



POINT OF ORDER

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Through the years, Altrusans have requested a simplified guide to parliamentary procedures. Thorough research of available materials has revealed that the need is an extremely valid one. The complexity of parliamentary procedures is evidenced by the highly technical manuals currently offered in the marketplace.

Point of Order is a unique, easy-to-use parliamentary procedure manual, specially designed for Altrusa International. It is designed for at-your-place convenience.

Introduction

"Where there is no law, but every man does what is right in his own eyes, there is the least of real liberty."
General Henry M. Robert, author of Robert's Rules of Order

Parliamentary procedure ensures true democratic spirit in assembly. Properly following its laws and procedures enables an organization to establish order, protect the individual voice, and strengthen its very fiber. It is a method of systematically conducting discussion and reaching decisions fairly and justly. It guarantees the right of voice and vote with the majority always ruling. Parliamentary procedure serves as a catalyst for achieving group productivity.

The parliamentary law as written in *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* has been chosen to govern all proceedings of Altrusa Districts and Clubs throughout the United States as well as Altrusa International, Inc. Those Altrusa Clubs located outside the United States may interpret the reference according to their customary rules of parliamentary procedure. It is important to note that parliamentary practice is subject to any special rules adopted by Altrusans at the International, District, or Club level.

It is commonly believed that only the Chairman need be well versed in parliamentary procedure. Nothing could be further from the truth. Officers and members alike should assume an equal burden in ensuring the democratic process in assembly. Effective and productive meetings are dependent upon each member's knowledge of and ability to practice parliamentary law. To help achieve this goal, this manual discusses the basics of parliamentary law. It does not presume to replace Altrusa's official and complete guide, *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*.

Responsibilities of the Presiding Officer

Although it is true that the presiding officer's knowledge of parliamentary practice determines the smoothness and productivity of a meeting, it is also true that careful planning determines the meeting's success. To expedite business, the presiding officer should:

- Know and completely understand the organization's bylaws, policies, goals and objectives,
- Review the minutes of the previous meeting and be prepared to discuss postponed motions or unfinished business,
- Be sure that all reports are prepared and that those presenting them will be in attendance and ready to report, and
- Prepare an agenda and distribute it to all members prior to the meeting.

The Chairman (also referred to as "Chair") of any meeting should preside fairly and impartially; the power of an organization rests with its membership. The Chair should not enter into discussion. The Chair can vote to make or break a tie, in a ballot vote, and to change a two-thirds (2/3) vote if one vote could do this. The Chair enforces decorum and ensures that personal vendettas are excluded from all proceedings. All remarks should be limited to the subject at hand and discussion should avoid the inclusion of a member's personal motives and/or behavior. Of the Chair's many responsibilities, none is more important than guaranteeing the rights of the individual voice and encouraging free and open discussion. The minority vote is protected through the Chair's proper execution of parliamentary law.

During the meeting, the presiding officer should make self references to the "Chair", never using the pronoun "I". Likewise, all officers should be referred to by title rather than by name. This practice establishes a proper line of authority and removes the temptation of using personal influence to affect a discussion's outcome.

The Chair is responsible for clarifying all action taking place; for making sure that members completely understand the proceedings. The Chair repeats all motions before opening them to discussion or finalizing them with a vote. The strength of the group depends upon participation which, in turn, depends upon understanding.

When the presiding officer wishes to enter into debate, that officer must give the Chair to the next officer in line of succession or to an officer who has not yet entered into debate on the issue at hand. The presiding officer may return to the Chair only after the issue has been settled by vote. This practice guarantees continued order during every discussion.

General Consent

When handling routine business, the Chair may choose to save time and eliminate frequent voting by utilizing *general consent*. General consent means that there apparently is unanimous approval. However, the Chair must always ask if there is an objection before continuing. If an objection is raised, a vote must be taken. Examples of usage are:

- "If there are no objections, we will send a letter of appreciation to retiring Board member, Barbara Jones." *(Pause. If there are no objections, the group has general consent and the letter will be sent.)*
- "Are there any corrections to the minutes?" *(Pause)* "Hearing none, the minutes stand approved as distributed."
- "Is there any further business?" *(Pause. If no one speaks, the group has general consent.)* "This meeting is adjourned."

