

## **BASIC PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE**

*Prepared for Leadership Workshop, June 2011*

Rules are to Ensure Efficient handling of business and provide Everyone an Equal Voice in a meeting of a deliberative Body.

Below are a few of the most frequently used rules.

### **CALL TO ORDER**

A quorum is needed to conduct business. A quorum will be established when there is majority of voting members present, or as stated in the Association's Bylaws. A meeting cannot be called to order until the quorum is established as proscribed in the Association's bylaws.

### **MINUTES**

If minutes are distributed prior to the meeting, waiving the reading of the minutes may be directed by the Chair if there are no objections. Corrections of the minutes may be made if there are any, and minutes are approved either as read/sent or approved as corrected.

### **THE CHAIR**

The President or appointed Officer is the Chair for all association meetings. S/he is responsible for setting the agenda and conducting the meeting. All comments, discussion, requests to speak, etc. are directed to the Chair.

### **MEETING ORDER**

- Only ONE person speaks at a time AFTER being recognized by the Chair.
- The Chair will recognize a person to speak and they "have the floor."
- Only voting members may speak unless special permission is granted by the Chair.
- Members should not indicate their desire to speak while someone is speaking. After the speaker has finished, then members may address their desire to be recognized by the Chair by raising a hand or stating, "Madam Chair/Chair."

### **MOTIONS**

#### **(Main Motion)**

- Only a voting member may make a motion.
- The motion DOES NOT need to be seconded if coming from a committee.
- The motion DOES need a second if stated by a member, but the second of the motion does not imply that there is agreement to the motion, only that there is agreement to allow debate on the motion and the name is not recorded.

### **SPEAKING FOR OR AGAINST A MOTION**

- After the motion has been made and seconded (when necessary) and restated by the Chair, the member making the motion may ask to be recognized by the Chair and granted the first opportunity to speak for or against the motion that s/he made. "Madam/Mister Chair, I speak (FOR/AGAINST) the motion....."
- ALL comments, etc. are directed TO THE CHAIR; never to other members.
- The chair may ask for alternating points of view: i.e., after a member speaks for the motion, the chair may ask if there is someone who wishes to speak against the motion.
- Each Member may speak when recognized by the Chair, but only once until every Member has had an opportunity to speak to the motion. A Member may not speak to a motion more than twice.
- ALL comments must pertain directly to the motion currently under discussion.

## **MOTION TO AMEND THE MOTION (Secondary Motion)**

- A Motion to Amend can be made to amend the motion under debate.
- The person wishing to make a motion to amend must be recognized by the Chair.
- The motion to amend requires a second.
- The motion to amend then may be debated and the same rules apply as stated above. During the debate, members may ONLY speak for or against the Motion to Amend, not the Main Motion.
- A vote must be taken on the Motion to Amend before discussion may resume on the Main Motion or a vote taken on the Main Motion.

## **MOTION TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION (“Call to Question”)**

- Purpose of this motion is to end discussion on a motion currently being debated.
- Member must be recognized to speak by Chair and then make the Motion to the Previous Question.
- Motion must be seconded.
- It is NOT debatable.
- Requires a 2/3 majority to pass. If passed all discussion on the motion ceases.

## **VOTING**

- The Chair may call for the vote after a Motion to the Previous Question passes and stops debate or when no one wishes to speak to the Motion.
- The Chair then restates the Motion.
- Voting may be by voice, hand, ballot, or by no objection (If there is no objection, then \_\_\_\_\_ passes.)
- Majority rules except when a 2/3 majority is required. Ties are broken by the Chair.

## **MOTION TO RECESS (Privileged Motion)**

- The purpose of this motion is to suspend the meeting for a specified period of time for all member(s) to address specific needs such as a bathroom break.
  - Member must be recognized by the Chair.
  - Motion requires a second.
  - Discussion is not allowed.
  - Simple majority required to pass motion to recess.

## **POINT OF ORDER**

A Member may state “Point of Order” at *any* time during a meeting when s/he wishes to point out a rule infraction such as discussion not relevant to the motion or interruption by a member who does not have the floor. Point of Order may be made while another member is speaking. Address comment to the Chair.

## **POINT OF INFORMATION**

Member must be recognized by the Chair after which the member may state (for example), “Point of Information, Madam Chair. I do not recall the wording of the motion under discussion. Could you please restate the motion?”

## *Resources*

### *Books*

[Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised](#) (RONR)  
[The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure](#) (TSC or Sturgis)  
[Demeter's Manual of Parliamentary Law and Procedure](#)  
[Riddick's Rules of Procedure](#) • [Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure](#)  
[Erskine May: Parliamentary Practice](#)

### *Online Book/Resources*

<http://parliamentarians.org/store/browsestore.php>

### *Texas Association of Parliamentarians Websites*

<http://parliamentarians.org/tx/>

[www.tsapleadership.info](http://www.tsapleadership.info)

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