

Roberts Rules of Order.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE CHEAT SHEET

Parliamentary Procedures are the way parliamentary law is followed in any given assembly or organization, together with whatever rules of order the body may have adopted.

PARLIAMENTARY LAW IS:

- Rules of the game of democracy.
- Rules which govern procedures by which civil and criminal laws are made and adopted.
- Rules and customs which govern deliberative and decision-making assemblies and organizations.

BASIC RULES AND PRINCIPLES

- Courtesy to all.
- Rule of the majority, rights of the minority.
- Justice for all, partiality for none.
- The organization is paramount.
- All members are equal.
- The issue, not the person, is under discussion.
- Silence gives consent.

STANDARD ORDER OF BUSINESS

An easy way to remember the standard order of business is with the mnemonic 3R-SUN.

- R**eading and approval of minutes
- R**eports of officers, boards, and standing committees
- R**eports of special (select and ad hoc) committees
- S**pecial orders
- U**nfinished business and general orders
- N**ew business

MAKING AND HANDLING MOTIONS USING ROBERTS RULES OF ORDER

Here are the eight steps required from start to finish to make a motion and come to a decision with the assembly. Each step is required.

Step	What to Say
The member rises and addresses the chair.	"Mr. Chairman"
The chair recognizes the member.	"The chair recognizes _____"
The member makes a motion	"I move to _____."
Another member seconds the motion.	"Second."
The chair states the motion.	"It is moved and seconded to _____. Are you ready for the question?"
The members debate the motion.	"The chair recognizes _____ to speak to this motion."
The chair puts the question, and the members vote.	"Those in favor of _____, say Aye. [Pause] Those opposed, say no."
The chair announces the result of the vote.	"The ayes have it, the motion carries. [describe action to be taken]."

BUILDING THE AGENDA

- Before each meeting, the Chair should create a detailed agenda. This includes the regular procedures for the board such as call to order, any opening ceremonies (pledge to the flag, etc.), reading of minutes, treasurer's report, committee reports, announcements, items of old business, items of new business, executive sessions, breaks, next meeting date and location, and any other major items that should come up during the meeting.
- Questions to ask before the agenda would be?
 - Does the secretary have the minutes ready for approval?
 - Does the treasurer have a financial report ready to present?
 - Do any officers or standing committee chairs have actions to propose or reports to make?
 - Are any special committee reports due? Will any actions be proposed? What are they?
 - Were any agenda items not reached at the time the last meeting adjourned?
 - Was anything postponed to this meeting?
 - Does the annual planning calendar require that action be taken at this meeting? What items will support the strategic direction? How does this meeting promote the organization's progress?
 - Have you kept your ear to the ground so there are no surprises?

BASIC TYPES OF AGENDA

- *Priority Agenda*: Put the items that must be decided at this meeting early on the agenda. Make sure that the most important items are considered first, when everyone is fresh.
- *Subject-Based Agenda*: Group similar subjects together so that you aren't constantly changing focus, such as: administrative, financial, membership, etc.
- *Strategic Agenda*: Group your decisions according to the goals of the board. You can also create a strategic agenda for an entire meeting, retreat, or time period.
- *Presiding Agenda*: After the member's agenda is prepared, make yourself a separate agenda with notations about votes required, committee appointments, etc. Leave extra space for notes and reminders.
- *Consent Agenda*: The consent agenda is usually put near the start of the meeting. It is actually part of the regular agenda and can be made up of any number of items, but any item placed on the consent agenda should be so uncontroversial that it can be reasonably expected that it will be adopted with no debate or separate vote. The Chair calls up the consent agenda by saying "the consent agenda is before you" and then asks if anyone wants to remove anything.
 - To do so, a member does not need to be recognized; he just calls out the item number. The Chair responds, "Item number x is removed." When no more items are removed, the Chair says: "Without objection, the remaining items on the consent agenda will be adopted."
 - Remember: no debate or separate vote is allowed on any item unless it is removed. If no one objects, all items are adopted. Removed items are either taken up right after the adoption of the consent agenda or are placed later on the agenda under the heading where they would have otherwise appeared.
 - The approval of the minutes, routine matters, or motions that have been discussed at previous meetings are good candidates for a consent agenda.

VOTING

- There are four basic methods of voting in a meeting:
 - **Voice**
The Chair asks members to verbally say Aye or Nay to a motion. This type of vote is used when a specific count is not required. When used, the Chair must decide and announce which vote carried the majority and whether the motion passed or failed.
 - **Rising**
Rising means standing or raising of hands. This method is used for a specific count and that count should be announced by the Chair along with the passage or failure of the motion.
 - **Secret ballot**
The secret ballot is used to allow each member to cast their vote while avoiding undue influence by others. The Chair is allowed to vote when using this method.
 - **Rollcall**
The secretary polls and records the vote of each member. The Chair then announces the results, often stating which members voted for and against the issue.
- Most votes require a simple majority, which is one more than half the members voting (**not** 51% of those present).
- A two-thirds majority is required for motions which limit rights. A two-thirds vote requires a rising or ballot vote.
- The Chair does not vote during a voice vote to avoid undue influence by the power of his or her position. If the Chair cannot determine whether the “ayes” or “nays” have more votes, he or she may decide to call for a rising vote.
 - In the case of a rising vote, the Chair may vote to create or break a tie, but not both.
 - The Chair is free to vote in a secret ballot like any other member. In all cases, a tied vote fails to pass the motion.
- If a member does not agree with the determination of the chair on a vote, they may call for a “Division of the House.”
 - If the Division of the House is called for, the Chair must proceed to a counted vote (rising or ballot).
- Not all motions require a vote by the body, some are simply ruled on by the Chair (e.g. point of order).

QUORUM

- A quorum is the number of members required to be present at the meeting to conduct business.
 - This amount is usually one member over half unless otherwise stated in the bylaws.
 - If a quorum is not present at the meeting, a general discussion can be held on various issues, but no official business can be conducted.
- If stated in the by-laws or previously approved by the membership, alternative methods may be used to obtain a quorum, such as using electronic communications (phone, video, email, etc.), proxy votes, or other methods.

MOTION

- A motion is simply a tool to transact business. If parliamentary procedure is strictly followed, there should be no discussion or business completed without a motion on the floor.
 - This means there is enough interest for discussion of the issue to proceed.
 - However, this rule is often not strictly adhered to, especially in smaller boards and/or groups which may want to have some open discussion before deciding whether the issue needs to be considered as a formal item of business.

- However, the Chair should see that most issues proceed quickly to a motion. If a motion is not forthcoming, the item should be referred to another place and time outside the business meeting. The term “business meeting” means just that – a place where business is conducted, not unending discussion of related or unrelated issues.
- A second is required by most motions to show that more than one person is interested. If there is no second then the motion lost for lack of second, and the Chair announces it as such.
 - Until a motion is seconded the maker can withdraw it. Once it is seconded, it becomes the property of the group and is on the floor for discussion or final determination.

AMENDMENTS

- Amendments can be made to insert, delete, or change the wording of an amendable motion.
 - However, an amendment is not in order to completely reverse the meaning of the motion. Amendments are made during discussion of the main or another amendable motion.
 - A second is required, it is debatable and amendable, a majority vote is required, and the amendment can be reconsidered.

REPORTS

Secretary’s minutes, the Treasurer’s report, and committee reports are just that, reports. They do not require a motion for acceptance and are simply received by the Chair

Advancing fraternity.

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