



## HOW TO ACHIEVE EFFECTIVE MEETINGS USING PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

# MAJOR COMPONENTS OF A MEETING

There are three major components of an effective meeting:

## Content

- facts/information/misinformation/
- expectations/assumptions/opinions

## Interaction

- participants relate to each other and work together in processing the content

## Structure

- the practical organization of content and interaction to achieve goals

# LEADING MEETINGS

Open the meeting on time

Be attentive to accepted rules and procedures

Be prepared: know the subjects on the agenda; know the issues involved

Maintain an impartial attitude: don't show disapproval; allow all sides an equal opportunity to speak

Encourage participation by: respecting others' ideas; recognizing members in order by a show of hands; maintaining eye contact with the speaker; providing adequate time for responses; actively soliciting opinions of all members; controlling aggressive members who want to dominate

Stick to the agenda: set time limits for discussion; ensure that speakers address the issue

Move motions: either rule it out of order or call for a second and put it to a vote; if needed, assist with phrasing a question or resolution

Enforce all questions of order, but be flexible

Require that speakers identify themselves for the record

Announce the results of each vote; ensure that the members accept the decision made by the group

Adjourn the meeting properly

# EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION

Be prepared

- Know the agenda
- Know the rules

Respect the chair's authority

Develop a plan of action

- Know what you want to achieve
- Prepare language

Be flexible

Listen

Use constructive language

Use subtle leadership techniques

Take notes

# DISRUPTIONS

Start with procedural rules

Ensure equal enforcement of relevant decisions

Stick with procedure; don't get personal

Postpone difficult issues

Be patient

Use ejection as a last resort

## Procedure can-----

Encourage a full, fair and orderly discussion involving all members on all issues

Maintain order in the group by limiting discussion to one item at a time and by keeping all speakers on topic

Acknowledge that every rule has a reason, and every motion can be debated or not, can be amended or not

# PROCEDURE –it's necessary to....

Protect the rights of the minority

Protect the rights of the majority

Produce better results

Hold the president accountable to the membership

Hold the membership accountable to the rules

Expedite decision making

# Parliamentary Procedure

Rules of parliamentary procedure outline all common meeting procedures, and help organizations bring order to discussion and decision making.

They are important, but should not be allowed to distract councils from the real issues under discussion.

They are a guide to procedural issues not included in your bylaws, but cannot be applied if they contradict the law, policy or regulation.

# The four democratic principles underlying Parliamentary Procedure are that it:

Recognizes majority rule

Protects the rights of the minority

Protects the rights and privileges of individuals

Protects the rights of absentees

# 1. Recognizes Majority Rule

## MAJORITY

Majority rule means that all decisions are made by a vote of at least a majority of YEAs or a majority of NAYs!!

VOTES OF THE MEMBERSHIP NOT THE EXECUTIVE BOARD!

## 2. Protects the Rights of the minority

By requiring a majority vote on all matters

May not suspend all the rules at a meeting

Minority reports

Minority recommendations

### 3. Protects the Rights and Privileges of Individuals

Allows:

Individuals or a group constituting a majority to have its say

Points of order or information

Discussion on a motion

Moving and seconding a motion

Rescinding a vote

## 4. Protects the Rights of Absentees

Requires majority vote to transact all business

Requires previous notice to amend bylaws

Amending the Order of Business at a meeting must be by vote of the membership.

Person must be present to be elected, or consent in advance.

**A quorum protects the rights of the minority.**

# Preparing for a Meeting

Careful planning builds confidence in the leadership.

Has an agenda been prepared? Was it on the meeting notice?

Are all the necessary items in place?

Do the parties responsible have reports ready?

Is the room properly set up?

Can everyone hear the speakers and vice versa?

The president or secretary should always have the bylaws and lists of committee members at hand.

# Order of Business

Call to order

Call the roll

Special presentation

Minutes

President's Report

Committee Reports

Unfinished (old) business

Resolutions

New business

Adjournment

# Call to Order/Call the Roll

## Call to Order

A meeting is not officially opened unless the chair states for the record:

The meeting will please come to order.

(Start on time if a quorum is present. Do not delay the meeting waiting for others to arrive.)

Associations need not take roll call, but should note after a “call to order” that a quorum is present.

# Suspending the Rules of Order/Special Presentations

This applies only to the Order of Business, never to the bylaws.

It is used to permit the association to take up a matter of business out of the prescribed order.

It only applies to the meeting at which it is made.

If there is a guest speaker or a presentation, put it on at this point in the agenda.

It is a courtesy to the presenters.

It allows the business portion of the meeting to proceed in an orderly, uninterrupted manner.

# Minutes

REMEMBER: Minutes are a record of the proceedings of a meeting, not the dialogue. They need only be a record of actions taken.

That would include all motions, proposals, resolutions, and any other matters where a vote was taken; the vote must be included.

