

THIRD CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN
MARIANA ISLANDS

RULES OF PROCEDURE

June 5, 1995

CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, MP 96950

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RULES OF PROCEDURE
FOR THE THIRD
NORTHERN MARIANAS CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

1. Pre-Convention Committee Chair to Convene Convention. The Pre-Convention Committee Chair shall convene the Third Northern Marianas Constitutional Convention on Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, on Monday, June 5, 1995 at 10:00 A.M. The Convention shall adjourn no later than August 4, 1995, unless it acts to extend its duration pursuant to section 11 (a) of Public Law 9-18, in which case the Convention shall adjourn no later than August 19, 1995.

2. Pre-Convention Committee Chair as President Pro Tempore. The Pre-Convention Committee Chair shall act as President Pro Tem of the Convention until the Convention elects a President from among its membership. However, if the Chair of the Pre-Convention Committee is a candidate for the office of President, then the Chair shall designate a delegate who is not a candidate for the presidency to act as President Pro Tem during the election of a President.

3. Delegates' Oath of Office. The Chief Justice of the Commonwealth Supreme Court shall administer the following oath or affirmation to the delegates en masse:

"I do solemnly affirm (or swear) that I will support and defend the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America, the applicable provisions of the Constitution, laws and treaties of the United States of America, and that I will faithfully discharge my duties to the best of my ability (so help me God)."

4. Quorum of the Convention. No business may be transacted by the Convention in the absence of a quorum. The presence of a majority of the delegates shall constitute a quorum; provided that at least one delegate is present from each of the three senatorial districts.

5. Voting. No voting shall be permitted except in person. Except as otherwise provided by these Rules, any question before the Convention or a committee thereof shall be decided by the vote of a majority of the delegates present and voting.

6. Majority Necessary for Final Adoption of Proposed Constitutional Amendment. No proposed amendment to the Constitution shall be adopted by the Convention except by the affirmative votes of not less than two-thirds (2/3) of the delegates present. A roll call vote shall be required on any motion for the final adoption of a proposed amendment to the Constitution and, on such votes, the prevailing side shall have the abstentions for the purpose of determining the success or failure of the motion. Abstentions may be either explicit or implicit; thus if a delegate is present and does not wish to vote, the delegate may fail to answer or may answer "present."

7. Organization of Convention; Order of Business; Election of the President

(a) The order of business at the first session of the Convention shall be as follows:

1. Call to Order;
2. National and Commonwealth Anthem
3. Invocation;
4. Roll Call;
5. Oath of Office;
6. Adoption of Interim Rules for Election of President;
7. Election of President;
8. Adoption of Rules of Procedure; and
9. Other Matters

(b) The Convention shall elect a President from among its membership by secret ballot vote pursuant to interim Rules for the election of President duly adopted. The President Pro Tem shall not recognize and the Convention shall not entertain any motion to amend the interim Rules until after the election of the President. The President shall be elected by vote of a majority of the delegates present and voting. If there are more than two candidates for the office of President and no candidate receives a majority on the first ballot, the Convention shall conduct a second ballot between the two candidates with the highest votes.

8. Admission to Floor . No person other than a delegate, officer, employee or consultant of the Convention, accredited news correspondent or person invited by the President shall be admitted on the floor of the Convention immediately preceding the time set for any call to order and immediately following adjournment. Only delegates, officers, employees, consultants and such other persons as may be authorized by the President or the Convention shall be admitted to the floor of the Convention during the session. The phrase "floor of the Convention" means the room or chamber where the Convention sits in session, excluding the space designated for visitors and for the press.

