

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

1. OBTAINING THE FLOOR

- (a) Before you may address an assembly, the presiding officer must recognize you.
- (b) You must speak from a standing position; and address yourself to the Chairman.

2. MAKING MOTIONS

- (a) Before a proposal or subject matter may be discussed by the group, you must make a formal motion which requires a "second."
- (b) The purpose of the requirement of a "second" is to assure the assembly that more than one person is interested in the proposal.
- (c) If there are no objections to the consideration of this proposal, the entire assembly will discuss it and make a determination.
- (d) In making a motion, you begin by saying, "Mr. Chairman (or Madame Chairman), I move that....." And then state your proposal clearly either in writing or orally.

3. AMENDING THE MOTION

- (a) This technique is used when one wishes to add to, subtract from or alter a motion that another has made.
- (b) In most instances, a "second" is required when offering an amendment.
- (c) Another may rise to amend the amendment. This technique is in order.
- (d) It should be remembered that there are only primary and seconded amendments.
- (e) A motion can be amended only to the second degree. One may offer an amendment to a pending amendment and that is all that is permissible at one time.
- (f) In other words, more than two amendments to a motion may not be pending at one time.

4. POINT OF INFORMATION

- (a) If an issue becomes too involved, one may seek a clarification by means of a motion called "a point of information."

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5. DIVISION OF THE QUESTION

- (a) It is quite possible that a proposal may entail two or more subjects. As a member of the assembly, you can ask that each part be considered separately.

6. POINT OF ORDER

- (a) This motion is used when there is a violation in parliamentary procedure. You simply rise and address the chair with the words, "I rise to a point of order." (Then you state your point.) The Chairman will recognize you.

7. ORDERS OF THE DAY

- (a) This is a privileged motion and is used when there is a digression from the agenda. When a meeting goes off on a tangent simply rise and make a "call for the orders of the day." The Chairman will then recognize you.

8. AN APPEAL FROM THE DECISION OF THE CHAIR

- (a) If you as a member of the assembly disagree with a decision of the presiding officer, you can appeal this decision when seconded.
- (b) You simply rise and move to appeal the decision of the Chair.
- (c) The presiding officer then puts the question to the assembly whether to sustain or overrule his decision.

9. MOTION TO LIMIT DEBATE

- (a) To prevent a discussion from dragging on endlessly, one can make a motion to limit each speaker's time, or to limit the number of speakers, or the length of the debate.
- (b) A two-thirds vote of the membership is necessary to approve this motion.
- (c) The converse motion is to extend debate. The same requirements prevail.

10. MOTION TO REFER

- (a) When a member of the assembly believes that further study to a proposal is advisable, he moves that the pending question be referred to an appropriate committee for review.

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11. ENDING DEBATE

- (a) Where a member of the assembly feels that the pending motion has been thoroughly discussed, he may move to terminate debate by a motion called "the previous question."
- (b) He simply rises and addresses the Chair and says, "I call for the previous question."
- (c) A second is required for this motion.
- (d) A two-thirds vote is necessary for its adoption.

12. MOTION TO TABLE

- (a) This motion means to temporarily put aside the pending motion to consider other business.
- (b) The member rises and addresses the chair by saying, "I move that the motion be laid on the table."
- (c) A second is required for this motion.
- (d) The converse motion is to "take from the table."
- (e) These two motions are not debatable.

13. MOTION TO POSTPONE DEFINITELY

- (a) A member of the assembly can propose that a pending motion, report, or resolution be postponed to a fixed future time, or until the next meeting.
- (b) A motion to postpone indefinitely is the converse motion. Such a motion generally is employed to "kill" the main motion.

14. DIVISION OF THE HOUSE

- (a) If a member doubts the accuracy of a "voice vote" (viva voce), he may call for a "Division of the house."
- (b) The vote is then taken by asking the members to stand, or raise their hands.
- (c) Polling the House.

15. MOTION TO ADJOURN

- (a) This motion is used to terminate the deliberations.
- (b) This motion may be offered at any time.
- (c) The time and place of the next meeting should be specified in the motion.

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