

# **CALL TO CONVENTION – 2024 ANNUAL CONVENTION VIRGINIA STATE ASSOCIATION OF PARLIAMENTARIANS**

*Theme – Bridging Traditions: The Evolution of Parliamentary Law*

Dear VSAP Members, Family, and Friends,

As the spring blooms in the beautiful landscapes of Virginia, it brings with it the promise of learning, connection, and growth. It is with great excitement and anticipation that we invite you to the Virginia State Association of Parliamentarians Annual Convention, happening April 20-21, 2024, at the scenic city of Charlottesville, Virginia.

This year, we are embracing the theme "Bridging Traditions: The Evolution of Parliamentary Law," a testament to our enduring commitment to the principles of parliamentary procedure and our eagerness to explore its dynamic evolution. This theme not only honors our rich heritage but also underscores our pursuit of adapting and innovating for the future.

We are particularly thrilled to announce a special lecture set against the historic backdrop of Monticello, the esteemed home of Thomas Jefferson. Here, we will delve into Jefferson's Parliamentary Procedure Manual, exploring its foundational impact on our democratic processes and its lasting relevance in today's society. This unique experience promises to be a highlight, offering profound insights amidst the grandeur of one of our nation's most treasured landmarks.

Our convention is more than just a gathering; it is a celebration of our collective passion for parliamentary procedure and a shared commitment to excellence in governance. It is a time to reconnect with old friends, make new ones, and immerse ourselves in the camaraderie and support that defines our association.

We invite you to join us in Charlottesville for what promises to be an enlightening and inspiring weekend. Together, let's bridge traditions and forge ahead into the future of parliamentary law, armed with knowledge, enthusiasm, and the spirit of innovation.

Warmest regards,

*/s/Donald Garrett*

Donald Garrett, PRP

2023-2025 VSAP President

Enclosures: Meeting Notice  
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## Meeting Notice

I, Donald Garrett, PRP, President of the Virginia State Association of Parliamentarians (VSAP), hereby give notice that the 2024 Annual Convention of VSAP will occur on April 20 and 21, 2024, at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Charlottesville (990 Hilton Heights Rd, Charlottesville, VA 22901). The Convention will be called to order at 9:30 am on April 20, 2024. Please visit <http://tinyurl.com/2024-VSAP> (all caps) to register for the Convention and pay the registration fee or submit the attached registration form.

### **Delegate Credentialing**

Unit/Club Delegates: Each Unit and Club receives one (1) delegate for its first five (5) primary members or major fraction thereof, and one (1) delegate for each additional five (5) members or major fraction thereof. Unit/Club Presidents must certify the name(s) and email address(es) of their delegate(s) via the attached form by April 12, 2024.

Member-At-Large Delegates: The VSAP President will appoint members-at-large to voting delegate slots on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Ex-Officio Delegates: Ex-Officio Delegates (Officers, Past Presidents, etc.) will be credentialed automatically upon registration.

### **Proposed Bylaws Amendments**

The report of the Bylaws Committee is enclosed with this notice. In accordance with Article XIV, Section 2 of the VSAP Bylaws, notice of the following proposed bylaws amendments is hereby given:

- Amend Article XIV, Section 3 of the VSAP Bylaws by striking "unanimous" and inserting "three-fourths."
- Amend Article XIV, Section 3 of the VSAP Bylaws by adding "in the form of a written hard copy."
- Amend Article VI, Section 5A by 1) striking "by ballot" and 2) adding "If there is more than one nominee for a position, the election shall be by ballot."
- Amend Article VI, Section 1 by striking "The election shall be by ballot. A plurality shall elect and the member receiving the largest number of votes shall serve as chairman. In the event of a tie, the committee members shall meet prior to the adjournment of the Convention and elect the Chairman."

## Separate Registration for the Friday Afternoon Lecture at Monticello

Sponsored by VSAP and the Virginia Alpha Unit of Registered Parliamentarians, we have arranged a lecture at Monticello, the estate of Founding Father Thomas Jefferson, to discuss Thomas Jefferson's development of his Manual of Parliamentary Procedure while he was Vice President of the United States. The presenter will display archival materials and have worksheets on the topic. Attendees will learn about the historical basis from which many provisions of RONR are derived ("The position of Jefferson's Manual is unchallenged as the first to define and interpret parliamentary principles for our democratic republic and to offer a basic pattern of rules." RONR pg. xxxvii).