9. Powers and Duties of the President. The President shall have the following powers and perform the following duties:

(a) To schedule sessions of the Convention. The President shall call the Convention to order and, except in the absence of a quorum, shall proceed to business in the manner prescribed by these Rules;

(b) To preserve order and decorum and, in debate, to confine delegates to the questions under discussion. When two (2) or more delegates seek to speak at the same time, the President shall name the delegate entitled to the floor;

(c) To call a recess at any time during a session of the Convention which decision shall not be subject to approval by or appeal to the Convention;

(d) To decide all questions of order, subject to appeal to the Convention in accordance with Rules 17 and 60 of these Rules. On every appeal the President shall have the right to give the reason for a decision.;

(e) To designate any delegate to perform the duties of the Chair; however, such designation shall expire after two (2) consecutive session days unless approved by the Convention;

(f) To name a Chair to preside over the Committee of the Whole. The President may serve as Chair of the Committee of the Whole;

(g) To certify all official acts of the Convention with the date thereof;

(h) To declare the vote and announce the result according to the fact on all questions and divisions;

(i) To serve as a member ex officio without a vote of the four substantive committees created by Rule 24;

(j) To serve as the Chair of the Committee on Organization and Procedures described in Rule 23 :

(k) To exercise, in consultation with Committee on Organization and Procedures, general supervisory responsibility over the work of professional and support staff; and

(l) To appoint the three Vice-Presidents, the Floor Leader and the Secretary of the Convention. The third Vice President shall be appointed from the same senatorial district as the President; the first and second Vice Presidents shall be appointed from the other two senatorial districts.

10. Duties of the Vice-Presidents. In the temporary absence of the President, or in the event of the President's temporary inability to preside, the President's duties shall devolve upon the first Vice-President or, if the first Vice-President also be absent, upon the second Vice-President or, if second Vice-President too be absent, upon the third Vice-President. For the purpose of this Rule, the terms "temporary absence" and "temporary inability" shall mean an absence or inability not to exceed five (5) consecutive Convention sessions. "Convention session" shall mean any day on which the Convention meets. The Vice-Presidents shall also serve as members of the Committee on Organization and Procedures described in Rule 23.

11. Vacancy in the Office of the President. In the event of a vacancy in the office of President by death or resignation or the absence of the President for more than five (5) consecutive Convention sessions or the inability of the President to discharge the duties of the office for more than five (5) consecutive Convention sessions, or otherwise, the Convention shall, by vote of a majority of the delegates present and voting, elect a President to fill such vacancy. Such election will constitute the determination of the delegates that a vacancy exists in the office of President.

12. Vacancy in the Office of Vice-President; Temporary Absence or Inability of Vice-President. In the event of a vacancy in the office of any Vice-President by death, resignation or otherwise, the President shall appoint a new Vice-President from the same senatorial district as that of the predecessor in office. In the temporary absence of any Vice-President or in the event of the temporary inability on the part of any Vice-President to discharge the duties of the office, the President shall have the power to designate and appoint another delegate of the same senatorial district to discharge the duties of the office during the President's temporary absence or temporary inability.

13. Duties of the Floor Leader. The Floor Leader shall assist the President and shall perform the following duties:

(a) To propose routine motions for the orderly and speedy conduct of business;

(b) To act as floor manager in aid of the adoption of proposals or resolutions where another delegate does not assume this task;

(c) To serve as a member of the Committee on Organization and Procedures described in Rule 23; and

(d) To perform such other duties as the President or the Convention may designate.

14. Duties of the Secretary. The Secretary shall perform the following duties:

(a) To attest by signature all proposed constitutional amendments and resolutions adopted by the Convention, orders, proceedings and other documents issued by order of the Convention;

(b) To certify and transmit or cause to be transmitted to the Governor, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives all proposed constitutional amendments and resolutions adopted by the Convention;

(c) To call the roll at the opening of each session of the Convention and at any other time a roll call is required;

(d) To assist the President in the supervision of professional and support staff;

(e) To keep or cause to be kept a daily verbatim journal and a daily summary journal of the Convention proceedings. The daily verbatim journal shall be an accurate transcription of the session proceedings. The daily verbatim journal shall be transcribed in English; debate in the vernacular shall be indicated. The daily summary journal shall summarize the matters considered and the actions taken by the Convention. A copy of the summary journal for the preceding session day shall be provided to each delegate before the start of each session;

