

Helping Societies in the Age of Pandemics

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For Handout Go To:
www.RulesDoneRight.com/NAP

Pandemics

EPIDEMIC



Natural Disasters



Man-Made Disasters



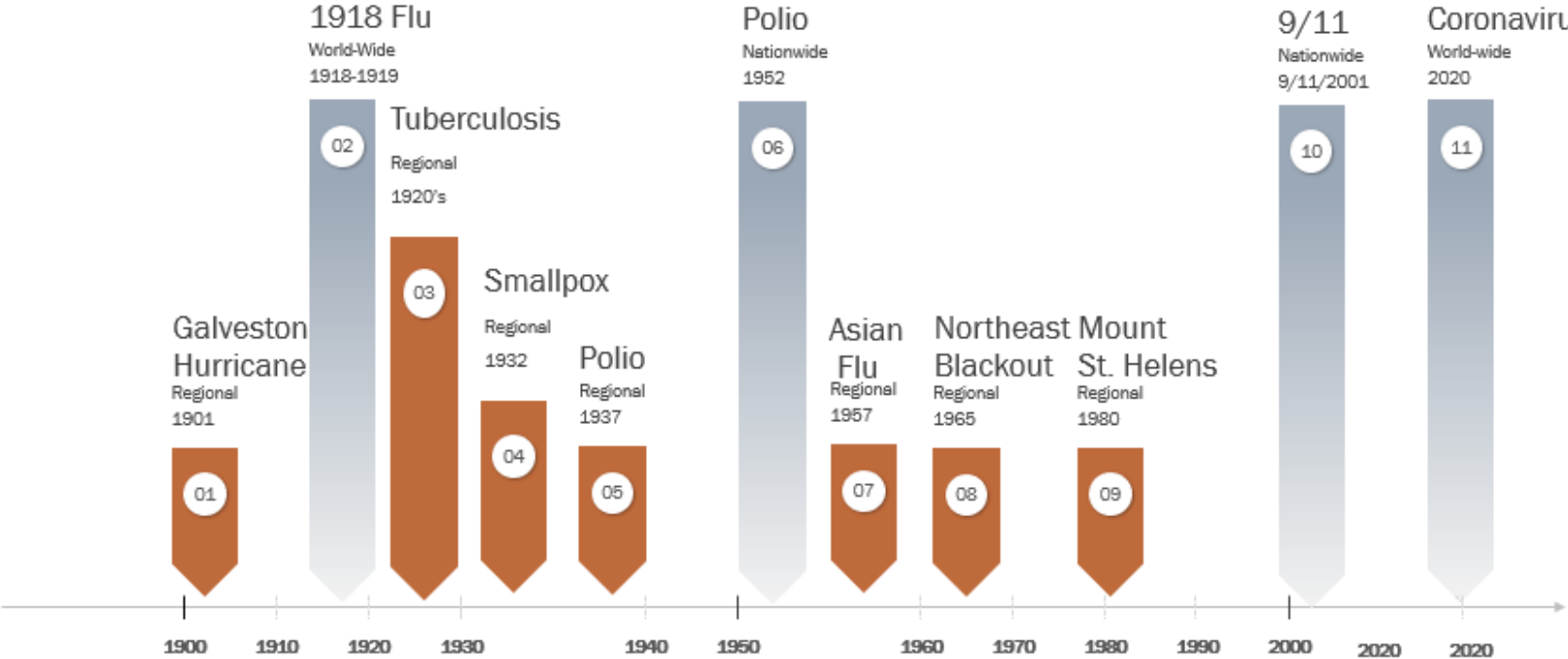
The Unexpected



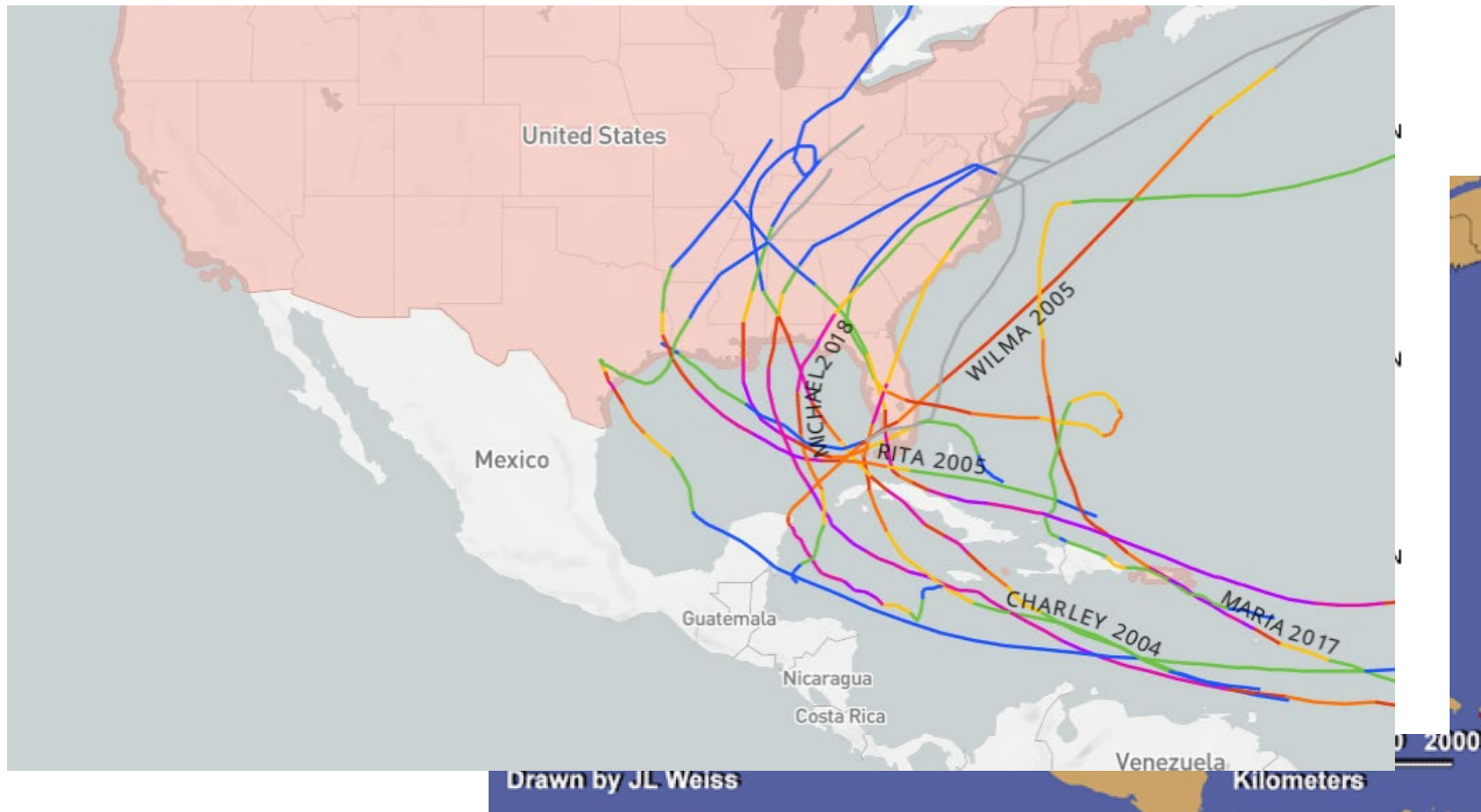
Civil Unrest



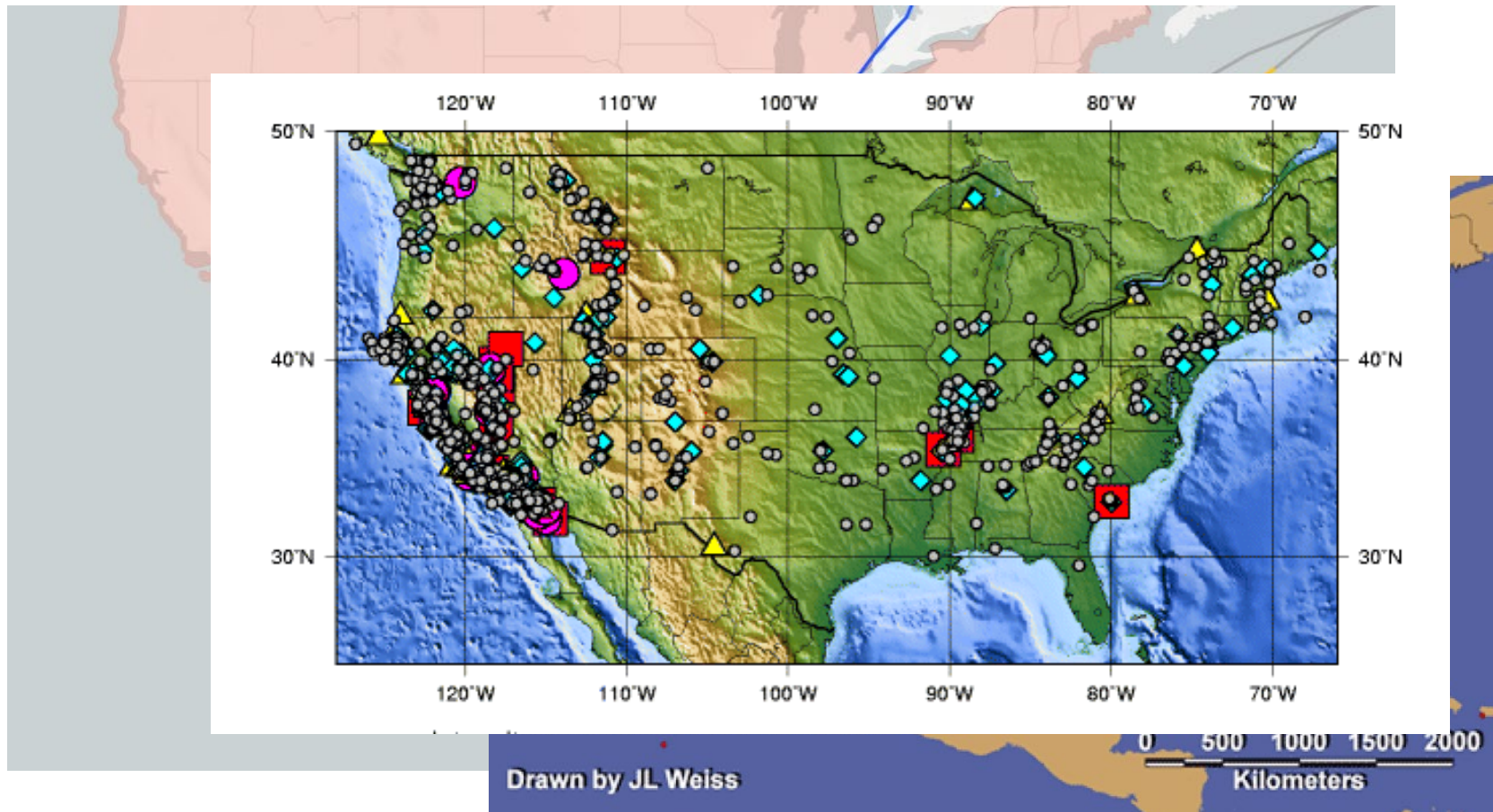
How Often Are Meetings Disrupted?