The Chair of any Altrusa group is responsible for protecting the equal rights and privileges of its members. Instituting proper parliamentary procedures guarantees every Altrusan the right to make a motion, speak on an issue, nominate officers, run for office, and vote. An effective Chair is a reflection of a strong organization.

Small Boards

When there are not more than about a dozen members of the Board, some of the formalities that are necessary in a large assembly would hinder business. In this case, the rules governing such meetings are different.

- Members may raise a hand instead of standing when seeking to obtain the floor and remain seated while making motions or speaking.
- Informal discussion of a subject is permitted while no motion is pending.
- If the Chair is a member, he or she may, without leaving the Chair, speak in informal discussions and in debate, and vote on all questions.

The Meeting

Quorums

Before a meeting may be called to order, a quorum must be present. A quorum is the minimum number of members required to transact business. Having a quorum present protects the organization from allowing a few to transact business without the consent of the majority. According to Altrusa Bylaws, a quorum at the Club level equals one-third (1/3) of the membership. A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum at special Altrusa Club meetings.

Agendas

The order of business is defined by the agenda. To encourage productivity and efficiency, all members should be aware of the agenda prior to the meeting. The sample agendas which follow should be used only as guides in preparing and tailoring an agenda for the business to be conducted at a particular meeting. Agenda items may be rearranged for continuity or to add impact. Members may be encouraged to suggest rearrangement of the agenda as a part of the presiding officer's call to order.

Sample Agenda for Monthly Board Meeting

1. Call to order, President
2. Invocation (*optional*)
3. Minutes of previous meeting, Recording Secretary
4. Report of Treasurer
5. Communications, Corresponding Secretary
6. Action on recommendations for membership
7. Reports from Committees; discussion of recommendations
8. Formulation of recommendations from the Board to the membership
9. Unfinished business (if necessary)
10. New business
11. Adjournment

Sample Agenda for Business Meeting

1. Call to order, President
2. Invocation (Altrusa Grace) (*optional*)
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Minutes of previous meeting, Recording Secretary
5. Report of Treasurer
6. Communications, Corresponding Secretary
7. Report of Board actions and recommendations
8. Reports of Standing Committees
9. Reports of Special Committees
10. Unfinished business (if necessary)
11. New business
12. Benediction (*optional*)
13. Adjournment

Sample Agenda for Program Meeting

1. Call to order, President
2. Invocation (*optional*)
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Introductions (those seated at the head table and guests present)
5. Program
6. Initiation of new members
7. Special business
8. Benediction (*optional*)
9. Adjournment

Calls to Order

The presiding officer always calls the meeting to order once it is determined that a quorum is present. Meetings should begin on time and end at a reasonable hour. The agenda should be carefully followed and all business should be transacted in an orderly fashion.

Minutes

The Recording Secretary is responsible for presenting the minutes of the previous meeting. Minutes of Altrusa meetings need not be read. Altrusa guidelines allow minutes to be printed in the Club newsletter, distributed to all members prior to the meeting by electronic means or provided upon arrival at the meeting and to be approved "as presented". The Chair must give all members an opportunity to correct the minutes as presented.

MINUTES

It is important to note that minutes are a record of what is *done* not what is *said* and should include the following information:

1. Name of organization
2. Kind of meeting (i.e. regular, special, etc.)
3. Date, time and place of meeting
4. Names of presiding officer and Secretary
5. Approval of previous minutes and any corrections to them
6. Recommendations of committee reports and action taken.
7. All motions carried or lost and the names of the members who made them (*omit withdrawn motions*)
8. Hour of adjournment
9. Signature of Secretary

All main motions are reflected in the minutes, including the final wording of the motion as stated by the presiding officer before the vote was taken (with any amendments incorporated) and whether each was adopted, defeated, postponed, referred to a committee, or disposed of in some other manner. The name of the maker of the motion is included, but not the seconder. Actual terms of discussion on the motion are not reflected in the minutes, or the actual vote in number or by name unless called for or requested by the assembly. Generally, motions withdrawn are not recorded.

