

The Role of the Local Parliamentarian

December 2024

Bert Lema

By now, you all should know to review and keep copies of the most current National Constitution and Bylaws, Department Bylaws, District Bylaws, and Local Bylaws in a file or folder for easy access whenever a question arises. You may not need to refer to these documents at every meeting, but it is a best practice to have them with you in the event you are called upon to resolve a disputed action. Since there were changes made to the National Constitution and Bylaws, as well as the Department Bylaws and Standing Rules, at their respective Conventions, if you have not downloaded the updates, please do it now. These can be found at amvetsaux.org and amvetsauxdeptmi.org, respectively.

Additional best practice suggestions which I would like to share with you include the following:

- Download and review your Local Parliamentarian Instructions which can be found on the Department website noted above. If you find something you do not understand or would like to submit a change recommendation to the Department for consideration, contact me (see below).
- I will notify you and the Local President when your Bylaws must be submitted for approval (every three years). However, if a Bylaw change is approved by your membership with a 2/3 vote before such time as your Bylaws are due for approval, you must send an amendment to your Bylaws showing the change to the Department Parliamentarian for approval. See your Local Parliamentarian Instructions and Department Bylaws for clarification.
- If your Local Auxiliary Bylaws do not specifically give the Parliamentarian the right to vote or make motions, she may not do either. However, if the membership by 2/3 vote approves a Bylaw change allowing her to be able to make motions and vote, use the wording detailed in your instructions. An amendment to your Bylaws must then be submitted to the Department Parliamentarian for approval.
- You are the advisor to the President. However, you also act in an advisory capacity to every Local Officer. If you have not done so, you should review their instructions in order to be able to assist them in their duties. Instructions for all Local Officers can also be found on the Department Website.

As always, when you have a question, you can always email me at lema81@wowway.com or give me a call at 586.214.1019 and leave a message. I always try to return calls and messages within 24-48 hours.