



AMVETS National Ladies Auxiliary

*"We waited together...
Now let's work together"*

March 17, 2020

FROM: Heidi Dineen-Serpis, National Parliamentarian
SUBJECT: Coronavirus and AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary Meetings

As you know we are in uncharted waters. Robert's Rules doesn't address pandemics and meetings. The following are suggestions. **Please note** these are not definitive answers, as we cannot provide definitive answers.

According to Robert's Rules of Order; A Special Meeting is a separate session held at a time different from that of any regular meeting and convened only to consider one or more items of business specified in the call of the meeting. **Notice** of the time, place, and exact purpose of the meeting **must be mailed to all members** within a reasonable number of days in advance. The reason for special meetings is to deal with important matters that may arise between regular meetings and that urgently require action by the society before the next regular meeting.

All Local Bylaws must authorize the calling of special meetings. If Auxiliaries do not have this it is recommended to **add a standing rule: In the event of a state of emergency, the Local president may call for a special meeting and voting may be done by mail or email.**

For a vote by mail:

If the vote is not secret: a printed ballot containing a space for the voter's signature, a specifically recognized, self-addressed stamped envelope with the name and address of the secretary (or person who will count the ballots). If the qualifications of the nominee may not be widely known to the membership, it is permitted to allow each nominee to furnish a brief factual statement of her services and qualifications, provided that all nominees are accorded equal opportunity and space. Electronic mail and other means of electronic communities can be tailored to comply with these requirements.

If the vote is to be secret: an inner return envelope with space for the voters' signature placed on its face instead of the ballot should be sent to the voter with the ballot, in addition to the self-addressed outer return envelope described above. The ballot sent to the voter should be pre-folded a sufficient number of times so that when returned marked and refolded in the same manner and sealed in the inner envelope- there will be no chance of accidental observance of the member's vote by the teller who removes the ballot from the inner envelope. In other words, you are sending back an envelope with your ballot and a signature page inside another envelope to the person collecting the ballots.

Efforts to conduct the deliberate process by postal or electronic mail- are not recommended- must be expressly authorized in the Bylaws and should be supported by special rules as appropriate. Based on this note found in Robert's Rules, it is recommended once auxiliaries can have their annual meetings that the above standing rule be added to all Local and Department Bylaws.