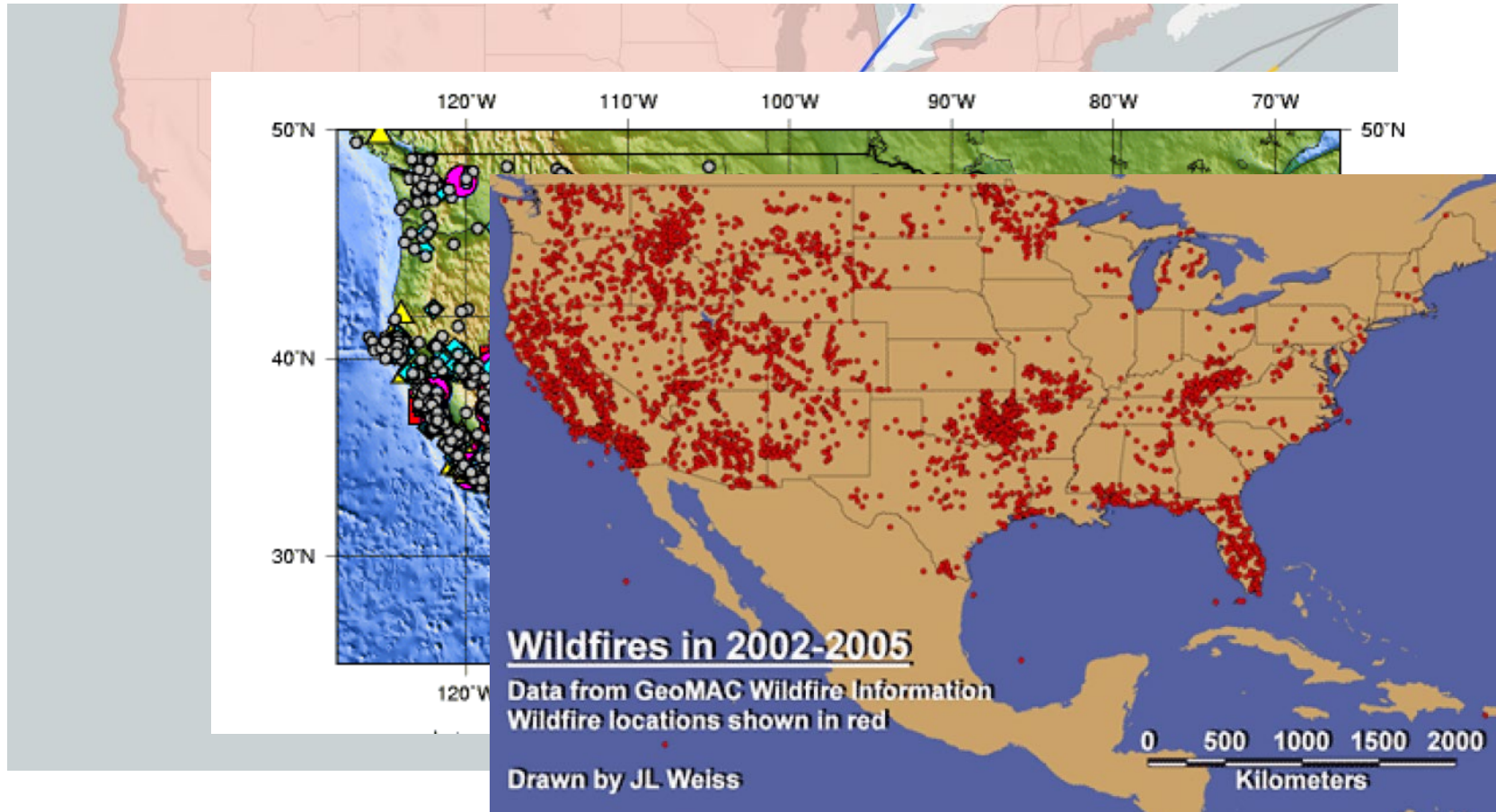
Major Hurricane Paths since 2000



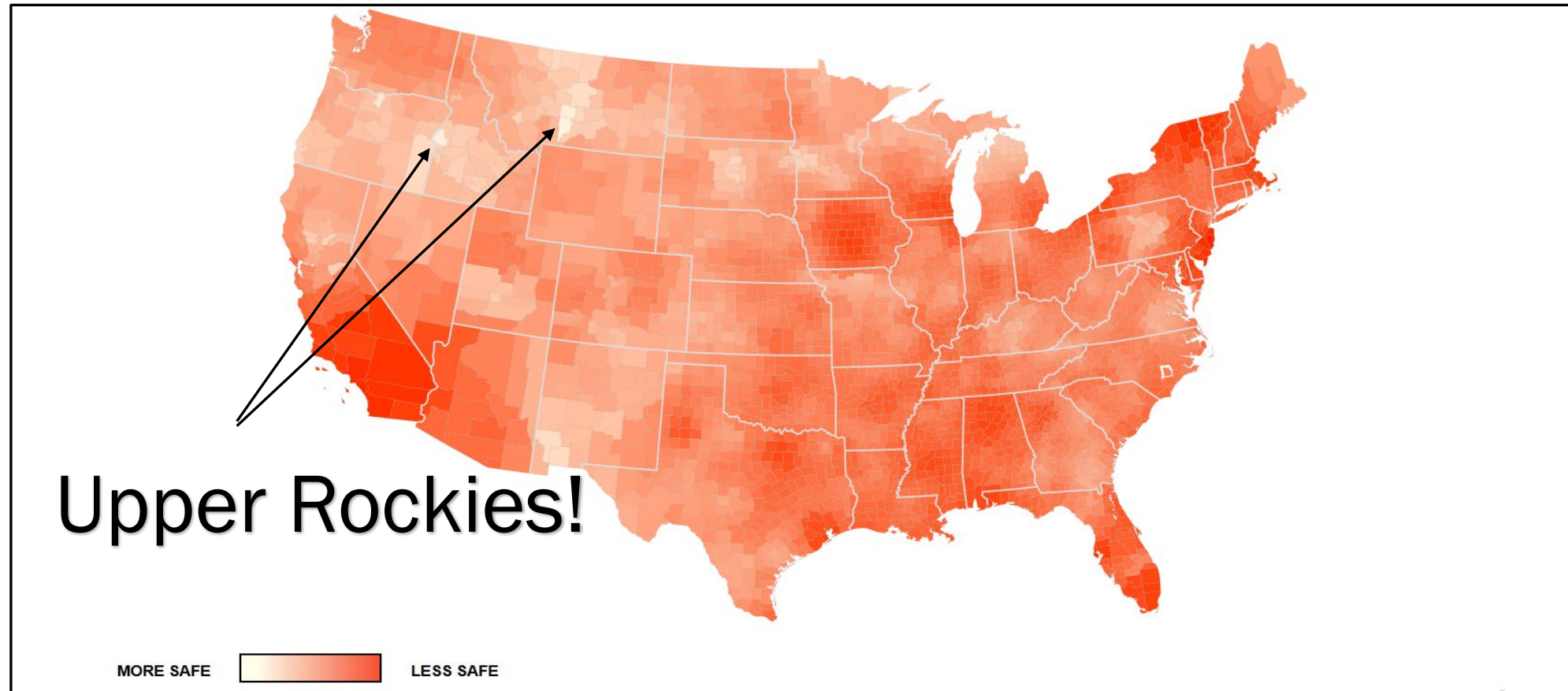
Major Earthquakes since 2000



Major Wildfires since 2002-2005



Where are Meetings Safe?