The event is scheduled to begin at 3:00 pm on Friday, April 19, 2024. Following the lecture, you are invited to attend the Virginia Alpha Unit of Registered Parliamentarians Annual Meeting.

The cost to attend this lecture is \$25, which includes a boxed sandwich meal. To RSVP, please contact Donald Garrett at [donaldgarrett@gmail.com](mailto:donaldgarrett@gmail.com), who will offer both check and card payment options.

### Request for Reports

Unit Presidents, Club Presidents, State Officers, and Committee Chairs:

Please submit your annual report in format to President Garrett at [donaldgarrett@gmail.com](mailto:donaldgarrett@gmail.com) no later than March 31, 2024. Please report on your accomplishments and upcoming goals for the remainder of the biennium. Separately, please notify President Garrett of any silent gavels since the 2023 Annual Convention.

### Request for Donations and Bookstore Items

VSAP Members:

We intend to conduct a silent auction at the 2024 Annual Convention. If you have any goods or services you would like to donate, please contact President Donald Garrett at [donaldgarrett@gmail.com](mailto:donaldgarrett@gmail.com) to coordinate the donation. Additionally, contact President Garrett if there are any particular parliamentary resources you would like to have available on-site in Charlottesville for purchase.

### Request for Advertisements

If you would like to advertise in the convention program, please email President Donald Garrett at [donaldgarrett@gmail.com](mailto:donaldgarrett@gmail.com) to coordinate.

## Schedule at a Glance

*Tentative as of 3/19/2024*

### **Friday, April 19, 2024**

*Robert H. Smith Education Center at Monticello, 1050 Monticello Loop, Charlottesville, VA 22902*

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|-------------------|--|
| 2:30 pm – 6:00 pm | Credentialing for Convention                                   |
| 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm | Lecture on Jefferson’s Manual (Separate Registration Required) |
| 4:30 pm – 6:30 pm | Va. Alpha Unit of Registered Parliamentarians Meeting & Dinner |

### **Saturday, April 20, 2024**

*DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Charlottesville, 990 Hilton Heights Rd, Charlottesville, VA 22901*

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|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 8:00 am – 11:00 am | Credentialing and Registration        |
| 8:00 am – 9:15 am  | Breakfast                             |
| 9:30 am – 11:30 am | Business Meeting                      |
| 11:30 am – 5:30 pm | Workshops (Breaks and Lunch Included) |
| 7:00 pm            | Dinner                                |

### **Saturday, April 20, 2024**

*DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Charlottesville, 990 Hilton Heights Rd, Charlottesville, VA 22901*

- |                     |                                |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| 9:00 am – 10:30 am  | Credentialing and Registration |
| 9:00 am – 10:30 am  | Breakfast Keynote              |
| 10:30 am – 12:00 pm | Business Meeting               |

## Report of the Bylaws Committee

Article XIV, Section 2 of the Virginia State Association of Parliamentarians Bylaws states, “These bylaws may be amended by the voting body of the Association by a two-thirds vote at a Convention, provided previous notice shall have been given in the Call to Convention.” The following four amendments are submitted for consideration at the 2024 Annual Convention.

### Proposed Bylaws Amendment 1

Submitted by the VSAP Bylaws Committee

Amend Article XIV, Section 3 of the VSAP Bylaws by striking "unanimous" and inserting "three-fourths."

<b>Current Bylaws Language</b>	<b>Proposed New Language</b>
Section 3. These bylaws may be amended by the voting body of the Association by a unanimous vote at the Annual Association Convention, provided previous notice shall have been given at the opening meeting of the Annual Association Convention.	Section 3. These bylaws may be amended by the voting body of the Association by a <del>unanimous</del> <b>three-fourths</b> vote at the Annual Association Convention, provided previous notice shall have been given at the opening meeting of the Annual Association Convention.

**Submitter Rationale:** Under the current Bylaws language, a single member can prevent an amendment to the VSAP Bylaws. The Bylaws Committee would like to increase this threshold to 25% of the delegates, similar to how the NAP Bylaws allows for nine-tenths vote to approve last-minute amendments to the NAP Bylaws.

**Recommendation:** The Bylaws Committee recommends that the amendment be adopted.

## Proposed Bylaws Amendment 2

Submitted by the Virginia Peninsula Unit of Parliamentarians

Amend Article XIV, Section 3 of the VSAP Bylaws by adding “in the form of a written hard copy.”