Minutes may be corrected or amended for clarity and accuracy, but not to alter the record of what actually happened, and not for a change of mind.

A motion to adopt the minutes is not necessary. The president can state: There being no amendments or corrections, the minutes are adopted as read. OR There being no further amendments, the minutes are adopted as amended.

# A minute on minutes!

## Format

Association name and type of meeting (membership/executive board/special)

Date and location of meeting, and time of call to order

Number of members present. Which officers are present if attendance at membership and/or executive board meetings is a condition for maintaining a position

Whether minutes of previous meeting were approved or corrected

Reports given with name of reporter and any action taken

All main motions and whether they were adopted or defeated, the name of the maker of the motion, and the number of members voting YES or NO.

All points of order and appeals

Time of adjournment

## Order of Business, continued

The president's report should include all correspondence received by the association, any issues the president has been following up on, events the president or designee have attended on behalf of the association, invitations open to the president and all members.

Unfinished business includes any issues that were postponed or left unresolved at the previous meeting.

Adjournment. A meeting is not officially closed unless there is a motion to adjourn that is seconded and voted on. It is not in order when another member has the floor or when business is pending.

# Point of Information

Can be made only by an association member, not by an observer

Is always directed to the chair for a response – or

Through the chair for response from another member.

Members do not question each other!!

The chair may interject relevant facts

Comments must be kept in order

Once the question has been answered, a member may state: **Move the question – or –I move that debate be closed or debate continued.**

# Points of Order

Directed to the presiding officer

Pertain to a question of Parliamentary Procedures or the bylaws

May only be made by a member

The response from either the presiding officer or the parliamentarian is an opinion, not a ruling, and may be challenged.

# Motions

**All substantive action proceeds from a motion. Motions, once introduced, must be dealt with in some fashion.**

- Approved
- Rejected
- Tabled
- Postponed to a set time
- Postponed indefinitely

Only one main motion can be considered at a time. A member who wishes to offer a motion says: “I move...”. It is incorrect to say “I make a motion...”

The motion should be seconded promptly.

Then the chair should repeat it.

All motions must receive a majority of affirmative votes to pass or a majority of negative votes to fail

# Motions

Main motions: a motion that brings business before the association

Subsidiary motions: actions taken with respect to the main motion, such as amendments

Privileged motions: matters unrelated to pending business, e.g., adjournment

Incidental motions: assorted issues of procedure

Motions that bring a question again before the association (e.g., to reconsider)

Make the motion express a single point using simple language

# Amending a Motion

Adding, striking out, or substituting language

If a motion to amend a main motion that is on floor, is moved and seconded, the chair restates the amendment and asks for discussion

When there is no further discussion, the chair proceeds to repeat the wording of the amendment, and then

-----a vote is taken to amend

And then----

If the vote to amend is affirmative the chair asks for discussion on the amended motion

Following discussion a vote is taken on the motion as “amended”

# To Table a Motion

To Lay a Motion on the Table means to set a motion aside temporarily to attend to more important business during the meeting.

This motion is not to be used for killing or postponing an item indefinitely

By adopting the motion to Lay on the Table, a majority has the power to halt consideration of a question immediately without debate

Such action violates the rights of the minority and individual members if it is used as a means to kill or to avoid dealing with it

# The Motion to Lay on the Table -

is out of order when another has the floor

must be seconded

is not debatable

is not amendable

requires a majority vote

cannot be reconsidered

An item laid on the table remains there until taken from the table – or until the close of the next regular session

# 1. Postpone to a Certain Time

## 2. Postpone Indefinitely

1. Applies to a main motion  
Needs a second  
Is debatable  
Cannot be postponed beyond the next meeting  
Can be reconsidered at the same meeting
2. Can be applied only to the main question, and only while the main question is immediately pending  
Needs a second  
Is debatable  
An affirmative vote on a motion to Postpone Indefinitely can be reconsidered

# To Withdraw a Motion

Before a motion has been stated by the chair, it is the property of the mover – the one who moves the motion or who placed the motion on the agenda

That person can withdraw it without anyone's consent

the chair places it before the membership by stating it

After a motion has been stated by the chair, it belongs to the meeting, and the maker of the motion or resolution must ask and receive permission of the membership to withdraw it

If the resolution is on by consent of the membership or the executive board, any member may ask to withdraw it, and a vote is required

# Reconsider

A motion to reconsider allows the majority on the prevailing side (either YEA! OR NAY!) to bring back a motion already voted upon

A motion to reconsider:

- May only be used at the same meeting at which the original motion is made
- Needs a second
- Is debatable
- Is not amendable

# Rescind or Repeal

Any member can move to rescind or repeal an action taken at a previous meeting

A motion to rescind or repeal:

- Can be moved by any member, regardless of how she/he voted on the original question
- Can't be applied to something that has been done, and can't be undone
- Needs a second
- Is debatable and amendable
- Has no time limit