Treasurer Reports

The Treasurer is responsible for presenting a Treasurer's report. The Treasurer's report need not be read, but may be printed in the Club's newsletter or distributed to all Club members at the beginning of a Club meeting or electronically. Unlike the minutes of a meeting, however, the Treasurer's report is *received* by the membership rather than accepted or approved. A Treasurer's report is only accepted or approved following an audit of two (2) or more members who check all bills received and paid.

Committee Reports

Committees having reports should be listed under appropriate categories. Those without reports should not be listed. Committee reports are *received* as presented. If the committee recommends action, the Chairman of the committee should make the motion to implement the necessary recommendation(s). A special committee automatically disbands upon the completion of its work and the presentation of its

final report. No motion is required for dissolution, but the Chair should recognize and thank the committee members for their efforts.

Taking Action

Making a Motion

To bring business before the assembly, a member must first be recognized by the Chair. Using the words "I move...", the member states the matter of business with a motion. All motions must be seconded by a member who need *not* be recognized by the Chair. The Chair may ask "Is there a second?", but may *never* ask someone to second the motion on the floor. Seconding a motion does not imply a member's support, but rather indicates that the member wishes to see it open to debate. Without a second, the motion is not before the assembly. Once before the assembly, a motion becomes the *question*. Immediately following the second, the Chair must repeat the question on the motion to clarify the issue for all members. The floor is then open to discussion, and the Chair should first recognize the person who made the motion.

Main motions may be made only when there is no other business on the floor. Only one motion may be considered at a time, and it is always debatable and amendable.

Making a Main Motion

A motion is a proposition that something be done or that something is the sense, opinion, or wish of the assembly. This is the way to bring business before the group:

Obtain the floor: address the Chair "Madam President"

Chair will recognize member "The Chair recognizes President Elect [name of officer]"

The member states name, position and then presents motion "Madame President (or title of the presiding officer), I move that..."

A Main motion:

- Cannot conflict with state law, Articles of Incorporation, or Bylaws
- Cannot be the same as previously proposed action defeated in same session or postponed
- Must be clear and concise
- Must be stated in the affirmative form rather than negative (i.e. "I move that we ..."not "I move that we do not ...")
- Must be written

Steps in Handling a Motion

After a member is recognized by the Chair and obtains the floor, there are six steps in handling a motion. The first three steps bring the proposal before the assembly, and the last three steps complete its consideration.

Step 1: A member makes a motion.

The words, "I move that" or "I move to" are used to begin the motion.

Step 2: Another member seconds the motion.

Without being recognized a member says, “I second the motion” or “I second it” or “Second”. A member does not have to be in favor of the motion to second it.

A motion made by direction of a board or committee of more than one does not need a second.

Step 3: The Chair states the motion.

The Chair usually says, “It is moved and seconded...[repeating the motion]”

This step places the motion before the assembly.

Step 4: Members debate the motion.

The maker of the motion is entitled to speak first. Members may speak twice in debate for no more than two minutes each time. No member has the right to speak a second time as long as any other member who has not spoken on that question wishes to speak.

Step 5: The Chair puts the motion to a vote.

When no member is seeking the floor, or all rights in debate have been exhausted, or a motion to close debate (previous question) has been adopted, the Chair puts the motion to a vote.

Step 6: The Chair announces the result of the vote.

Announcing the result of the vote involves four steps:

- a) Which side “has it”.
- b) Declaration that it was adopted or lost.
- c) A statement indicating the effect of the vote or ordering its execution.
- d) Where applicable, announcement of the next item of business or request for additional new business.

For example, the Chair says “The ayes have it, the motion is adopted, and we will supply books to all elementary schools in our county. The next item of business is...”

Amending a Motion

If a motion may be more suitable or acceptable in an altered form, a proposal to change its wording before the main motion is voted on can be introduced by Moving to Amend.

An amendment must be *germane* to be in order; it must be closely related to or have bearing on the subject of the main motion. It cannot introduce an independent question, but can be hostile to, or even defeat, the spirit of the original motion.