Not a matter of “If”
But
A matter of “When”

2020 unusual but not unique

The Current Emergency

Available NAP Resources on Parliamentarians.org:

- Pre-release of the “Sample Rules for Electronic Meetings” from RONR 12th Edition Appendix
- Webinars:
 - Parliamentary Advice
 - Electronic Meetings
 - Electronic Voting

The screenshot shows the homepage of the National Association of Parliamentarians (NAP). The header includes the organization's name and tagline, "Educating the world on parliamentary procedure," along with a navigation menu: Home, + About, + Join, + Professional Development, + Members, Store, and Contact. A large banner features the text "NAP Essential resources for parliamentarians" and a "Find a Professional Parliamentarian" button. Below the banner are three main columns: "NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS" with articles on office reopening and electronic meetings; "UPCOMING EVENTS" listing a training conference and a PRC module schedule; and "FOR PARLIAMENTARIANS" with buttons for membership, login, directory, events, quiz, store, and learning opportunities. Social media icons for Facebook, LinkedIn, and RSS are at the bottom right.



A Parliamentary Go Bag for Future Emergencies

What Kind of Tools Required?

- Preparation before the emergency
- Operating within the emergency

What tools are at your disposal?



“The object of rules of order is to facilitate the smooth functioning of the assembly and to provide a firm basis for resolving questions of procedure that may arise.”

- RONR (12TH ED) 2:14

Organizing for Obstacles

"Before anything else,
preparation is the key
to success"

-- Alexander Graham Bell



Tool#1: What To Do With Meetings?

Length of Crisis	Importance of Activity		
	Minimal	Locally	Legally
Short	Cancel	Postpone	Abbreviate
Medium		Alternative	
Long			Alternative

- Cancel Meeting
 - No recourse, once cancelled, forever cancelled.
- Postpone Meeting
 - If required by bylaws, likely want to postpone
 - Any required actions can be made later.
- Abbreviated Meeting
 - Meets legal requirements
 - Creates Adjourned Meeting for later
- Alternative Meetings
 - Online, different place or time
 - Will require notice and permission

Abbreviated Meetings

With President and Secretary Present:

“The meeting will come to order. If there is no objection, the meeting shall adjourn to meet at (date/ time), at (location). Since there is no objection, the meeting is adjourned to meet at (date/time) at (location).”

(wording borrowed from Timothy Wynn, PRP)

Tool#2: Consider Alternative Meeting Ideas

*“The time to repair the roof is
when the sun is shining.”*

President John F Kennedy
(Jan 11, 1962 State of the Union
Address)

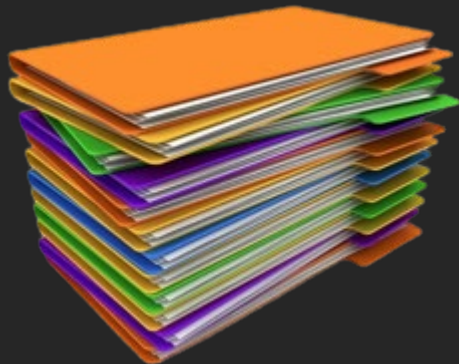


- There is always a bias towards holding meetings in the standard way.
- Sample Rule Sets (see NAP website, 11th ed CD, 12th ed appendix):
 - Some members by phone
 - All members by phone
 - All members by phone, using internet services
 - All members on via Internet
- Alternative meetings can mean many things:
 - A different place
 - A different time or day
 - In person, Electronic or Hybrid

Tool#3: Build Emergencies into the Governing Documents

“Change is hard at first, Messy in the middle and Gorgeous at the end”

-- Robin Sharma



- Update the Bylaws with explicit handling of meeting disruptions.
- Specifically Provide for:
 - Alternative methods of meeting in emergencies
 - A mechanism for invoking the emergency condition
 - Who can make the call?
 - How will trigger be communicated?
 - Are there conditions where the call is automatic?
 - all levels of organization or meeting types

- Limit what is placed in the Bylaws

Tool#3: Build Emergencies into the Governing Documents

*Credit to the Authorship Team
who developed a standardized
recommendation which I
modified to meet this purpose.*

Section 4. Emergency Meetings Held Electronically.

