

PARLIAMENTARY TERMS

Abstention – Act of not voting, is not used when majority, 2/3, etc.

Adjourn – Act of ending the meeting.

Amend – To modify the question, to insert, to strike out, or to strike out and insert.

Appeal, Decision of the Chair – To determine the assembly's attitude toward a ruling made by the chair.

Chair – The phrase "the chair" applies both to the person presiding and his/her station in the hall from which he/she presides.

Commit – To refer to a committee. When a motion becomes involved through amendments or when it is wise to investigate the question more carefully, it may be moved to commit the motion to a committee for further study.

Debate – Discussion of the merits of a motion.

Division of the Assembly – Used when a member doubts the results of a voice vote or a vote by show of hands, thereby requiring the vote to be taken again by rising.

Floor, Obtain the – To obtain the floor, the member must be recognized by the chair as having the exclusive right to be heard at that time.

Inquiry, Parliamentary – A question directed to the presiding officer to obtain information on parliamentary law or the rules of the organization bearing on the business at hand.

Lay on the Table – To delay a motion and clear the floor for more urgent business.

Limit or Extend Debate – To provide more or less time for discussion.

Order, Point of – Calls attention to violation of parliamentary procedure. "Mr. President I rise to a point of order." "Your point of order is sustained." Or "Your point is denied."

Previous Question – A motion which requires a 2/3 vote to secure immediate vote on one or more pending questions, thereby ending debate.

Question – Matter at hand or topic being discussed.

Question of Privilege, To Raise – Permits a request or motion relating to the rights and privileges of the assembly or of its members to be brought up for possible immediate consideration because of its urgency.

Recess – A short intermission in the assembly's proceedings which does not close the meeting.

Reconsider – To secure further consideration and another vote of the question. The member moving to reconsider must have voted on the prevailing side.

Rescind – To repeal action previously taken.

Resolution – The act of the assembly to declare facts or express opinions and purposes.

Ratify – Approves action previously taken.

Take from the Table – To make pending (bring up) a motion or series of motions which have been laid on the table.

Suspend the Rules – A motion requiring a 2/3 vote which permits action otherwise prohibited by the rules.

THE AGENDA

Planning

First, determine an overall objective for the meeting; if there is no purpose there should not be a meeting. Then, brainstorm specific items of business that need to be covered. Referring to the previous meeting's agenda, minutes, and the suggested order of business is an organized way of determining those specifics. Clarify, combine, and prioritize, keeping in mind the element of a time limit. Follow a set order of business in determining the placement of each of the items upon the agenda. For informal meetings (not run by *parli/pro*), it is helpful to have a statement of the objective and a review of the agenda as the first item of business. If members know what they are supposed to accomplish and the manner in which it is to be handled they are more likely to achieve the set goal. Near the end, review important dates and decisions made. Always remember to thank those present for attending and participating and tell them that you look forward to seeing them at the next meeting.

Following

The chairperson needs to be firm in adhering to the agenda unless it is set aside by the decision of the assembly. Set a time limit and appoint a timekeeper for each section of the agenda. This is especially useful for brainstorming sessions as this forces members to focus. Explain the difference between discussions and debate. Discussion involves no one personally and is a sharing of ideas, while in debate, differing viewpoints often become personal battles between participants. Distinguish between acceptance and agreement. Enlist the help of the participants by explaining to them the importance of adherence to the agenda and its advantages: finishing sooner and completing more, having a feeling of accomplishment, etc. Ask for their active help. For example, have them raise one finger in the air, if at any time they feel the meeting and discussion is off focus. Not only does this relieve the chairperson of having to ask for quiet, but also makes participants more responsible for their actions.

A Formal Agenda

- I. Call to Order
By Chairman or President
- II. Opening Ceremony
Flag salute/pledge/extended greeting
- III. Roll Call of Members
By Secretary
- IV. Reading and Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes
 - A. Distribute minutes before meeting for members to read
 - B. Secretary reads minutes to assembly
- V. Officer's Reports
By Treasurer, etc.
- VI. Committee Reports
 - A. Standing committees that serve all year, or are provided for in the constitution
 - B. Special committees that are appointed for a specific purpose and for a limited time

Note: Committee spokesperson should describe how the committee undertook the task, describe the method of gathering information, draw conclusions from the information, and give recommendations.
- VII. Unfinished Business...Itemize and list person responsible for each item including:
 - A. Pending questions from previous meeting
 - B. Unfinished business from previous meeting
- VIII. New Business...Itemize
- IX. Announcements
- X. Adjournment


Note: An agenda can be altered once the meeting has begun by Suspend the Rules – which allows a matter to be considered sooner than an agenda calls for by a 2/3 vote.

Hints: Incorporate ice breakers, "get to know each other" activities, guest speakers, and leadership development activities or seminars in the agenda. Most of all, HAVE FUN.

CLASSIFICATION OF MOTIONS

The word MOTION refers to a formal proposal by a member suggesting that the assembly take a certain action.

Motions are classified into the following five groups:

1. Main motions
 - a. Original man motions
 - b. Incidental main motions
 2. Subsidiary motions
 3. Privileged motions
 4. Incidental motions
 5. Restorative motions that bring a question again before the assembly
- Secondary motions
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- A diagram consisting of three lines that originate from the right side of items 2, 3, and 4 in the list above. These lines converge towards a single point on the right, where they meet the text 'Secondary motions'.

Main motion – is a motion whose introduction brings business before the assembly.