Amendments to the main motion are subsidiary motions and come in three main forms:

- To *insert* within the passage or *add* if placed at the end of a sentence or passage
- To *strike out* word(s) or paragraph(s)

- Combination of the above: to *strike out and insert* (words); to *substitute* by removing an entire block of text and inserting another

The amendment must be seconded and voted on in the same fashion as any motion. Discussion of an amendment must always be centered around the amendment itself rather than the main motion.

Although a motion may be amended many times in succession, only two (2) motions to amend are allowed on the questions at the same time. A primary amendment refers directly to the main motion. The secondary amendment should refer *only* to the primary amendment without any reference made to the main motion. Motions should be voted on in reverse order with those made last settled first.

After a motion to amend is made, seconded, and debated, a vote is taken *solely* on the amendment. If it passes, then the original motion remains pending before the group as modified or *as amended*. The original motion as amended can then be discussed and put to a vote. A defeat of the amendment leaves the original motion as it was worded before the amendment. There is no limit to the number of amendments a motion may have.

Limiting Debate

Discussion on a motion should be conducted in an orderly fashion with the Chair frequently repeating the question to ensure group understanding of the issue. When a member feels the question has been sufficiently discussed, the member may *move the previous question (aka call the question)* which, if approved, ends debate. This action requires a second and two-thirds (2/3) vote in order to pass. If passed, the Chair must then repeat the question on the floor and immediately call for a vote.

Requesting Informal Discussion

If the assembly chooses to discuss a motion informally, a member may *move to resolve into a committee of the whole to discuss...*, whereupon all may enter into informal discussion. This motion must be seconded and debated with a vote of the majority to pass. A time limit should be incorporated into the motion. If passed, the presiding officer vacates the Chair and appoints another member to the Chair. Informal discussion may continue until time has expired or until a member *moves that we rise and report*. The assembly then returns to its former proceedings with the Chair once again assuming its leadership role and action taken on the motion. The minutes of the committee of the whole are temporary and are not entered into the minutes of the assembly.

Reconsidering a Vote

A member may *move to reconsider the vote* on the main motion at any time in the *same* meeting in which the vote was taken. In order to make this motion, the member *must* have voted with the majority on the main motion. A motion to reconsider allows for a member's change of heart regarding the decision of the majority. This motion requires a second, is debatable, and needs the vote of the majority. The member should state: "having voted on the prevailing side, I move to reconsider the vote on ...".

Rescind or Amend Something Previously Adopted

A member may *move to rescind or to amend something previously adopted* in order to change action previously taken or ordered. This motion may be made by any member, at any time, provided that no other motion is pending. Previous notice may be required. This cannot be offered if something has

been done as a result of the prior vote that is impossible to undo. This motion requires a second and is debatable. The vote required for adoption depends on whether previous notice was given.

When previous notice has been given, the member should state: *“In accordance with the notice give at the last meeting, I move to rescind the motion related to...”*. In this instance, a majority vote is sufficient.

When no notice has been given, the member should state: *“I move to rescind the motion related to [...] adopted at the January meeting.”* Without previous notice, the motion requires a two-thirds vote or a majority of the entire membership for adoption.

Lay on the Table

A member may *move to lay the question on the table* in order to temporarily place the pending question aside in order to address a matter of immediate urgency or address something else. This motion requires a second, is not debatable, is not amendable and requires the vote of the majority. The member should state: *“I move to lay the question on the table...”*. Since it is not debatable or amendable, the Chair puts it to a vote immediately after stating the question. After a question has been laid on the table, it can be taken from the table by a majority vote immediately following the disposal of the interrupting business.

Postpone to a Time Certain

A member may *move to postpone the question to a certain time* in order to consider the question at a more convenient time or because debate has shown a reason to postpone a decision. This motion requires a second, is debatable, is amendable as to time, and requires the vote of the majority. The member should state: *“I move to postpone the motion to the next meeting (or a specific day and time or after a certain event)...”*. A postponed question becomes an *order of the day* for the time to which it is postponed and will be placed on the agenda accordingly.

