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PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE WORKSHOP

- Processing a Motion
- Precedence of Motions
- Meaning of Votes
- Quorum
- Agenda
- Tools in place to assist with running the meeting
- Script of a Motion
- Rules for a Small Committee/Board
- Basic Characteristics of a Motion

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PROCESSING A MOTION

1. ***A Member Makes a Motion***
 - a. The member words the motion properly: I move that (followed by specific statement of proposed action)
 - b. The member who made the motion has the first right to speak on the motion
 - c. The member who made the motion can not speak against the motion, but may vote against it
 - d. The presiding officer has the right to request that the motion be in writing, unless the rules indicate otherwise. NCR paper on hand at each meeting will aid in this process
2. ***Another Member Seconds the Motion***
 - a. Motion that comes from a committee does not need a second
 - b. In seconding a motion, a person may only be agreeing that the issue should be discussed and decided upon
 - c. If there is no second, the presiding officer tells the assembly that the motion dies for lack of a second
3. ***The Chair States the Motion, Therefore Formally Placing It Before the Assembly***
 - a. Do not overlook this step. It is crucial because:
 - i. At the completion of this step, ownership of the motion is transferred from the individual who made the motion to the members present
 - ii. After this step, the motion belongs to the body, not an individual
 - b. Proper restatement of the motion by the presiding officer:
 - i. Helps make sure everyone has heard the motion, exactly as it was proposed, and
 - ii. Helps keep everyone on target as to the exact wording of the motion to be debated
 - c. If the presiding officer is unclear about the exact wording, there are two places the presiding officer can go to for assistance:
 - i. Use the NCR copy of the motion paper provided by the maker of the motion
 - ii. Ask the secretary to read the motion
4. ***The Members Debate the Motion***
 - a. During this time the motion is
 - i. considered pending and
 - ii. can have secondary motions applied to it
 - b. Assignment of the floor: While a motion is open to debate, the first person to rise and address the chair shall be assigned the floor by the chair. Cases where the floor should be assigned to a person who may not have been the first to rise and address the chair are:
 - i. If the member who made the motion has not yet spoken on the question,
 - ii. When the person seeking the floor has not already spoken on the same motion on the same day; and
 - iii. In cases where the chair knows the opinions of the persons seeking the floor, then the assignment should alternate between those favoring and those opposing the question

- c. During debate, there are some motions that are improperly used. If that occurs, assist the maker of the motion to help make it a proper motion.
- i. "I move to table this motion until"
 - (1) Can not table until a specific time. The intent is probably the motion to Postpone Definitely.
 - (2) Differences between Postpone Definitely and Table:
 - (a) Table is not debatable, Postpone Definitely is debatable.
 - (b) Table must be brought back by a motion to Take from the Table. Postpone Definitely **automatically** comes up when the time of postponement arrives.
 - (3) If the member uses this terminology, simply treat the motion as a motion to Postpone Definitely.
 - (a) Member: "I move to table this motion until next weeks meeting"
 - (b) Another Member: "Second"
 - (c) Presiding Officer: "It has been moved and seconded that we postpone this motion until next weeks meeting. Is there any discussion.
 - ii. "I move to table this motion so that we can kill this issue."
 - (1) Presiding Officer should rule this motion out of order and then suggest that the proper motion is to Postpone Indefinitely.
 - (2) Differences between Table and Postpone Indefinitely:
 - (a) Table is not debatable. Postpone Indefinitely is debatable.
 - (b) The motion to Postpone Indefinitely prevents the issue from coming up again at this meeting. The motion to Table does not.
 - iii. "I call the question" or "Question"
 - (1) These are two versions of the same motion. The intent of this motion is to close debate on this motion and move immediately to the vote.
 - (2) If the motion is to "Call the Question on this and all pending questions" then the effect is to close debate and require movement to the vote on the pending motion and all other pending motions. (E.g. On the amendment and on the main motion.)
 - (3) The member may not simply yell out this motion. Like all other motions, the maker must wait to be recognized.
 - (4) This motion must go through all of the steps of a motion with the following uniqueness:
 - (a) It is not debatable
 - (b) Because it takes rights away from the members, it requires a two-thirds vote.
- d. Debate must be limited to the specific motion that is pending.
- i. The specific aspects covered in the motion are open to debate, not the whole subject area.
 - ii. If the members begin wondering away from the subject area, a nice way to bring them back on task is: "Is there any further discussion on [specifically state the subject]?"

