

MISTER PARLIAMENTARIAN
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PARLIAMENTARY CHEAT SHEET
 How to do the basics all in one place

PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

To protect the rights of the ALL members, particularly the minority* and those who are absent
 The majority rules after full and free debate and vote

MOTIONS: HOW YOU DO STUFF

The 13 ranking motions, a motion cannot be made if a motion above it on the chart has already been made.

Rank	Name	What it does	Sec.	Debatable	Amendable	Vote
1	Fix the Time to Which to Adjourn	Set a continued meeting	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
2	Adjourn	End the meeting	Yes	No	No	Majority
3	Recess	Take a break	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
4	Question of Privilege(3)	Member needs something	No	No	No	(1)
5	Orders of the Day (3)	Get back to the agenda	No	No	No	(1)
6	Lay on the Table	Set aside temporarily	Yes	No	No	Majority
7	Limit or Extend Debate	Limit or Extend debate time	Yes	No	Yes	2/3
8	Call the Question/ Previous Question	Stop Debate	Yes	No	No	2/3
9	Postpone to a Certain Time/Day	Put it off	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
10	Refer to Committee	Send to a committee	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
11	Amend the Motion	Change the words	Yes	Yes	Yes (2)	Majority
12	Postpone Indefinitely	Kill the motion	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
13	Main Motion	New Proposal	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

Other Commonly Used Motions (not all motions in Robert's are here)

Name	What it Does	Sec	Debatable	Amendable	Vote	Note
Point of Order (3 above)	Calls attention to a procedural fault	No	No	No	1	May be Appealed
Suspend the Rules	Do something outside the rules	Yes	No	No	2/3	
Reconsider	Take another crack at a Motion	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	Must be made by someone who voted on the prevailing side
Withdraw Motion	Take a motion back	Yes	No	No	Majority	
Appeal the Ruling (3)	You disagree with a Ruling of the Chair	Yes	No	No	Majority	Majority or Tie upholds the Ruling, M in the negative overturns the ruling
Division of a Motion	Divide a motion into parts	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	Chair can initiate
Division of the Assembly (3)	Redo the Vote	No	No	No	1	Vote retaken by a different method
Request for Information (3)	Ask A Question	No	No	No	none	Chair answers or directs someone to answer

1) Chair decides. 2) Amendable in one place at a time. 3) These are the ONLY motions that can interrupt someone who is speaking.

HOW TO MAKE AND PROCESS A MOTION

Member rises** and says "Mister (or Madam) Chair"

Chair recognizes member (allows them to speak)

Member says "I move that we give \$500 to the disaster relief fund"

(Motion must be specific as to what is to be done)

Another member says (does not need to be recognized) "Second"

Chair says "It is moved and seconded that we give \$500 to the disaster relief fund. The member who made the motion my now speak to the motion"

Member speaks

Chair says "Is there any further debate" members may debate or propose amendments or make other procedural motions such as refer, postpone to the next meeting etc.

A member, after having been recognized says "I call the Question" someone else says "Second"

The Chair says" The question has been called. This will end debate on this motion and we will then proceed to vote on the motion. All those in favor of ending debate please raise your hand" **As this requires a 2/3 vote, it cannot be done by a voice vote.**

Chair says "Thank you, hands down please. All those opposed to ending debate, please raise your hand"

Chair says "There being 2/3 in the affirmative, we will now vote on the Motion to give \$500 to the disaster relief fund. (or, if the vote to end debate fails the Chair says "The motion to end debate fails, debate will continue")

All those in favor say AYE, (pause) All those opposed say NO (pause) The ayes have it and we shall give \$500 to the disaster relief fund" (or "The negative has it and we will not give \$500 to the disaster relief fund")

HOW TO MAKE AND PROCESS AND AMENDMENT

Member rises and is recognized by the Chair

Member says "I move to amend the motion by striking (removing) \$500 and inserting \$1000" Someone else says "Second" **(The amendment must specify the exact wording change to be made)**

Chair says "It is moved and seconded to amend the motion by striking \$500 and inserting \$1000, so that the motion would then read that we give \$1000 to the disaster relief fund. The member who made the amendment may now speak to it"

Member speaks

Chair says "Is there any further debate" members may debate or propose an amendment to the amendment or make other procedural motions such as refer, postpone to the next meeting etc.