Appointing Committees

Often, the assembly requires the services of a committee that may carefully investigate the question and put the issue into a better condition to consider. A member may move to *refer to committee*, a subsidiary motion. The motion is debatable, amendable, and requires a majority vote. In determining the committee and its purpose, the motion should consist of the following four (4) elements:

1. Number of committee members.
2. Method of selection: volunteers, appointed by Chair, nominated from the floor and elected, named by maker of motion.
3. Type of report: information, recommendations, motion for action, perform a task.
4. Time to report committee findings.

The member should state: *“I move that the motion be referred to the Literacy Committee to determine the feasibility and bring back recommendations at the next meeting...”*.

If all the necessary information is not included in the original motion, the Chair should request the maker to modify the motion to include the various elements so that amendments are avoided.

The Law of Motions

In parliamentary law, motions are ranked with some motions yielding to others. This means that some motions take precedence over others and must be taken in that order. The order of rank is:

1. *Privileged Motions*
Refers to action of the entire assembly. Privileged motions take precedence over all pending questions, are not debatable, and a vote must be taken without discussion. Motions to "recess" and "fix the time to which to adjourn" are amendable.
2. *Subsidiary Motions*
Are ranking motions and refer to other motions, usually the main motion, with the purpose of altering, postponing, or temporarily disposing. Subsidiary motions help expedite business and must be seconded and voted upon.
3. *Main Motion*
Introduces a matter of business for consideration of the assembly.
4. *Incidental Motion*
Relates, with a few exceptions, to the main question in such a way that it must be decided before business can proceed.
5. *Renewal Motion*
Used to return a motion to the floor.

The following tables offer a brief overview of motions, their purposes, and requirements. Note that motions continue to be ranked within both the Privileged Motions and Subsidiary Motions sections.

Table of Motions

MOTION	PURPOSE
<i>Privileged</i>	
1. Fix the time to which to adjourn	Set time to continue meeting
2. Adjourn	End the meeting
3. Recess	Provide intermission time for rest, meals, etc.
4. Question of privilege	Obtain action immediately regarding personal privilege or privilege of the assembly
5. Call for the orders of the day	Demand that group conforms to agenda
<i>Subsidiary</i>	
6. Table the motion	Delay for emergency only
7. Previous question	Stop debate and bring question to a vote
8. Limit/extend limits of debate	Regulate length of discussion

9. Postpone definitely	Delay action to a specific time
10. Refer to committee	Place question temporarily in the hands of the committee to investigate, recommend, or take action
11. Amend	Change or modify the motion
12. Postpone indefinitely	Kill a motion without bringing it to a vote
<i>Main Motion</i>	To introduce new business
<i>Incidental (no specific order)</i>	
Point of order	Enforce parliamentary laws
Appeal to the Chair	Reverse the decision of the Chair
Division of the assembly	Verify accuracy of a vote
Suspend the rules	Take up a question, or do something in violation of the rules
Objection to consideration of the question	Avoid discussion of a question that is irrelevant or objectionable
Method of voting	Propose method to vote
Nominations	Close or reopen
<i>Requests & Inquiries</i>	
Parliamentary Inquiry	Request for Chair's opinion on parliamentary matter
Point of information	Inquiry as to facts affecting the business at hand – request through Chair
Request to withdraw a motion	Granted on by the assembly
<i>Renewal</i>	
Reconsider	Try to secure a new vote
Take from table	Bring up a motion previously tabled because of an emergency
Repeal	Void action of the past
Discharge a committee	When a committee has failed to report; when the assembly desires to proceed without further aid from committee or wishes to drop the matter