In the event of a stated emergency, all meetings of the society, including General Business and Board meetings, may be conducted at alternative in-person arrangements or through use of Internet meeting services.

a) An emergency can be declared or retracted by any of the following:

- i) The President
- ii) The vote of the majority of the board
- iii) Per conditions specified in the Special Rules of Order as to Emergency Meetings.

b) The President shall notify the membership of the declaration or retraction of any Emergency prior to at least 3 days of the next scheduled meeting.

c) The Internet meeting services shall be specified by the Special Rules of Order as to Emergency meetings such that it supports anonymous voting and support visible displays identifying those participating, identifying those seeking recognition to speak, showing (or permitting the retrieval of) the text of pending motions, and showing the results of votes.

d) These electronic meetings shall be subject to all rules adopted by the Board, or by the Society, to govern them. Any such rules adopted shall supersede any conflicting rules in the parliamentary authority but may not otherwise conflict with or alter any rule or decision of the Society. An anonymous vote conducted through the designated Internet meeting service shall be deemed a ballot vote, fulfilling any requirement in the bylaws or rules that a vote be conducted by ballot

Tool#4: Create Special Rules

- Impossible to keep up with everchanging technology and rules are easier to change than Bylaws
- Special Rules of Order : Procedural
 - Recommend using Scenario A of the RONR 12th edition rules with additions.
- Standing Rules: Administrative / Policy
 - Use these rule sets to provide the technical and administrative details of handling the alternative meeting plans.
 - Which application is being used
 - How to access
 - Authentication / Credential requirements



Special Rules of Order

- Special Rules of Order : Procedural
 - Recommend using Scenarios of the RONR 12th edition rules with additions. (10-12 rules sections)

Special Rules as to Emergency Meetings

1. An emergency meeting is automatically activated when any of the following occur affecting the location of a pending meeting.
 - a) Governor enacted State of Emergency
 - b) Government travel restrictions such that more than 50% of members would not be able to attend
 - c) Closure of the meeting facility
2. A secure authentication system for each voting member shall be provided to assure the identification of each voter and their voting rights when voting using the Internet meeting service.



Standing Rules

“Standing rules ... are rules ... which are related to the details of administration and which can be...changed...as any ordinary act of the society”

RONR (12th Ed) 2:23

- Standing Rules: Administrative / Policy
 - Use these rule sets to provide the technical and administrative details of handling the alternative meeting plans.
 - Which application is being used
 - How to access
 - Authentication / Credential requirements
 - Software Requirements
 - Who is paying and how
 - Who holds the login information
 - Which equipment will be used

Tool#5: Create a Crisis Team

“The presiding officer of an assembly... should be chosen principally for the ability to preside.”

RONR (12th Ed) 47:6

- The best presiding officer in person is often not the best presiding officer for online virtual meetings.
- Create a new position of Technology Officer
 - Comfortable and knowledgeable on the technology
 - Remains in touch with the current trends
 - Responsible for updating the technical / administrative special rule sets.
 - Be the presiding officer for all virtual meetings.
- Create a team of Technology Assistants to assist with all virtual meetings
 - Handling member questions
 - Assisting with handling all the necessary tasks due to the application

Tool#6: Automatic Activation

- Lots of time wasted trying to decide whether to go to emergency meeting mode
 - Eliminate need for emergency meetings
 - Trigger as early as possible
 - Are there levels of contingency?
- How should the emergency be activated
 - President
 - Board
 - Simple Rules

Simple Rules

“Simple rules are shortcut strategies that save time and effort by focusing our attention and simplifying the way we process information. The rules aren’t universal— they’re tailored to the particular situation and the person using them.”

- Simple Rules, Sull & Eisenhardt

■ Simple Rules

- Stop -- Canceling all Meetings
- Delay -- Postpone Meetings
- Change -- Alternative Meetings

■ Example Simple Rules

- Governor Issues State of Emergency
- Transportation Shutdowns
 - Airspace
 - Mass Transit
- School Districts Closed
- National Weather Alerts
- Health Department Alerts
- Venue Unavailability

Fulfilling the Requirements

“the very definition of ‘emergency’ is that it is unexpected, therefore is not going to happen the way you are planning”

- General Dwight D. Eisenhower



Tool#7: Keeping Virtual Control

“Herding cats: It’s easier than it sounds.”



- Virtual Meetings have unique issues:
 - Low Bar to Participation
 - Authentication / Credentials
 - Limit technology questions
 - Training in how to vote

- Clearing the Decks:
 - Real life: hands are dropped, and the request queue is cleared after each part of business is completed.
 - The Goal is to Replicate In-Person during Electronic Meetings

- Maintaining Security
 - Is every properly identified?

Voting Integrity



Not what we mean by Electronic Voting!

- Voter Authentication
 - Unique Passwords
 - Unique Email Addresses
 - Only Roll Calls?
 - Trust that it works?

- If possible, use Unanimous Consent

Tool#8: Training and Instructions



- Critical to provide training and instructions for all new applications:
 - After all test cases and trial runs are complete.
 - Training should be available before the event
 - Instructions should be available during the event
- Skilled Trainers should be used
 - Presiding officer will struggle to train at the start of a meeting.
 - Delays in the meeting means losing interest in the meeting
- Be clear: App or Browser Based, It matters!