(f) To distribute or cause to be distributed the agenda of the business of the Convention for each day that the Convention meets to the delegates or others as appropriate;

(g) To prepare or cause to be prepared for duplication all proposals and other documents that are required to be duplicated under these Rules;

(h) To give or cause to be given a number to every delegate proposal for an amendment to the Constitution prior to introduction, and the numbers shall be in numerical order. When a committee recommendation is reported, the Secretary shall give it a number, in separate series for each committee. The Secretary shall keep the several proposals and recommendations on file in order by their numbers, unless otherwise ordered by the Convention. "Delegate proposal" and "committee recommendation" shall have the same meaning for the purpose of this Rule as they have for the purposes of Rule 52;

(i) To act as custodian of all documents and records of the Convention. These shall include but not be limited to the following:

1. delegate proposals, committee recommendations and any amendments thereto;

2. records of Convention sessions including summary journal, verbatim journal, audio or video recordings;
3. records of meetings of the Committee of the Whole;
4. records of substantive committees;
5. records of public hearings;
6. legal opinions and memoranda rendered to the Convention or its committees by counsel assisting the Convention; and
7. all other records received or generated by the Convention.

For purposes of this subsection "records" shall mean letters, words, numbers, photographs or their equivalents, set down by handwriting, typewriting, printing, photostating, photographing, magnetic impulse, mechanical or electronic recording, or any other form of data compilation.

After the adjournment of the Convention, the Secretary shall turn such documents and records over to the Commonwealth Archives in accordance with Section 20 of Public Law 9-18;

(j) To arrange for the recording of the proceedings of the Convention and of the Committee of the Whole and for the transcription of such recordings; and

(k) To serve as a member of the Committee on Organization and Procedures described in Rule 23.

15. Staff of the Convention. The Convention may, subject to budgetary constraints, employ such professional and support staff as it deems necessary and proper.

16. Conduct of Debate. When any delegate is about to speak in debate or to present any matter to the Convention, the delegate shall address himself or herself to "Mr./Madam President"; a delegate shall not speak until recognized and, when recognized, the delegate shall confine himself or herself to the question under consideration and avoid personalities.

17. Point of Order. When a delegate believes that these Rules are being violated, the delegate may interrupt the proceedings to make a point of order. When recognized,

the delegate shall specify the Rule being violated. The point of order is not debatable; however, the President may, before ruling in accordance with Rule 9 (d), permit the delegate additional time to be heard on the point of order and may permit such other delegate to speak to the point as the President deems appropriate. If the ruling of the President is appealed to the Convention, the delegate raising the point of order and the President each shall have five minutes to explain their positions on the ruling to the Convention. The Convention shall then vote on the appeal in accordance with Rule 60.

18. Times Delegates May Speak. Except as otherwise provided in these Rules, no delegate may speak more than once on the same question without leave of a majority of the delegates present and voting, unless the delegate be the mover of the matter pending or Chair of the committee that reported it, in which case the delegate shall be privileged to speak twice. Notwithstanding this provision, however, each delegate who speaks to an issue shall have three (3) minutes to rebut responses to his or her statement.

19. General Limit on Debate. Except upon the affirmative vote of a majority of the delegates present and voting, no delegate may speak longer than fifteen (15) minutes without being required by the presiding officer to yield the floor, provided, however, that the President may allow additional time to the delegate speaking if there is no objection from the floor. The restriction imposed by this Rule shall not be applicable to Chair and Vice-Chair of committees when they are presenting reports of their committees to the Convention or to the Committee of the Whole, or to the chief spokesperson for a majority report of a committee of the Convention.

20. Seating. Delegates shall be seated in the Convention hall by direction of the President.

21. Contest of Election or Appointment. No protest or petition contesting the election or appointment of any delegate shall be received or considered by the Convention.

22. Vacancies. A vacancy in the office of any elected delegate shall be filled in accordance with Public Law 9-18, section 9.