MOTION	In Order When Another Has the Floor	Must be Seconded	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Required	Can be Reconsidered
Fix the Time to Which to Adjourn	No	Yes	No	Yes (as to date, hour and place)	Majority	Yes
Adjourn	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Recess	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
Raise a Question of Privilege	Yes	No	No	No	Chair	No
Call for Orders of the Day	Yes	No	No	No	Chair	No
Lay on the Table	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	Negative only
Previous Question	No	Yes	No	No	2/3rds	Yes
Limit or Extend Limits of Debate	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3rds	Yes
Postpone to a Certain Time	No	Yes	Yes (limited)	Yes	Majority (2/3rds for Special Orders)	Yes
Commit or Refer	No	Yes	Yes (limited)	Yes	Majority	Yes, if committee has not begun consideration
Amend	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Postpone Indefinitely	No	Yes	Yes, debate can go into main question	No	Majority	Affirmative only
MAIN MOTION	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
Point of Order	Yes	No	No	No	Ruled on by Chair	No
Appeal	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	Yes
Division	Yes	No	No	No	Required on Demand	No
Suspend the Rules	No	Yes	No	No	2/3rds	No
Objection to Consideration of Question	Yes	No	No	No	2/3rds against consideration	Negative only
Voting	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	Depends
Nominations	No	Yes	No	No	2/3rds to close; Majority to open	No
Parliamentary Inquiry	Yes	No	No	No	Chair responds	N/A

MOTION	In Order When Another Has the Floor	Must be Seconded	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Required	Can be Reconsidered
Point of Information	Yes	No	No	No	Chair responds	No
Request to Withdraw Motion	Yes or unanimous consent	Yes	No	No	Majority	Depends
Reconsider	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	No
Take from Table	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
Repeal	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority with Notice or 2/3rds	Negative only
Discharge Committee	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority with Notice or 2/3rds	Negative only

The Vote

Parliamentary law protects the minority opinion by giving a single vote to each member. Votes may be taken by voice, show of hands, standing, secret ballot, roll call vote where members respond when their name is called, or secret roll call vote where members sign their names.

Majority Vote

Elections and most motions require a majority vote which is defined as the majority of the votes cast, *not* the majority of members present since some members may choose not to vote on a particular question. Some motions require two-thirds (2/3) of the votes cast in order to pass.

Calling for a Recount

When a vote by acclamation fails to clearly show whether the vote was affirmative or negative, any member may call for a *division*. Calling for a division is a request to take an additional vote on the question by a standing vote. The request may be made by the member simply stating “*division*”.

Election of Officers

In accordance with Article XIII, Section 1 of the Club Bylaws, all officers, except the Immediate Past President, are elected *by ballot* at the regular business meeting in March. They are installed to take office as of June 1st each year.

To get to the point of elections, a nominating committee must be elected by the membership in accordance with Article XIV, Section 2 of the Bylaws. The committee should be elected at least eight (8) weeks prior to the March business meeting and consist of no fewer than three (3) members.

In accordance with Robert’s Rules, it is acceptable for the nominating committee to name one nominee per office. The committee may nominate more, as long as not restricted by the Bylaws. Altrusa has no mandate as to number of nominees for Club offices. It is also acceptable for members of the committee to be nominated for office. The committee should be prepared to report to the membership prior to the elections meeting. This will allow other individuals to consider placing their names into nomination. The Committee Chair should formally report to the membership by listing those persons

proposed by the committee in the order that their offices appear in the Bylaws. The report does not need to be accepted or approved by the membership, simply received. Once the committee reports, it is discharged. It may have to reconvene if a nominee withdraws before elections and there is a vacancy.

At the March meeting, after the nomination committee's report has been read, the President should call for additional nominations from the floor for each office. Any nominations from the floor are added to the ballot.

Altrusa Bylaws require a ballot vote; therefore, according to Robert's Rules, a ballot must be taken unless the Bylaws provide otherwise. Altrusa Club Bylaws provide an option that if there is only one nominee per office, "*the Secretary may be instructed to cast the ballot*", as stated in Article XIII, Section 1. It is not appropriate for a motion to accept the ballot or confirmation of nomination committee report to be taken in place of a ballot vote or the Secretary casting the ballot.

The instruction of the Secretary to cast the ballot is handled in the following manner:

If no nominations are made and it is a single slate for each office, a motion should be presented:

"I move to direct the Recording Secretary to cast the ballot."

Motion must be seconded.

President repeats motion and asks for discussion.

Call the vote.

