

PARLIAMENTARY GUIDE 2009 – 2010

The Parliamentarian is a consultant who advises the President, other officers, committees and members on parliamentary procedure. Her role during a meeting is purely advisory since parliamentary law gives the chair alone the power to rule on questions of order and parliamentary inquiries. She should be seated next to the president in order to quietly call her attention to any errors or violations affecting the basic rights of members.

The best tools for a Parliamentarian and President are the Unit and Department constitution and Bylaws and Standing Rules. Anything not covered in these shall be governed by "Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, 10th Edition." For fair and orderly meetings, "Roberts" provides common rules and procedures for debate in order that the entire membership can have full participation.

Democracy and parliamentary procedure go hand in hand. The basic principles are courtesy, order, justice and equality for all; consideration of one thing at a time, the right of the majority to prevail and the right of the minority to be heard.

The basic rules of parliamentary procedure follow a fixed order of business for conducting meetings.

1. Call to order
2. Roll call to establish a quorum (a quorum is the number of members required to be present to conduct business. Bylaws should provide this number. If none is provided, a majority of the entire membership constitutes a quorum.)
3. Reading and approval of minutes, etc. (The Secretary's minutes are approved. The Treasurer's report is NOT ACCEPTED but placed on file for audit. The audit report is accepted. Reports of officers and chairmen are accepted. Resolutions and constitutions and Bylaws are adopted.

Members should express themselves in the form of motions. See "Steps of a Motion" attached.

If the president is late for a meeting, the vice-president should start the meeting, if a quorum is present. The president, upon arriving, should wait until the pending business is completed before assuming the chair. "If the vice-president(s) also are not there, the secretary assumes the chair and next the members then choose someone to assume the chair.

If a Unit or District has a problem and seeks the advice of a parliamentarian, they should first contact the District Parliamentarian, who in turn may contact the Department Parliamentarian. This is the chain of command to follow. It is best to make all requests in writing.

Always be courteous, just and respect everyone's viewpoint. In the words of my favorite Parliamentarian, Edna Schuitema, "Rub it out, don't rub it in!!"

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PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE
USE OF MOTIONS

UNDER PRIVILEGED MOTIONS -	These are of highest rank when business is pending.
"I move to ADJOURN"	Use to end the meeting.
"I move we RECESS"	Use to allow time to count ballots, eat, etc.
"I rise to a QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE"	Such as "the room is too hot; we can't hear", etc.
UNDER SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS	These change the Main Motion, or do something with it.
"I move we POSTPONE this until"	This delays taking the final vote.
"I move we REFER THIS TO A COMMITTEE"	Used to put the subject in the hands of a smaller group.
"I move to AMEND the motion by"	Say how to change the wording, strike out, insert, add, etc.
"I move the PREVIOUS QUESTION" -	Used when debate is too long, or just to get on with business.
UNDER INCIDENTAL MOTIONS	Use these as needed to settle something at once.
"I call for a DIVISION of the ASSEMBLY"	Use when the announced vote is questioned.
"I call for a DIVISION of the QUESTION"	Use if two ideas are in one question.
"I rise to a POINT OF ORDER"	If there is a mistake contrary to rules.
"I rise for INFORMATION"	A request for information which is relevant to the business on hand
UNDER MAIN MOTION	Used to introduce a new idea to the group.

By learning how to handle motions, we can all make our meetings more interesting - AND SAVE TIME.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE
STEPS OF A MOTION

1. Obtain the floor.
 - a. by addressing the chair
 - b. by being recognized
2. Make the motion
3. Second the motion
4. Chair states the motion or has it read by Secretary
5. Debate the motion. Remarks and discussion.
Subsidiary motions are made during this period
6. Stop debate
7. Put the question (stated by Chair, who should make it clear what is being voted on)
8. Vote on the question
 - a. by acclamation or voice ("Aye" or "No")
 - b. by division (show of hands, or rising)
 - c. by ballot
 - d. by roll call ("Aye" or "No")
9. Announce the result of the vote. (No motion is disposed of until the Chair announces the result of the vote and declares the motion "carried" or "lost")"
10. If it appears that everyone is in favor of a proposal, it can be finalized by asking for GENERAL CONSENT (also called UNANIMOUS CONSENT). However, if one person disagrees, there must a vote taken.