<b>Current Bylaws Language</b>	<b>Proposed New Language</b>
Section 3. These bylaws may be amended by the voting body of the Association by a unanimous vote at the Annual Association Convention, provided previous notice shall have been given at the opening meeting of the Annual Association Convention.	Section 3. These bylaws may be amended by the voting body of the Association by a unanimous vote at the Annual Association Convention, provided previous notice shall have been given at the opening meeting of the Annual Association Convention <i>in the form of a written hard copy.</i>

**Submitter Rationale:** Last year at the VSAP Annual Association Convention there were several “last minute bylaw amendments” proposed. Because these amendments were presented to the voting body for the first time at the opening meeting and not in the convention meeting call, some voting members did not have time to write down, fully digest, and make proposed primary and/or secondary amendments to the proposed amendments. Whereas it may be natural in such a case to vote against the proposed amendment, there are times when adopting a last minute amendment is in the best interest of VSAP. In such a situation it is paramount that the voting body be given sufficient time to write down, fully digest, and propose primary and/or secondary amendments to the proposed bylaw amendment. The current bylaw amendment ensures that the VSAP Association Convention’s voting body give due diligence to a proposed VSAP amendment.

**Recommendation:** The Bylaws Committee recommends that the proposed amendment be *postponed indefinitely*. The Convention already has the authority under RONR to create a rule that previous notice be reduced to writing: “If previous notice is given at a meeting, it can be given orally unless the rules of the organization require it to be in writing” (RONR, §10:47, emphasis added). The Bylaws Committee believes this matter is better addressed as a special rule of order or a standing rule instead of as an encumbrance in the Bylaws.

If the motion to postpone indefinitely is lost, the Bylaws Committee recommends that the convention approve a proviso that the amendment take effect upon the adjournment of the 2024 Annual Convention.

**Proposed Bylaws Amendment 3**

Submitted by the VSAP Bylaws Committee

Amend Article VI, Section 5A by 1) striking “by ballot” and 2) adding “If there is more than one nominee for a position, the election shall be by ballot.”

<b>Current Bylaws Language</b>	<b>Proposed New Language</b>
Section 5. Election of Officers A. Officers shall be elected by ballot at the annual association convention in odd-numbered years to serve a term of two (2) years or until their successors are elected. The term shall begin at the close of the convention at which the officers are elected.	Section 5. Election of Officers A. Officers shall be elected <del>by ballot</del> at the annual association convention in odd-numbered years to serve a term of two (2) years or until their successors are elected. The term shall begin at the close of the convention at which the officers are elected. <i>If there is more than one nominee for a position, the election shall be by ballot.</i>

**Submitter Rationale:** This amendment would allow uncontested elections to be decided by acclamation, saving time. The convention would still retain the ability to order a ballot vote if it chooses.

**Recommendation:** The Bylaws Committee recommends that this amendment be adopted.

**Proposed Bylaws Amendment 4**  
Submitted by the VSAP Bylaws Committee

Amend Article VI, Section 1 by striking “The election shall be by ballot. A plurality shall elect and the member receiving the largest number of votes shall serve as chairman. In the event of a tie, the committee members shall meet prior to the adjournment of the Convention and elect the Chairman.”

<b>Current Bylaws Language</b>	<b>Proposed New Language</b>
<p>Section 1. The Annual Convention in even-numbered years shall elect a Nominating Committee consisting of five (5) members, provided, however, that no two members may be from the same unit or club. The election shall be by ballot. A plurality shall elect and the member receiving the largest number of votes shall serve as chairman. In the event of a tie, the committee members shall meet prior to the adjournment of the Convention and elect the Chairman.</p>	<p>Section 1. The Annual Convention in even-numbered years shall elect a Nominating Committee consisting of five (5) members, provided, however, that no two members may be from the same unit or club. <del>The election shall be by ballot. A plurality shall elect and the member receiving the largest number of votes shall serve as chairman. In the event of a tie, the committee members shall meet prior to the adjournment of the Convention and elect the Chairman.</del></p>

**Submitter Rationale:** This amendment would allow uncontested elections to be decided by acclamation, saving time. The convention would still retain the ability to order a ballot vote if it chooses. Additionally, this amendment would allow the chair of the committee to be decided under the procedure in RONR: “[T]he body that elects the committee members has the power, at the time the appointments are made, to designate any one of them as chairman. If a chairman is not designated when the committee is appointed, the committee has the right to elect its own chairman” (RONR, §13:18).

**Recommendation:** The Bylaws Committee recommends that this amendment be adopted.