Tool#9: Use Ratifications and Re-adoptions

RONR (12th Ed) 10:52-57

“An assembly can ratify only such actions... as it would have had the right to authorize in advanced”

-RONR (12th Ed) 10:55

“better to seek forgiveness than ask for permission” -- anon

- Critical to keep the organization alive and functioning so that members have a place to which to return
 - When made at unauthorized electronic meeting
 - Actions: Ratify
 - Decisions : Re-Adopt
 - Ratify can be a powerful motion
 - Acting on urgent matters
 - Actions in organization’s best interest
 - Make plans for when the emergency passes
 - Useable in Board Meetings and General Assemblies
- * Recommend reviewing Mr. Balch comments in Friday’s sessions.

Tool#10: Dare to be Innovative

“When it comes to innovation you’ve got to be ahead of the pack, but no too far”

-- Victor Pisapia

“Don’t let Perfect be the enemy of good”

– Gen. Stan McChrystal

- How is the organization limited?
 - Legal Requirements
 - Rules from superior body
 - Bylaws

- Otherwise, it is your organization, so adapt to your member’s comfort level.
 - New Ways of Meeting
 - New Places to meet (Parks, Parking Lots)
 - New Events or Service Activities

- According to General Robert:
 - Rules are to keep order but not too hinder!

The Go Bag Tool List

“If you want to teach people a new way of thinking, don't bother trying to teach them. Instead, give them a tool, the use of which will lead to new ways of thinking.”

-- Richard Buckminster Fuller

- Meetings: Cancel, Postpone, Abbreviate, Alternative
- Alternative Meeting Ideas
- Emergency Meetings in the Bylaws
- Special and Standing Rules for Technology
- Director of Technology and Technology Assistants
- Simple Rules for Activation
- Procedures for Virtual Control
- Training and Instructions
- Ratification
- Dare to be Innovative

Go-Bag Checklist

Available on:

RulesDoneRight.com/NTC



Decisions Consulting

HELPING SOCIETIES IN THE AGE OF PANDEMICS

A PARLIAMENTARIAN TOOLKIT

1918 Flu
Pandemic
Tuberculosis
Smallpox

Polio
Hemorrhagic
Conjunctivitis
Epidemic
Asian
Flu
North
American
Influenza
Pandemic
2009
Coronavirus
SARS-CoV-2

DISRUPTIONS ARE NORMAL WAY OF LIFE

The fact that we shutdown the schools, shops, pools, water foundations and all non-essential activities in the name of the coronavirus may have felt new and unique to all of us. But the truth is that it isn't that unique of an episode in the history of the United States. In the past 120 years, we have experienced similar shutdowns for numerous reasons, in addition to the now famous Spanish Flu of 1918.

Shutdowns in the summers of 1937 and 1952 due to Polio epidemics seem familiar. In the 1920's, schools were often shut or operated with the windows open due to Tuberculosis outbreaks, especially in the Northeast. More recently, panics about Zika and Ebola would result in shutdowns in the world of the New Normal.

Sample

2001: S
2003: S
2004: I
2005: H
2006: M
2007/8:
2009: S
2012: M
(MERS)
2013: V
(States)
2014: E
2016: Z
2017: H
2020: C

HELPING SOCIETIES IN THE AGE OF PANDEMICS

A PARLIAMENTARIAN TOOLKIT

“ The time to repair the roof is when the sun is shining. -- President John F. Kennedy (Jan 11, 1962 State of the Union Address)

Tool #1: CONSIDER ALTERNATIVE MEETINGS IDEAS

In any organization, there is a bias towards the status quo, wanting to meetings as the organization has always held the meeting. During the saw organizations continue to vote to hold meetings in person when the authorities were not going to let that happen.

Many organizations found out during the 2020 crisis that they had no e As a parliamentarian, we should assist our clients in setting up plans to alternative arrangements when the conditions require.

The appendix of the 12th Edition of the RONR, contains ideas for meeting telephone for all or some of the members, phone with internet voting a internet services. These are some ideas but there are others which ma online.

Consider:

- 1) What kinds of alternative meeting organization handle?
- 2) Is your member computer savvy required equipment?
- 3) Meetings Online or a Hybrid?
- 4) Are there alternative time or place help your organization meet?

HELPING SOCIETIES IN THE AGE OF PANDEMICS

A PARLIAMENTARIAN TOOLKIT

“ Crisis cause organizations to succeed or fail quickly.

KEEPING TRACK OF IT ALL!

Use the provided checklist to keep everything under control.

