



SIMPLIFIED PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

I. ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. The meeting is “called to order” by the president.
2. The secretary reads the minutes of the preceding meeting.
 - a. May be approved as read.
 - b. May be approved with additions or corrections.
3. Monthly statement of Treasurer is “*Received as read and filed for audit.*”
 - a. Chair so states.
4. The president calls for reports of standing committees.
5. The president calls for reports of special committees.
6. Unfinished business is next in order at the call of the chair or of the meeting.
7. New business.
8. The program: The program is part of the meeting; the president “presides” throughout, but the program chair makes the report.
9. Adjournment.

II. DUTIES OF A PRESIDENT

1. To preside at all meetings.
2. Keep calm at all times.
3. Talk no more than necessary while presiding.
4. Have the agenda for meeting before him/her and proceed in a businesslike manner.
5. Have a working knowledge of parliamentary law and a thorough understanding of the constitution and by-laws of the organization.
6. Keep a list of committees on the table while presiding.
7. Refrain from entering the debate on questions before the assembly. If it is essential that this be done, the vice-president should be placed in the chair. The president is not permitted to resume the chair until after the vote has been taken on the question under discussion.

8. Extend every courtesy to the opponents of a motion, even though the motion may be one that the presiding officer favors.
9. Always appear at the rostrum a few minutes before the time the meeting is to be called to order. When the time arrives, note whether a quorum is present; if so, call the meeting to order, and declares, “*a quorum is present.*”

III. OTHER OFFICIALS

Vice-President

The vice-president of an organization is the one who acts in the place of the president, whenever needed. In case of resignation or death of the president, the vice-president automatically becomes the president unless the by-laws provide other methods.

In official meetings, the vice-president should preside in the absence of the president or whenever the president temporarily vacates the chair.

If the president should be absent for a long period, the vice-president may exercise all duties of the president except to change or modify rules made by the president.

The vice-president cannot fill vacancies where the by-laws state that such vacancies shall be filled by the president.

In case of resignation of the president, and the vice-president does not care to assume the office of president, the vice-president must resign.

The office of vice-president becomes vacant when the vice-president assumes the office of president. If there are several vice-presidents, they automatically move up to the higher office leaving the lower office vacant. This office should be filled as instructed by the by-laws or authorized parliamentary authority.

Secretary

The secretary should issue all calls or notices of meetings and should write such letters as the executive committee may designate.

The secretary should keep a neat and careful record of all business done in the meetings, with the exact wording of every motion and whether it was lost or carried. Brief extracts from speeches, if important, may be recorded but no comment of any kind, favorable or unfavorable, should be made. The minutes should show the names of persons appointed to committees. It is the duty of the secretary to notify all persons nominated or elected to any committee.

The secretary should be on hand a few minutes before the meeting is called to order. S/he should have the minute book of the organization with her/him so that reference can be made to minutes of past meetings.

The secretary should always have a copy of the by-laws; standing rules; a book of parliamentary procedure endorsed by the organization; list of members or clubs; and a list of unfinished business, a copy of which should be given the presiding officer.

The minutes of an organization should contain a record of what is done and not what is said.

Minutes should contain:

- Date, place and time of meeting.
- Whether it is a regular or special meeting.
- Name of person presiding.
- Name of secretary.
- All motions, whether adopted or rejected.
- The names of the persons making the motions; the name of the seconder need not be recorded.
- Points of order and appeals, whether sustained or lost.
- A motion that was withdrawn should not be recorded.

Treasurer

The treasurer of any organization is the custodian of its funds and receives and disburses them upon authority from the organization, executive committee or the finance/budget committees.

The organization should authorize the medium by which bills are paid, (whether by check or by cash, and by whom) and should either approve the budget or authorize the executive committee to do so. A chair or an officer or member should get permission from the president or board to make an expenditure.

No treasurer should accept bills for payment, such as for postage, traveling expenses, etc., from a chair unless receipts are also enclosed.

The treasurer should make a monthly statement and a report once a year, or upon the request of board during the year.

Committees

Committees have no authority except that which is granted by the constitution or by vote of the organization. A committee has no right to incur any debt or involve the organization in any way unless given full authority to do so.

IV. PRINCIPAL MOTIONS

General statement: When a motion has been made, seconded and stated by the chair, the assembly is not at liberty to consider any other business until this motion has been disposed of. If the motion is long and involved the chair should ask the mover to hand it in writing to the secretary. The mover cannot withdraw the motion after the chair has stated it. In general, all-important motions should be seconded, which may be done without rising or addressing the chair.

1. To Amend: This motion is “to change, add, or omit words” in the original main motion, and is debatable; majority vote.

To Amend the Amendment: This is a motion to change, add, or omit words in the first amendment; debatable, majority vote.

Method: The first vote is on changing words of second amendment, the second vote (if first vote adopts change) is on the first amendment as changed; the third vote is on adopting the main motion as changed.

2. To Commit: When a motion becomes involved through amendments or when it is wise to investigate a question more carefully, it may be moved to commit the motion to a committee for further consideration. Debatable – Amendable – Committee must make report on such question.
3. To Lay on the Table: The object of this motion is to postpone the subject under discussion in such a way that it can be taken up at some time in the near future when a motion “to take from the table” would be in order. These motions are not debatable or amendable: majority vote.
4. To Postpone: A motion to postpone the question before the assembly to some future time is in order, except when a speaker has the floor. Debatable: majority vote.
5. To adjourn: This motion is always in order except:
 - a. When a speaker has the floor.
 - b. When a vote is being taken.
 - c. After it has just been voted down.
 - d. When the assembly is in the midst of some business that cannot be abruptly stopped.

Under all the above circumstances, the motion is not debatable.

When the motion is made to adjourn to a definite place, and time, it is debatable.

6. To Reconsider: The motion to reconsider a motion that was carried or lost is in order if made on the same day or the next calendar day, but must be made by one who voted with the prevailing side. No question can be twice reconsidered. Debatable: majority vote.

Require 2 votes: First on whether it should be reconsidered; second on original motion after reconsideration.

7. The Previous Question: Is to close debate on the pending question. This motion may be made when debate becomes long and drawn out. It is not debatable. The form is “*Mr. (Madam) Chair, I move the previous question.*” The chair then asks, “*Shall debate be closed and the question now be put?*” If this is adopted by a two-thirds vote, the question before the assembly is immediately voted upon.
8. Point of Order: This motion is always in order, but can be used only to present an objection to a ruling of the chair or some method of parliamentary procedure. The form is “*Mr. (Madam) Chair, I rise to a point of order.*” The Chair: “*Please state your point of order.*” After the member has stated his objection, the chair answers:
 - a. “*Your point of order is sustained*” or
 - b. “*Your point of order is denied.*”

If any member is not satisfied s/he may appeal the decision of the chair. The chair then addresses the assembly, “*Shall the decision of the chair be sustained?*” This is debatable and the presiding officer may discuss it without leaving the chair. Voted on like any other motion: majority or tie vote sustains the decision of chair. Requires a majority of “no” votes to reverse decision of the chair.