A member, after having been recognized says "I call the Question" someone else says "Second"

The Chair says" The question has been called. This will end debate on this amendment. All those in favor of ending debate please raise your hand" **As this requires a 2/3 vote, it cannot be done by a voice vote.**

Chair says "Thank you, hands down please. All those opposed to ending debate, please raise your hand"

Chair says "There being 2/3 in the affirmative, we will now vote on the Amendment to strike \$500 and insert \$1000 so that the motion will read we give \$1000 to the disaster relief fund. (or, if the vote to end debate fails the Chair says "The motion to end debate fails, debate will continue") All those in favor say AYE, (pause) All those opposed say NO (pause) The ayes have it and the motion is amended to give \$1000 to the disaster relief fund" (or "The amendment fails and the motion remains that we will give \$500 to the disaster relief fund")

HOW TO MAKE AND PROCESS AN AMENDMENT TO AN AMENDMENT

In essence, the first amendment is treated as a main motion, and the second amendment as an amendment to that motion. An amendment to an amendment must amend the first amendment, it cannot amend a different place in the original main motion. The process is the same as above.

HOW TO APPROVE MINUTES

Chair says "The next business is the approval of the minutes of [insert date], are there any corrections"
It is permissible for the Chair to ASSUME the motion to approve, as no other motion can be made, and proceed without someone making a formal motion. If the members have copies of the minutes, there is no need to read them out loud.

If there are not corrections, Chair says "As there are no corrections, the minutes are approved as presented"
If there are corrections, the Chair says "The corrections are noted. If there are no further corrections (pause) the minutes stand approved as corrected"

HOW TO ADJOURN

If there is a scheduled time to end the meeting: Chair says "The time for adjournment has been reached (pause for someone to make a motion to extend, if no motion is made -) We are adjourned"

If there is no more business to discuss, Chair says "There being no further business (pause for someone to say something, if none, say), We are adjourned"

If someone makes a motion to adjourn and it is seconded, Chair says "It is moved and seconded to adjourn, all those in favor say AYE, all opposed say NO, the ayes have it and we are adjourned" or "The negative has prevailed and we will proceed with business"

Notice that in the first two instances, no formal motion was made as such an action would just delay the matter unnecessarily.

HOW TO APPEAL THE RULING OF THE CHAIR

The assembly has the final say on what happens, and rulings of the Chair can be Appealed to the full assembly (a Chair may NOT be 'challenged' and that would should not be used)

Member (does not have to be recognized) says "I appeal from the ruling of the Chair". Another member seconds.

The Chair says "The ruling of the Chair has been Appealed, the member may state their reason for the Appeal"
Member who made the Appeal states the reason(s) for the Appeal

The Chair then states their reason for making the rule

Chair says "All those who would uphold the ruling of the Chair say AYE, all those who would not uphold the ruling of the Chair say NO." A Majority in the affirmative or a tie, upholds the Chairs ruling, a majority in the negative overturns the Chairs ruling

MOTIONS WITH SPECIAL PROPERTIES

RECONSIDER.

- 1) Can only be moved by someone who voted on the prevailing side on the original motion.
- 2) The Reconsideration can be postponed to later in the meeting, or the next meeting, in which case no action can be taken on the content of the motion until the reconsideration is complete.
- 3) Can only be made the in the same meeting as the motion to be reconsidered, or at the next meeting if no action has been taken, or, in a convention, the motion can be made in the next business meeting.
- 4) Not all procedural motions can be reconsidered.
- 5) An amendment may be reconsidered if the main motion has not yet been voted on.