Subsidiary motions – assist the assembly in treating or disposing of a main motion. They have the following characteristics: (1) They are applied to another motion. (2) They can be applied to any main motion. (3) They fit into an order of precedence.

Privileged motions – concern matters of immediate and overriding importance which without debate should be allowed to interrupt the consideration of anything else.

Incidental motions – relate in different ways to the pending business or the business otherwise at hand. They commonly arise out of (1) another pending motion; or (2) sometimes, another motion or item of business.

Motions that bring a question again – either by their introduction or by their adoption, they serve the function of their name.

MAKING A MOTION

(1) The member rises and addresses the presiding officer by the title, "*Mr. (Madam) President*" or "*Mr. (Madam) Chairman.*"

(2) The presiding officer recognizes the member. The chair may recognize a member by name, "*Mr. (name),*" or by a nod to him. After receiving formal recognition from the chair, a member is then said to "*have the floor*" and is the only member who may present or discuss a motion.

(3) The member makes the motion. Always introduce a motion in the form, "*I move that...*" followed by a statement of the motion.

(4) Another member seconds the motion. Without recognition from the chair another member may say, "*I second the motion.*" If the motion is not seconded, it dies for lack of a second.

(5) The presiding officer states the motion to the assembly. The chair repeats or "*states the motion*" to the assembly. Once it has been formally stated to the assembly, it may be referred to as "*the question.*"

(6) The members discuss or debate the motion. After the motion has been stated by the chair, it is open for debate. Any speaker may be recognized by the chair. Several members may rise simultaneously, and then the chair should use the following guidelines when deciding which member should be recognized.

- a. Preference should always be given to the proposer of the motion.
- b. No member may speak more than twice on the same question each day.
- c. All remarks must be germane (pertinent) to the pending question.
- d. All remarks are addressed to and through the chair.

e. A member may speak no longer than 10 minutes per speech without the consent of the assembly.

f. Rights in regard to debate are not transferable.

g. To participate in debate, the presiding officer must relinquish the chair.

(7) Members vote on the motion. When debate appears to have closed, the chair "*puts the question to a vote.*" First he may inquire, "*Is there any further discussion?*" or "*Are you ready for the question?*" If no one rises, the chair presumes that discussion is closed.

The presiding officer will then take the vote by saying, "*All in favor (State the motion) say 'Aye.'*" Following the assembly's response he says "*Those opposed say 'No.'*" If the vote can not be determined by the volume of the voices, "*The chair is in doubt. Those in favor of the motion please rise.*" After counting he says, "*Be seated. Those opposed please rise.*" After counting, "*Be seated.*" Or the vote may be similarly taken by a show of hands. The chair must always call for the negative vote, no matter how nearly unanimous the affirmative vote may appear to be.

(8) The presiding officer announces the result of the vote. The chair formally announces the outcome of the vote to the assembly. As may be appropriate the chair will say, "*The ayes have it and the motion is adopted*" (or "*carried*"). Or "*The noes have it and the motion is lost.*" For a rising vote or a vote by show of hands: "*The affirmative has it and the motion is adopted.*" Or "*The negative has it and the motion is lost.*" After the vote has been announced by the chair, another motion may be considered.

COMMON MOTIONS

AMEND

The purpose of an amendment is to modify the wording of a pending motion before the pending motion itself is acted upon. An amendment must always be germane; that is, it must be pertinent.

Basic processes:

- a.) strike out
- b.) insert
- c.) Strike out and Insert

Types of amendment:

- a.) Primary – to the main motion
- b.) Secondary – to the amendment

Member: "I move to amend the main motion by striking out officers and inserting executive board."

Another member: "I second the motion."

Presiding officer: "It has been moved and seconded to amend the main motion by striking out officers and inserting executive board." "Are you ready for the question?" (Debate)

COMMIT

It may be that much time would be required to amend the main motion properly, or that additional information is needed, so that it would be better to turn the motion over to a committee for study or redrafting before the assembly considers it further. Such action can be proposed by moving to commit the question.

Member: "I move to commit all pending questions (main motion and amendment) to the _____ Committee."

Another member: "I second the motion."

Presiding officer: "It has been moved and seconded to commit all pending questions to the _____ Committee."

THE MOTION

"THAT THE OFFICERS BE SENT ON AN ALL EXPENSE PAID TRIP TO HAWAII."

PREVIOUS QUESTION

If it is desired to close debate and amendment of a pending motion so that it will come to an immediate vote, this can be proposed by moving the previous question. This motion is not debatable, is not amendable, and requires a 2/3 vote.

Member: "I move the previous question." Or "I move the previous question on all pending questions."

Another member: "I second the motion."

Presiding officer: "The previous question has been moved and seconded. This motion is not amendable nor debatable and requires a 2/3 vote." "All those in favor of this motion please rise, all those opposed please rise." "With a vote of _____ to _____ the motion passes/fails."

LAY ON THE TABLE

It enables the assembly to lay the pending question aside temporarily when something else of immediate urgency has arisen, however, the assembly can take it up again at the will of a majority within the time frame of the same or the next meeting. If the motion is not taken from the table within that time frame then the motion dies.

Member: "I move to lay on the table all pending motions (the main motion and its amendment)."

Another member: "I second the motion."

Presiding officer: "It has been moved and seconded to lay on the table all pending motions." "All those in favor of this motion say 'Aye', all those opposed say 'No.' The motion carries/fails."