23. Committee on Organization and Procedures. The Committee on Organization and Procedures shall consist of the President, the three (3) Vice-Presidents, the Floor Leader, the Secretary , and the Chairs of the substantive committees provided for in Rule 24. This committee shall prepare agenda for the Convention, appoint members to committees in accordance with Rule 27, oversee the drafting of constitutional provisions, coordinate the work of the substantive committees, and be responsible for the general business of the Convention.

24. Substantive Committees. There shall be four substantive committees created with the following subject area responsibilities:

(a) Committee on Land and Personal Rights:

1. Public Lands (Art. XI)
2. Restrictions on Alienation of Land (Art. XII)
3. Eminent Domain (Art. XIII)
4. Corporations (Art. XVI)
5. Natural Resources (Art. XIV)
6. Personal Rights (Art. I)
7. Preamble
8. New/Other Matters

(b) Committee on Legislative Branch and Public Finance:

1. Legislative Branch (Art. II)
2. Taxation and Public Finance (Art. X)
3. Gambling (Art. XXI)
4. Elections (Art. VIII)
5. Eligibility to Vote (Art. VII)
6. Schedule on Transitional Matters

(c) Committee on Executive Branch and Local Government:

1. Executive Branch (Art. III)
2. Local Government (Art. VI)
3. Code of Ethics (Art. XIX)
5. Oath of Office (Art. XVII)
6. Official Seal, Flag, Language (Art. XXII)

(d) **Committee on Judiciary and Other Elected Offices:**

1. Judicial Branch (Art. IV)
2. Constitutional Amendment (Art. XVIII)
3. Washington Representation (Art. V)
4. Education (Art. XV)
5. Civil Service (Art. XX)
6. Initiative, Referendum and Recall (Art. IX)

25. Assignments of Proposals to Committees. Delegate proposals shall be assigned by the President to the appropriate committee for consideration. Notwithstanding the above allocation of subject area responsibilities to committees, the Committee on Organization and Procedures may re-assign matters among the committees to accomplish the work of the Convention efficiently.

26. Discharge of Proposals Assigned to Substantive Committees. If a majority of the delegates present shall so request, a proposal under consideration by a substantive committee shall be taken from its jurisdiction and placed before the Convention.

27. Membership of Committees. Each delegate shall be a member of at least one but not more than two substantive committees. In naming delegates to committees, the Committee on Organization and Procedures shall strive to appoint committees whose geographic composition is proportional to that of the Convention as a whole, provided that each committee (substantive or special) shall have at least one member from each of the three senatorial districts. The substantive committees shall be of roughly equivalent size.

28. Committee Officers. The Chair and Vice-Chair of each substantive committee shall be appointed by the President. The Vice-Chair shall act as Chair during a temporary absence or temporary inability of the Chair. "Temporary absence" and "temporary inability" shall have the same meaning for the purposes of this Rule as they have for the purposes of Rule 10.

29. Meetings During Sessions of the Convention or the Committee of the Whole. No substantive committee shall meet during a session of the Convention or of the Committee of the Whole except with the permission of the majority of the delegates.

30. Public Hearings. The following Rules shall be applicable to any public hearing conducted by a committee of the Convention, including the Committee of the Whole:

(a) Subject to the approval of the Committee on Organization and Procedures, a committee may hold public hearings as and when it so determines;

(b) The Chair of the committee shall give public notice of each public hearing as far in advance as is practicable;

(c) All persons wishing to testify before a committee shall be afforded a reasonable opportunity to do so;

(d) Expert witnesses may be invited to testify whenever the committee deems it necessary or desirable;

(e) Witnesses shall, whenever possible, submit written statements of their testimony in advance of the hearing, but the lack of such written statements shall not be used to deny any witness the opportunity to testify;

(f) For the purpose of public hearings, any three (3) members of the committee shall constitute a quorum;

(g) All public hearings shall be recorded. All recordings, in whatever form, together with written testimony and any exhibits or other materials provided by witnesses shall be promptly turned over to the Secretary of the Convention who shall preserve such records in accordance with his or her responsibilities under Rule 14 (i).