AMEND OR RESCIND A MOTION PREVIOUSLY ADOPTED

(2 separate motions, but they are handled exactly the same)

- 1) Can be applied to any adopted motion, regardless of how long ago I that motion as adopted
- 2) Cannot be made if the motion has already been carried out and the action cannot be undone
- 3) Is treated as a Main Motion
- 4) Vote required is deferent depending on how the motion was made:

A) If notice was given at a previous meeting, or in the call to the meeting, then a majority vote is required

- B) If no notice was given, then a 2/3 vote is required
- C) A majority vote of the entire membership***, with or without notice

DISCHARGE A COMMITTEE (usually used when a committee has not acted)

- 1) Removes a motion previously referred to the committee from that committee and gives it back to the assembly that referred it
- 2) Vote required is deferent depending on how the motion was made:
 - A) If notice was given at a previous meeting, or in the call to the meeting, then a majority vote is required

- B) If no notice was given, then a 2/3 vote is required
- C) A majority vote of the entire membership***, with or without notice

MISUSE OF LAY ON THE TABLE

The motion to Lay on the Table is often misused to kill a motion. That is not its purpose and it should not be used that way. The purpose is to set something asked while the assembly does something of more importance, such as a guest speaker, an item set for a specific time etc. Lay on the Table requires a second and a majority vote. The motion set aside can be recalled by the motion To Take From the Table, also requiring a second and a majority vote, although it is usually accomplished by general consent. The motion used to kill a main motion is Postpone Indefinitely. That motion must be seconded and requires a majority vote.

DILATORY OR IMPROPER MOTIONS

Any procedural motion can be dilatory if it is only made to delay the meeting. Chair makes the ruling that the motion is dilatory, that ruling can be appealed

No motion can be considered that would violate any law (federal, state or local) or violate the constitution/bylaws or purpose of the association unless the assembly decides to hear it by a 2/3 vote.

RULES GOVERNING DEBATE

The maker of a motion has the right to speak first to the motion. If they do not exercise that right, they lose it. Robert's Rules states that members may speak for 10 minutes on a motion. That is not usually acceptable in regular organizations. So the organization should adopt a Special Rule of Order to supersede Robert's and set a more reasonable limit on debate.

Such rules can limit both individual speakers (usually 2 - 3 minutes) and the total time of debate on any motion (usually 10 - 20 minutes)

Any such rule must be adopted or amended by a 2/3 vote. If an individual member requests longer to speak, that classifies as a Suspension of the Rules and also requires a 2/3 vote.

Members may only speak twice on the same motion, and the second time only after everyone who has spoken once. To speak a 3rd time requires a suspension of the rules which requires a 2/3 vote.

Members should not refer to other members by name, and should be discouraged by the chair from doing so. Debate is about the ISSUE, NOT THE PERSON. It only matters WHAT was said, NOT WHO SAID IT.

QUORUM V. MAJORITY

The QUORUM is the number of members who must be present in order to legally conduct business. Normally, that is a majority of the seated members. However, the bylaw may set a different requirement.

A MAJORITY is more than half. NOT 50%+1. Ex. 10 members, half is 5, Majority is 6, that works. 11 members, half is 5.5, + 1 = 6.5, cannot have half votes.

A MAJORITY is the next highest whole number above 50%

VOTING

There are many ways to vote

General (or unanimous) Consent: The Chair says “If there is no objection, this motion will be adopted. (pause) Hearing no objection, the motion is adopted” or “There is an objection, we will take a vote”

Voice: Chair says “All those in favor of the motion say AYE, (pause) All those opposed to the motion say NO. (pause) The affirmative has it and the motion is adopted” (or) “the negative has it and the motion is not adopted” If you do not object, you do consent. Silence not only implies consent, silence IS consent.

Raising Vote (hands, voting cards or standing) ”Chair says “All those in favor of the motion raise your hand (or voting card, or stand), (pause) Thank you, hands down (or cards down, or sit down) All those opposed to the motion raise your hand (or voting card, or stand), (pause) Thank you, hands down (or cards down, or sit down) (pause) The affirmative has it and the motion is adopted” (or) “the negative has it and the motion is not adopted”

Counted Vote (any of the rising vote methods can be used for a counted vote) Chair needs to appoint tellers in advance to do the counting, the number of tellers depends on the number of members, in small groups, the Chair can count.