If the motion passes, then the Secretary rises and states:

"Madame President, by direction of the members I cast the ballot of the members for

[Name of candidate] for the office of President

[Name of candidate] for the office of President-Elect

[Name of candidate] for the office of Vice President

[Name of candidate] for the office of ..."

And so on for each office.

Then the President declares the members elected.

Any ballot vote requires that the candidate who receives the majority of the votes cast wins.

Ending the Meeting

A motion to adjourn is a privileged motion which requires a second and a vote of the majority. Any member may move to adjourn the meeting and, once passed, the Chair calls the meeting adjourned. The meeting may also be adjourned by the presiding officer using general consent. *"If there is no objection (pause), the meeting is adjourned."*

Standard parliamentary procedure is guided by common sense and courtesy. To assist and guide the organization through complex parliamentary problems, every group should identify a parliamentarian. However, uniform familiarity with the basics of parliamentary laws and practices will only serve to enhance productivity, efficiency, and promote general good will among the entire membership.

Glossary

Acclamation

A voice vote by stating "Aye" or "No".

Adjourn

To close a meeting.

Adopt

To pass or carry a motion.

Agenda

A prepared list of items to be considered at a meeting.

Amendment

A change proposed or made in a motion, constitution, or bylaws.

Appeal to the Chair

An incidental motion made by a member who disagrees with the Chairman's decision. The motion is debatable if the pending question is debatable and requires a majority vote.

The Chair

The presiding officer.

Close Debate

To end discussion on a motion.

Debate

To discuss a motion.

Division

A recount of the vote by show of hands or by standing. It may be requested by any member.

Ex Officio

By virtue of the office.

General Consent

Refers to a request by the presiding officer on matters where dissent is not expected, such as approval of the minutes.

House

The assembly.

Majority

More than one-half (1/2) of the votes cast.

Method of Voting

An incidental motion providing for the type of vote desired on a motion, such as a vote by acclamation, roll call, standing, or other form of voting.

Minutes

The official record of the proceedings of the assembly.

Motion

A proposal requiring action by the assembly.

New Business

The business brought before the group for the first time.

Obtaining the Floor

Receiving the right to speak.

Objection to Consideration of a Motion

An incidental motion made to avoid the consideration of a motion that is undesirable or impractical. The motion is applied to the main motion and must be made immediately after the main motion is opened to debate and before any amendments are made.

On the Floor

A motion is on the floor when it is being considered by the assembly.

Order of Business

The series of steps covered in a meeting from Call to Order to Adjournment.

Pending Question

Any motion on the floor.

Plurality

The largest number of votes received by a candidate in an election involving three or more candidates.

Point of Order

An objection raised by a member because of improper procedure or annoying remarks, requiring immediate ruling by the presiding officer.

Previous Question

A subsidiary motion calling for the close of debate and a call for a vote.

Privileged Question

A request made by a member asking the presiding officer to deal with an emergency or other matters of general welfare.

Pro and Con

The arguments for and against.

Pro Tem

For the time being, acting during the absence of another.

Question

The business before the assembly.

Quorum

The number of members required to be present to transact business legally as specified in the bylaws.

Receive a Report

To listen to a report without taking official action, recognizing work done.

Recess

A temporary intermission.

Repeal

A renewal motion made to void action previously taken on a main motion. The motion to repeal is debatable and amendable and requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote.

Seconding a Motion

A member seconds a motion to open it to debate. Seconds do not need to be acknowledged by name nor recorded in the minutes.

Suspend the Rules

An incidental motion used in urgent cases to save time. The motion requires a two-thirds (2/3) vote.

Table the Motion

To delay or postpone action for an emergency.

Unanimous Ballot

If bylaws permit, a ballot cast by the Secretary for a candidate who is the only person nominated for an office when no objection is made. The Chair customarily instructs the Secretary to cast a unanimous ballot for the candidate.

Unfinished Business

A matter carried over from an earlier meeting.

Withdraw a Motion

An incidental motion permitting a previous motion to be withdrawn. The motion is allowed only if the maker agrees to the withdrawal of her motion. Withdrawal must have a majority vote only if the motion was opened to debate.

Yield the Floor

To surrender the right to continue speaking to another member.