31. Formation of the Committee of the Whole. The Convention may upon motion resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the consideration of delegate proposals, committee recommendations and other business.

32. Consideration of Business by the Committee of the Whole. When a delegate proposal, committee recommendation, resolution or other matter is submitted

to the Committee of the Whole, it shall be read by the Secretary or another person designated by the Chair of the Committee of the Whole and debated by the Committee. All amendments made to matters submitted to the Committee of the Whole shall be noted in its report. After the report by the Committee of the Whole, the matter may be debated and amended on the floor of the Convention.

33. Rules of the Committee of the Whole. Except as otherwise provided herein, the Rules of the Convention shall be observed in the Committee of the Whole so far as they are applicable.

34. Quorum of the Committee of the Whole. A quorum for the Committee of the Whole to do business shall be as provided in Rule 4. If the Chair of the Committee determines that no quorum exists, the Committee shall rise, the President shall resume the chair, and the Chair shall report to the Convention the cause of the rising of the Committee.

35. Rising of the Committee of the Whole. A motion for the rising of the Committee of the Whole shall always be in order unless a member of the Committee is speaking or a vote is being taken and shall be decided without debate.

36. Recording in Journal. No memorial, remonstrance or petition shall be read or recorded in full in the journal unless ordered read or recorded by the affirmative vote of a majority of those present and voting.

37. Stating Motions. When a motion is made, it shall be stated to the Convention by the President or, if in writing, it shall be handed to the Convention Secretary or his or her designee and read aloud to the Convention before being debated.

38. Seconding. No motion shall be considered by the Convention until it has been seconded. This requirement shall not apply to points of privilege, information, or order, or to request to withdraw a motion.

39. Withdrawal of Motions. After a motion has been stated by the President or read by the Secretary or his or her designee, it shall be deemed to be in the possession of the Convention, but it may be withdrawn by the maker at any time before being amended or put to a vote.

40. Main and Subsidiary Motions.

(a) A delegate may be the mover of a main motion intended to further the business of the Convention at the time provided for in the order of business.

(b) Whenever any main motion is under discussion, only the following subsidiary motions relative thereto may be entertained in the following order of precedence:

1. For the previous question : neither debatable nor amendable;
2. To lay on the table: neither debatable nor amendable;
3. To postpone to a date certain : neither debatable nor amendable;
4. To postpone indefinitely: debatable but not amendable;
5. To limit debate : neither debatable or amendable;
6. To call for the orders of the day: neither debatable or amendable;
7. To commit or recommit to a Committee with or without instructions from the body: debatable but not amendable;
8. To fix the time to which to adjourn: both debatable and amendable;
9. To amend: both debatable and amendable.

41. Privileged Motions.

(a) A delegate, when recognized, may be the mover of a privileged motion at any time such a motion is appropriate to the order of business. A privileged motion shall take precedence over main and subsidiary motions. Privileged motions, except for a question of privilege, are not subject to debate and shall be disposed of before the Convention proceeds with the order of business.

(b) Privileged motions, in the following order of precedence among themselves, are:

1. Call of the Convention when there is not a quorum present;
2. To make, or give notice of, a motion to reconsider;

3. To adjourn (when unqualified or when no provision has been made for the next meeting);
4. To recess;
5. To raise a question of privilege.

42. Questions of Privilege. Questions or points of privilege are questions which relate to the body or its members in such a manner as to affect the proper functioning of the body. Questions of privilege shall be strictly construed and shall be limited to the following:

(a) Privilege of the Convention:

1. Presence of members when a quorum is present.
2. Organization of the Convention.
3. Comfort of the delegates.
4. Freedom from disturbance.
5. Disorderly conduct of members.
6. Conduct of officers or employers.
7. Conduct of reporters or the press or the accuracy of published reports.
8. Accuracy of the journal and records of the Convention.

(b) Personal Privilege: Questions relating to the reputation or conduct of members in their representative capacity.