5. ***The Chair Puts the Question to a Vote***
 - a. This should include restatement of the motion to be voted on. This restatement serves as a reminder of what the membership is voting on
 - b. Even in obvious votes, the presiding officer should call for votes for and votes against the motion. The only exception here is with courtesy resolutions (e.g. the resolutions at the end of the convention that thank everyone who worked on the convention.)
 - e. If the presiding officer requests that those voting in favor of the motion indicate with an affirmative response, the presiding officer should not call for negative votes with a call for “same sign.” E.g. “All those in favor say ‘aye’, those opposed, same sign.”
 - f. The presiding officer should be very comfortable with being able to determine the results of the vote. If in doubt, it is the duty of the chair to verify the vote beyond reasonable doubt, and to the satisfaction of the members
6. ***The Chair Announces the Results of the Vote***

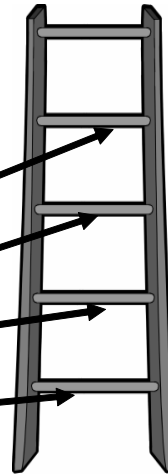
The content of a complete announcement of the results of the vote includes:

 - a. Announcement of which side has the necessary votes, and is thus the prevailing side. In a counted vote, the presiding officer should first give the count before announcing the prevailing side
 - b. Declaration as to whether the motion is adopted or lost
 - c. A statement indicating the effect of the vote
 - d. Where applicable, announcement of the next item of business

PRECEDENCE OF MOTIONS

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1. Fix time to which to adjourn
2. Adjourn
3. Recess
4. Raise a question of privilege
5. Call for orders of the day
6. Lay on the table
7. Previous question
8. Limit/extend limits of debate
9. Postpone definitely
10. Commit or refer
11. Secondary amendment
12. Primary amendment
13. Postpone indefinitely
14. Main motion



MEANING OF VOTES

Majority – More than half of the votes cast

Two Thirds – Two times the number of yes votes as no votes

Plurality – A method of voting in which the candidate or proposition receiving the largest number of votes is elected or selected.

Abstain – To refrain from voting

VOTING EXAMPLE		
1,000 members in the organization 100 members present 90 members vote		
Vote	Majority	Two Thirds
Of the members present	51	67
Of the entire membership	501	667
Of the members present and voting	46	60

Presiding officer votes: In all other methods of voting other than a ballot vote, the chair only votes when his or her vote affects the results. Numerical examples would help here.

VOTE REQUIRED	YES VOTES	NO VOTES	PRESIDING OFFICER VOTE	
			YES	NO
Majority	13	13	Yes – affects results	No - fail without vote
Majority	14	13	No – pass without vote	Yes – affects results
Two Thirds	9	5	Yes – affects results	No - fail without vote
Two Thirds	10	5	No - pass without vote	Yes – affects results

QUORUM

The number of voting members who must be present for business to be transacted legally.

AGENDA

The following is the agenda for organizations that are governed by *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*:

- I. Approval of minutes
- II. Reports of:
 - A. Officers
 - B. Boards
 - C. Standing Committees
 - D. Special Committees (select, ad hoc, task force, etc.)
- III. Special Orders (orders from the governing documents)
- IV. Unfinished Business (*not* old business)
- V. New Business

TOOLS IN PLACE TO ASSIST WITH RUNNING THE MEETING

Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, the parliamentary authority for most organizations in this country, has rules that will assist in the efficiency and effectiveness of meetings. One set of those rules are the rules under the heading Decorum in Debate. They cover the following major headings:

- Confining remarks to the merits of the pending question

- Refraining from attacking a member's motives

- Addressing all remarks through the chair

- Avoiding the use of members' names

- Refraining from speaking adversely on a prior action not pending

- Refraining from speaking against one's own motion

- Reading from reports, quotations, etc., only without objection or with permission

- Refraining from disturbing the assembly

SCRIPT OF A MOTION

MEMBER: I move that . . .

CHAIR: Is there a second to the motion? [This statement is eliminated if a member calls out "second" or if the motion is made on behalf of a committee.]

MEMBER: I second the motion

CHAIR: It is moved and seconded that... Is there any discussion? [Since the maker of the motion has first right to speak on the motion, the chair should call on the maker of the motion first.]

MEMBERS: Discussion occurs [It is during this time that a motion is considered pending and secondary motions may be applied to it.]

CHAIR: Is there any further discussion? Are you ready for the question? [Pause] The question is on the adoption of the motion to [clearly restate the motion]

VOICE VOTE:

All those in favor, say aye. [Pause for response]

All those opposed, say no. [If the chair is in doubt of the results of a voice vote, then the chair should state "The chair is in doubt, therefore a rising (or counted) vote will be taken." Then proceed with a counted vote.]

RISING VOTE:

Those in favor of the motion, please stand. [Pause] Please be seated.

Those opposed to the motion, please stand. [Pause] Please be seated

SHOW OF HANDS VOTE:

All those in favor of the motion, please raise your right hand. [Pause]

Please lower your hand. Thank you. Those opposed to the motion, please raise your right hand. [Pause] Please lower your hand. Thank you

BALLOT VOTE:

Please mark your ballots clearly, fold them one time, and hand them directly to a teller

ROLL CALL VOTE:

The clerk will now call the roll

CHAIR: ANNOUNCEMENT OF VOTING RESULTS:

UNCOUNTED VOICE, RISING OR SHOW OF HANDS VOTE:

The affirmative has it, the motion is adopted, we will [state the effect of the vote] and the next business in order is . . .

