Our procedure calls for our coming to a vote at this time.") May also be used to challenge a ruling of the chair.

D. Point of Information

To ask a question of the chair. May not be used to ask a question directly of another member ("There is no such thing as a 'point of clarification'" or any other special way to give information, except to be recognized by the chair in the usual manner.)

Basic Parliamentary Procedures¹

(From Robert's Rules of Order Revised)

Types of Motions (in order of precedence)

To Do This:	You Say This:	May you interrupt the speaker?	Do you need a second?	Is it debatable?	Can I be amended?	What vote is needed?	Can it be reconsidered?
Adjourn meeting	I move that we adjourn.	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Call an intermission	I move that we recess for ...	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
Complain about heat, noise, etc.	I rise to a question of privilege.	Yes	No	No	No	No Vote	No
Temporarily suspend consideration	I move to table the motion.	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No ²
End debate and amendments	I move the previous question.	No	Yes	No	No	Two-thirds	Yes
Postpone discussion	I move to postpone the discussion until...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Give closer study to something	I move to refer the matter to committee.	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes ³
Amend or substitute a motion	I move to amend the motion by...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Introduce business	I move that...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes

More Motions (no order for those below)

To Do This:	You Say This:	Yes	No	No	No	No Vote ⁴	No
Protest breach of rules or conduct	I rise to a point of order.	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	Yes
Vote on a ruling of the chair	I appeal the chair's decision.	No	Yes	No	No	Two-thirds	No
Suspend rules temporarily	I move to suspend the rules so that...	Yes	No	No	No	Two-thirds ⁵	Yes ⁶
Avoid considering a motion	I object to consideration of this matter.	Yes	No	No	No	No Vote	No
Call for a standing vote count	I call for a division, or Division!	Yes	No	No	No	No Vote	No
Request information	Point of information.	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Take up a matter previously tabled	I move to take from the table.	Yes	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Reconsider a "hasty action"	I move to reconsider the vote on...	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	No

Notes to Table:

1. This summary sheet is adapted from one used at the 1998 Labor Party First Constitutional Convention.
2. If lost, may be reintroduced; if with a motion to "Take from the table" can be introduced after passage of some business.
3. Unless vote on question has begun.
4. Unless the committee has already taken up the subject.
5. Unless the motion to be amended is not debatable.
6. Unless the chair submits to the assembly for decision.

7. Except when relates to transgression of speaking rules, priority of business, or during a division, or if pending question is undebatable.
8. A two-thirds vote against consideration.
9. Only successful votes against consideration.
10. Only when clearly necessary.
11. May only be made by one who has voted on prevailing side and on same or next day.
12. Unless the motion to be reconsidered is not debatable or after previous question has been ordered.

PRACTICE RESOLUTION #1
Building Strong Contract Campaigns

Whereas, NYSNA nurses fought for and won some groundbreaking agreements in the 2014-2015 major bargaining cycle, which was the most coordinated ever, and

Whereas, we learned that exerting pressure via widespread engagement and participation of our members, linked to our communities, via public actions and direct actions were key elements in those achievements, and

Whereas, in the public sector, impacted by the Taylor Law, there remain extra challenges in achieving good contracts, with excessive waiting time for settlements in the context of attacks against public sector workers, and

Whereas, we have learned that escalating actions up to and including strike votes and strikes were key in pushing more positive settlements in the private sector, and

Whereas, many employers continue to try to circumvent our contracts or “forget” commitments to follow through on agreed-upon contract language, while ignoring serious staffing crises and frequent incidents of violence in our facilities, and

Whereas, in the next large scale public sector and multi-employer, regional private sector bargaining cycles, our RN union needs to be even stronger because Employers may be even more resistant to our efforts to ensure quality care for all New Yorkers,

Therefore, be it resolved that:

The NYSNA Board initiate a comprehensive contract strategy process now, to include the various sectors of Local Bargaining Unit leaders and NYSNA members, so that we can incorporate both the uniqueness of the various LBUs and the commonalities that bind us, as well as the lessons learned from the last round of bargaining, and

Included in that plan will be wide-ranging educational and organizing projects that will prepare members for difficult bargaining with an important focus on member education and action, early community outreach and relationship-building and creative planning, particularly in the public sector that has Taylor Law restrictions, and

Included will be education on and concrete advanced preparation in the event of a need to engage in strikes in the Private Sector, aimed at pushing the Employer to reach a fair contract, and

Included will be facility and region-specific strategic goals and plans, understanding that the social realities in our state vary on a number of levels.

PRACTICE RESOLUTION #2

Retiree Health Benefits

Whereas,

Retiree Health Benefits are important to our members.

Nursing is a physically, emotionally, and mentally taxing profession. We give the best years of our lives, to promote the health of others.

When it's our time to be cared for, on the other hand, there aren't any health benefits, that we can access between the early retirement age of 60 up to 65.

This puts economic pressure on nurses to work into their mid-60s, which can lead to worse health issues—both injuries and illnesses.

Therefore, be it resolved that:

We, as NYSNA member leaders, want to encourage our colleagues to include Retiree Health Benefits on the bargaining agenda of all NYSNA LBUs and make it a high priority.

We want the NYSNA Trustees on the Benefit Fund to explore multiple options for retiree health benefits to support RNs in negotiations – including, but not limited to a NYSNA Fund-related VEBA.