43. Motion to Adjourn. A motion to adjourn is always in order, except:

- (a) It may not interrupt a member who has the floor;
- (b) It cannot be renewed after it has been defeated until after some business has intervened;
- (c) It is not in order during roll call or the taking or verification of a vote;
- (d) It is never in order for a dilatory purpose.

44. Motion to Take from the Table. After one (1) day's notice, days upon which the Convention does not sit not being counted, any matter laid on the table may be

taken therefrom on motion, provided that the business of the class of the matter to be taken from the table would then be in order.

45. Amendment Must be Germane. No motion or proposition relating to a subject different from that under consideration shall be admitted under color of an amendment or substitute.

46. Amendments to be Distributed. No amendment to any committee recommendation shall be considered unless it is submitted in writing and a copy thereof is delivered to the floor desk of each delegate prior to the time the amendment is offered.

47. Division of Question. A delegate may move for a division of the question when a delegate finds two or more specific subjects within the same general subject of a proposal, committee recommendation, resolution or other question before the Convention and desires that each such specific subject be considered and voted on separately. When a member moves for division of the question, the Presiding Officer shall interrupt the proceedings and permit the member to make the motion, which shall specify the subjects to be considered and voted on separately. The motion shall be decided without debate and shall be put to vote as soon as made and seconded.

Whenever a question has been divided, no final vote shall be taken on any division until all of the divisions thereof have been considered for amendment, after which further amendments to any division shall be in order, and thereafter each division will be put to final vote.

48. Calling for the Previous Question. Any delegate may move for the previous question which shall be decided without debate and shall be put to vote as soon as made and seconded. The adoption of the motion for the previous question shall close debate and require the Presiding Officer to put the previous question before the body for a vote.

49. Sine Die Adjournment. A motion to adjourn the Convention sine die shall not be voted upon until at least forty-eight (48) hours after notice is given to the delegates; and to pass this motion requires an affirmative vote of a majority of all the delegates to the Convention.

50. Reconsideration in Convention.

(a) Any question finally adopted or rejected by the Convention may be reconsidered on motion of any delegate at any time before the convention adjourns sine die.

(b) No question may be reconsidered more than once, except if the reconsideration is moved by direction of the Committee on Organization and Procedures or approved by two thirds (2/3) of the delegates.

(c) A motion to reconsider in Convention may not be called up until the second session day after it is moved, and shall require an affirmative vote of a majority of the delegates to the Convention.

(d) A motion to reconsider in Convention may be laid on the table independent of the question to be reconsidered; but a motion to reconsider moved by direction of the Committee on Organization and Procedures or pursuant to the approval of the required number of delegates as provided above shall be in order without regard to the tabling of any previous motion to reconsider.

51. Quorum Calls. A call of the Convention may be ordered if there is an absence of a quorum. The roll of the Convention shall be called by the Secretary and the absentees noted. The Sergeant-at-Arms may, upon motion, be dispatched after the absentees. In such case, a list of the absentees shall be furnished by the Secretary to the Sergeant-at-Arms, who shall bring such absentees to the floor of the Convention with all possible speed. In case the Sergeant-at-Arms shall require assistance, the President, upon motion, may deputize as special assistant sergeant-at-arms any person properly qualified.

52. Introduction of Proposals and Recommendations.

(a) Any suggestion, proposition or draft intended to amend the Constitution shall be called a delegate proposal or a committee recommendation. A proposal introduced by a delegate shall be designated a delegate proposal, and a proposal submitted by a committee shall be designated a committee recommendation. A delegate proposal shall be presented by the

delegate or delegates introducing it, and a committee recommendation shall be presented by the Chair of the committee submitting it.

(b) A proposal from any non-delegate may be presented to the Convention by the Committee on Organization and Procedures or by any delegate as long as the identity of the requesting person, group or organization is clearly stated. Presentation of such proposals as a matter of courtesy does not connote approval of the proposal by the Committee or the delegate.

(c) Five (5) copies of every delegate proposal or committee recommendation shall be delivered to the Convention Secretary, who shall cause the same to be suitably numbered and distributed as promptly as possible.