OR

The negative has it, the motion is defeated and [state the effect of the motion]

COUNTED MAJORITY VOTE:

There are _____ votes in the affirmative and _____ votes in the negative. There is a majority in the affirmative and the motion is adopted. We will [state the effect of the vote] and the next business in order is . . .

OR

There are _____ votes in the affirmative and _____ votes in the negative. There is less than a majority in the affirmative and the motion is defeated [state the effect of the vote] and the next business in order is . . .

COUNTED TWO-THIRDS VOTE:

There are _____ votes in the affirmative and _____ votes in the negative. There is a two-thirds vote in the affirmative and the motion is adopted. We will (Give the effect of the vote] and the next business in order is . . .

OR

There are _____ votes in the affirmative and _____ votes in the negative. There is less than a two-thirds vote in the affirmative and the motion is defeated (state the effect of the vote]

CHAIR: The next business in order is . . .

RULES FOR A SMALL BOARD/COMMITTEE – no more than 12 members present

- It's not necessary to rise in order to make a motion or when seeking recognition by the chair
- There is no limit on the number of times a person may speak
- The presiding officer does not have to leave the chair when making a motion or when participating in debate
- Motions to close or limit debate should not be entertained
- Motions do not need to be seconded
- Rules that apply only to small committees:
 - A motion can be reconsidered, regardless of when the motion was made
 - A motion can be reconsidered by anyone who did not vote on the losing side (so a member who was not present can move to reconsider, as can a member who abstained)
 - If the motion to reconsider is made at a later meeting, it requires a two-thirds vote without notice, or a majority vote if all committee members who voted with the prevailing side are present or have been notified”

BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF MOTIONS

From: *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Robert's Rules*
The Guerilla Guide to Robert's Rules

MOTION	PURPOSE	INTERRUPT SPEAKER?	SECOND NEEDED?	DEBATABLE?	AMENDABLE?	VOTE NEEDED
1. Fix the time to which to adjourn	Sets the time for a continued meeting	No	Yes	No ¹	Yes	Majority
2. Adjourn	Closes the meeting	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
3. Recess	Establishes a brief break	No	Yes	No ²	Yes	Majority
4. Raise a Question of Privilege	Asks urgent question regarding to rights	Yes	No	No	No	Ruled by chair
5. Call for orders of the day	Requires that the meeting follow the agenda	Yes	No	No	No	One member
6. Lay on the table	Puts the motion aside for later consideration	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
7. Previous question	Ends debate and moves directly to the vote	No	Yes	No	No	Two thirds
8. Limit or extend limits of debate	Changes the debate limits	No	Yes	No	Yes	Two thirds
9. Postpone to a certain time	Puts off the motion to a specific time	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority ³
10. Commit or refer	Refers the motion to a committee	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
11. Amend an amendment (secondary amendment)	Proposes a change to an amendment	No	Yes	Yes ⁴	No	Majority
12. Amend a motion or resolution (primary amendment)	Proposes a change to a main motion	No	Yes	Yes ⁴	Yes	Majority
13. Postpone indefinitely	Kills the motion	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
14. Main motion	Brings business before the assembly	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

1 Is debatable when another meeting is scheduled for the same or next day, or if the motion is made while no question is pending

2 Unless no question is pending

3 Majority, unless it makes question a special order

4 If the motion it is being applied to is debatable

Motions above are in the Order of Precedence of Motions.

BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF MOTIONS

**From: *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Robert's Rules*
*The Guerilla Guide to Robert's Rules***

MOTION	PURPOSE	INTERRUPT SPEAKER?	SECOND NEEDED?	DEBATABLE?	AMENDABLE?	VOTE NEEDED
Point of order	Requests that the rules be followed	Yes	No	No	No	Ruled by chair
Appeal from the decision of the chair	Challenges a ruling of the chair	Yes	Yes	Depends ⁴	No	Majority ⁵
Suspend the rules	Allows the group to violate the rules (not bylaws)	No	Yes	No	No	Two thirds
Objection to consideration	Keeps the motion from being considered	Yes ⁶	No	No	No	Two thirds ⁷
Division of the question	Separates consideration of the motion	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
Division of the assembly	Requires a standing vote	Yes	No	No	No	One member
Parliamentary inquiry or point of information	Allows a member to ask a question about business at hand	Yes	No	No	No	Responded to by chair
Withdraw a motion (after stated by chair)	Removes a motion from consideration	Yes	Depends ⁸	No	No	Majority
Take from the table	Resumes considering a motion that was laid on the table	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Reconsider	Considers a motion again	Yes ⁹	Yes	Depends ¹⁰	No	Majority
Rescind or amend something previously adopted	Repeals a previously adopted motion or amends it after it has been adopted	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Depends ¹¹

5 Majority in negative required to reverse chair's decision

6 When another member has been assigned the floor, until debate has begun or a subsidiary motion has been stated by the chair

7 Two thirds against consideration sustains objection

8 Yes, if motion is made by person requesting permission; no, if made by another member

9 When another has been assigned the floor, but not after he has begun to speak

10 Only if motion to be reconsidered is debatable

11 a) a majority with notice; b) two thirds; or c) majority of entire membership