Chair says: “All those in favor of the motion raise your hand (or voting card, or stand) and keep them up until the tellers have counted you, (pause) Thank you, hands down (or cards down, or sit down) All those opposed to the motion raise your hand (or voting card, or stand), and keep them up until the tellers have counted you (pause) Thank you, hands down (or cards down, or sit down) (pause) On a vote of ## the affirmative and ## in the negative, The affirmative has it and the motion is adopted” (or) “the negative has it and the motion is not adopted”

Roll Call vote: Chair says, “This will be a roll call vote, the secretary will read your names in alphabetical order, please answer Yes, No or Abstain when your name is called” The secretary (or a teller) calls each name and records the answer. The secretary then give the totals to the chair and the chair makes the announcement as in the counted vote above.

Ballot vote: This must be prepared for in advance, and is too complicated and to dependent on circumstances to go over in this brief. Email me for details.

“I SO MOVE”

Those words should NEVER be heard in a meeting. The person making the motion must state the motion fully, to avoid any confusion so everyone knows exactly what is being debated and voted on.

“FRIENDLY AMENDMENTS”

DO NOT EXIST. Any amendment proposed must be processed fully, as described above. When the Chair states the motion (It is moved and seconded that we give \$500 to the disaster relief fund.) the motion changes ownership. It now it the property of the assembly as a whole, and the maker has no more rights to it. They have no right to approve or disapprove of a proposed amendment or procedural motion.

AGENDA v. PROGRAM

The AGENDA is the list of business items for a business meeting.

The PROGRAM is the list of everything that is going to happen during that event. It may include speakers, workshops, presentation of awards, etc. So in a convention of several days the PROGRAM is the list of all activities taking place at that convention, the AGENDA is the things to be done at the business meeting(s).

CONSENT AGENDA

This is a process to take care of routine, non-controversial motions with a single vote.

The items should be listed together on the agenda. The chair says “We will now take up the consent agenda, does any member wish to pull any item from consent” Any member may pull any item off the consent agenda because they wish to amend it, vote no, or make any other procedural motion, no second required, and they do not need to state the reason for the pull. (I wish to pull #3, or the motion on the donation to disaster relief) If a

member has only a brief question about an item, that question and answer can be allowed without pulling the item. The item that is pulled is removed from the consent, and is taken up at the normal place it would be in the agenda. After all pulls have been made, the chair says "There being no further pulls, the consent agenda items are adopted" No vote is needed, as this is by consent. If you do not pull it, it will be adopted.

SUSPENDING THE RULES

Most regular parliamentary rules (whether in Special Rules of Order, Standing Rules or Robert's Rules) can be suspended with a 2/3 vote for that meeting or for that motion.

Regular Rules that CANNOT be suspended are"

Any rule that would violate the principals of Parliamentary Procedure

Any rule that protects absentees

Any rule that deals with issues outside the meeting

Any rule that protects the basic rights of a member

BYLAWS (or CONSTITUTION) CANNOT BE SUSPENDED, except in 2 specific cases

1. The duties of an officer at a meeting (so if the Treas. is absent, someone else can make the report etc.)

2. If the rule is in the nature of a rule of order

3. If the rule provides for its own suspension

NOTICE or PREVIOUS NOTICE

Some action as so important that the members must be made aware in advance that the matter is going to come up at a meeting. A notice requirement CANNOT BE WAIVED, even by unanimous approval.

Notice can be given 1) Orally at a previous meeting (At the next meeting is will move to amend the bylaw by ...) or 2) In writing in the Call to the Meeting (Notice of the Meeting) The notice must be sufficient to allow the members to know what the matter is about and what changes are being proposed, and, the case of a bylaw amendment, the exact text of the amendment. Some motion take a different vote if notice has been given (majority instead of 2/3)

Notice is required for: Bylaw Amendments, Special Meetings,

Notice Changes Voting requirements: Amend or Rescind Something Previously adopted, Discharge a Committee, Disciplinary Actions

Questions can be addressed to: jhstew@earthlnk.net

* Minority is used in parliamentary procedure in its simplest definition, any group less than half of the body

** "Rises" is a generic term which means stick something up in the air to get the attention of the Chair. A hand, a voting card, your body

*** A Majority of the Entire membership means a majority of the number of members of the particular body that is voting, ex. A majority of the total number of board members, not just those present, or a majority of the total number of registered delegates in a convention