Question	Done?
What kinds of alternative meetings can your organization handle?	
Is your member computer savvy and have the required equipment?	
Meetings Online or a Hybrid?	
Are there alternative time or place which would help your organization meet?	
What meetings may need to an emergency alternative?	
Where will the meetings details be listed?	
By what means will the alternative meeting be triggered?	
What is the typical skill set of the members?	
What equipment is available to most members?	
For internet based solutions:	
What costs are involved and who will pay?	
Who will be responsible for maintaining online accounts	
What training and education will be required?	
Will the alternative meeting require a technical background?	
How will the society keep up with the changes in technology?	
Who will be able to activate the emergency meeting methods?	
What Government actions will trigger the emergency?	
How will the emergency be cleared?	
Is your tool capable of clearing any settings of the users?	
Can you authenticate the members to assure proper voting?	
Have you implemented a separate path for technology / tool questions from the parliamentary questions?	
Have you modified your Bylaws to eliminate any meeting based requirements?	
Can your officers serve until replacements are made?	
Who is qualified to do proper training?	
Are you training with the final software setups?	
Can you provide written or posted instructions during the meetings?	
Are the organization's officers trained in the use of the rasty motion?	
Are you letting the rules place unnecessary limits on the organization?	
Are there alternative meeting places that could be used, such as parks or restaurants?	
Are there new activities or purposes for meeting which the organization could be doing instead of a typical meeting?	



Decisions
Consulting

Contact:

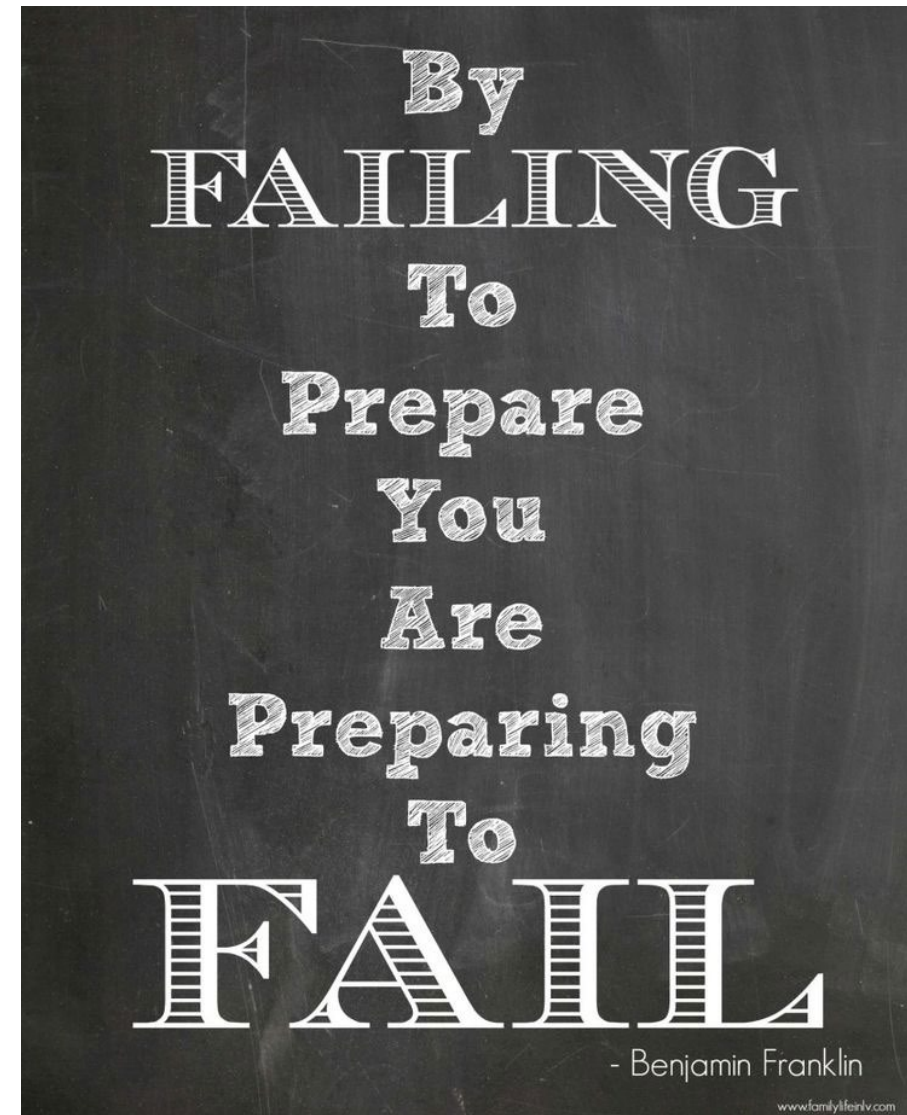
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Thanks!