(d) Delegate proposals shall be promptly submitted in accordance with committee agendas and deadlines to be established by the Committee on Organization and Procedures. No delegate proposal shall be introduced after July 10, 1995 except with the unanimous consent of the Convention.

53. Order of Consideration. The Convention shall consider delegate proposals and take action in the following order:

(a) Introduction of delegate proposals by number and proposer; duplication and distribution to delegates; followed by reference by the Committee on Organization and Procedures to a substantive committee established under Rule 24.

(b) Consideration by the substantive committee; followed by action by majority vote.

(c) Receipt by the Convention of reports accepted by the committees.

(d) Consideration by the Committee of the Whole of committee reports; followed by action by majority vote.

(e) Receipt by the Convention of reports accepted by the Committee of the Whole; followed by action by majority vote. Adoption on FIRST READING may

be by majority vote.

(f) Reference of amendments adopted by Convention on first reading to the Committee on Organization and Procedures for scheduling for second reading after the deadline for delegate proposals imposed by Rule 52(d) has passed.

(g) Consideration by the Committee of the Whole of amendments adopted by the Convention on first reading; followed by action by majority vote.

(h) Receipt by the Convention of amendments accepted by the Committee of the Whole; followed by action on SECOND READING. Adoption on SECOND READING must be by super majority vote pursuant to Rule 6.

(i) Reference of amendments adopted by the Convention on second reading to the Committee on Organization and Procedures for incorporation into a composite Constitution.

(j) Receipt by the Convention of the composite Constitution containing all amendments adopted on second reading.

54. Agenda. The Committee on Organization and Procedures shall prepare an agenda for each session of the Convention. The agenda shall be furnished to the Convention Secretary, who shall distribute it to the delegates before the time set for the next session of the Convention.

55. Order of Business. The order of business of the Convention shall be as follows:

- (a) Call to order and preliminary matters;
- (b) Silent prayer or meditation;
- (c) Roll call;
- (d) Reports of committees;
- (e) Introduction and first reading and referral of proposals;
- (f) Second and final reading of proposals;
- (g) Motions and resolutions;
- (h) Unfinished business;

- (i) Special Orders of the day; and
- (j) General Orders of the day.

56. **Unfinished Special Orders.** Any subject matter that has been made a special order for a particular day, but which is not reached on that day, shall then come up for consideration under the order of "unfinished business" at the next succeeding session of the Convention.

57. **Reading.** When the reading of a paper, including the journal, is called for and an objection is raised to such reading, the Convention, by a majority vote of delegates present and voting, shall determine without debate whether the paper shall be read.

58. **Presentation and Endorsement of Petitions.** Petitions received by an officer of the Convention or by any delegate may be initialed by the recipient and handed directly to the Chair of the committee that has the subject matter of the petition under consideration. The Chair of the committee, on behalf of the Convention, shall give appropriate notice of the receipt of the petition.

59. **Putting the Question; Roll Call**

(a) The President shall put all questions substantially in this form: "As many as are in favor of (as the question may be), say 'aye' "; and after the affirmative vote is expressed, "as many as are opposed, say 'nay' ".

(b) If the President is in doubt as to the vote, he may order a roll call vote of the Convention. A roll call vote of the Convention may also be had upon the demand of at least five (5) delegates. A roll call vote shall be had on any motion for the final adoption of a proposed amendment to the Constitution.

(c) After a question has been stated by the President, and the call of the roll has been started by the Secretary, the President shall not recognize a delegate for any purpose except upon points of order until after the announcement of the vote.

(d) During all roll calls, the names of the members shall be called

alphabetically by the Secretary and the absentees noted. In taking ayes and nays⁻⁷⁹⁻ upon the question, the Secretary shall enter upon the journal the names of those voting "aye" and the names of those voting "nay".

60. Appeals.

(a) On all appeals from decisions of the chair, the question shall be "Shall the ruling of the chair stand as the judgment of the Convention?".

(b) No delegate shall speak on the question of an appeal more than once without leave of the Convention.

(c) An appeal may be laid on the table but it shall not carry the main subject matter before the Convention with it, and the question out of which the appeal arose remains before the Convention.

(d) A majority of the delegates present and voting is required to overrule the President's decision.

61. Construction and Interpretation of the Rules. These Rules shall be construed according to their plain meaning. In the event that any ambiguity or conflict should arise regarding these Rules, or in the event that these Rules do not address a question or situation which may arise, then such controversy shall be resolved according to the rules and principles set forth in Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure.

62. Suspension of the Rules.

(a) A Rule of the Convention shall not be temporarily altered, suspended or rescinded unless one Convention day's notice shall be given of the motion therefor; provided, however, that such notice shall not be necessary of the last day of the Convention.

(b) A simple majority of the delegates present and voting shall be required to effect such alteration, suspension or rescission.

(c) The notice and the motion shall each specify the object of the temporary alteration, suspension or rescission and, in the case of the adoption of such motion, it shall be held to apply only to the object specified therein.

(d) Such notice shall be given and such motion made under the order of business in which the latter proposed to be affected by such alteration, suspension or rescission stands.

(e) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (a) through (d), a Rule of the Convention may be temporarily altered, suspended or rescinded without notice by unanimous consent.

63. Amendment of Rules.

(a) A motion to amend a Rule of the Convention shall not be made on less than five (5) session days' notice.

(b) A simple majority of the delegates present and voting shall be required to effect such amendment.

64. Language. English, Chamorro or Carolinian may be used in any proceeding of the Convention or in any Committee, except that any written submission or proposal shall be in English. All transcriptions of Convention proceedings shall be in English.

65. Notification. Upon completion of the Convention's work, the Convention shall transmit copies of all proposed amendments adopted by the Convention to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Proposed amendments adopted by the Convention shall be accurately translated into the Carolinian and Chamorro languages.

66. Place of Meetings. The Convention and the Committee of the Whole shall meet only on Saipan.

67. Radio and Television Coverage. Live radio and television coverage of all sessions of the Convention and the Committee of the Whole shall be permitted under an arrangement for placement of equipment that does not disrupt or inconvenience the

proceedings. The Chair of each substantive committees shall have discretion to allow⁻⁸¹⁻ such coverage.

68. Powers of the Convention.

(a) The President of the Convention or the Chair of any duly established committee thereof, may issue subpoenas requiring the attendance of witnesses and subpoenas duces tecum requiring the production of books, documents or other evidence, in any matter related to the work and duties of the Convention.

1. Any subpoena or other process issued under the authority of the Convention shall run in the name of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The subpoena or other process shall be signed by the President or Chair, as the case may be, shall contain a reference to this section, and shall set forth in general terms the matter or questions with reference to which the testimony or other evidence is to be taken.

2. Any officer to whom such process is directed, shall forthwith serve or execute the same upon delivery, without charge or compensation; provided, that any officer serving or executing such subpoena or other process shall be compensated for actual expenses, if any.

(b) The President of the Convention or the Chair of any duly established committee thereof, may administer and oath or affirmation to a witness in any matter under examination by the Convention. Any person who:

1. Fails or refuses to answer any relevant question or fails or refuses to furnish any relevant book, paper, or other document subpoenaed; or

2. Exhibits disrespect of the Convention or a committee thereof by knowingly and willfully interfering with the operation and function of the Convention or the committee by open defiance of an order in or near the meeting place of the Convention or the committee, by disturbing the peace in or near the meeting place, by interfering with an officer of the Convention or the committee in the lawful performance of official duties, or by unlawfully detaining or threatening any witness of the Convention or the committee because of that person's duty as a witness: shall be in

contempt, and upon conviction thereof shall be fined not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both. In any instances of the alleged contempt, the President of the Convention shall certify a statement of the contempt to the Attorney General of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands who shall prosecute the offender in the Commonwealth Superior Court.

(c) The officers and employees of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands shall cooperate with the Convention or any committee thereof and furnish to it or to its representatives such information as may be called for in connection with the activities of the Convention or its committees.