

Parliamentary Procedure

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What is Parliamentary Procedure?

Parliamentary procedure, also referred to as parliamentary law or rules of order, parliamentary procedure is the body of rules, ethics and customs governing meetings and the other operations of clubs, organization, legislative bodies, and other deliberative assemblies. Essentially, what this means is that parliamentary procedure dictates how meetings are to be run in order to accomplish business as quickly and as efficiently as possible. Some examples of organizations and legislative bodies that utilize parliamentary procedure in their general meetings would be FBLA and the United Kingdom Parliament.

Why Use Parliamentary Procedure?

As stated in Robert's Rules of Order, "Parliamentary law is the best method yet devised to enable assemblies of any size, with due regard for every member's opinion, to arrive at the general will on the maximum number of questions of varying complexity in the minimum time and under all kinds of internal climate ranging from total harmony to hardened or impassioned division of opinion". To put that in simpler terms, the reason parliamentary law or procedure is utilized and coveted by various organizations and legislative bodies is because it protects the rights of all members and helps maintain order during a heated debate or discussion. In addition to this, it also ensures that the will of the majority is addressed while protecting the rights of the minority.

Did You Know?
Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised is the book that FBLA-PBL uses as the guidelines for Parliamentary Procedure.

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What Are Motions?

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When using parliamentary procedure, in order to present new ideas to the assembly, one is required to do so by utilizing a motion. Motions come in various classes, some with more specific than others; however, in this article, we will be addressing the most essential motions necessary to run the simplest meeting using parliamentary procedure.

Main Motion

A main motion is a motion that proposes ideas for group activities and is essentially the bread and butter of parliamentary procedure. Using this motion, members can initiate debate on a topic of their choice.

Incidental Motion

Incidental motions are motions that arise as a result of the debate on another motion and as a result outrank main motions. For example, if a member was to propose and large purchase utilizing organization funds in a main motion, a fellow member

could propose the incidental motion “Request for information” regarding the current budget during debate in order to make a more educated decision.

Privileged Motion

Privileged motions are motions that, while not relating the pending motion, are of so great importance that they take precedence over all other unprivileged motion.

Subsidiary Motion

Subsidiary motions are motions made for the purpose of affecting the motion currently being debated. For example, one subsidiary motion that is commonly used is the motion to “amend”. By utilizing this subsidiary motion, members can debate whether or not to alter the motion that is currently being debated.

Motions and Minutes

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How Do I Propose a Motion?

Now that you know some of the basic motions of parliamentary procedure, you can begin the final step of learning the basics: putting your knowledge into action at your meetings. Here are the steps for proposing a motion:

1. A member rises and addresses the presiding officer.
2. The Presiding officer recognizes the member.
3. The member states the motion.
4. Another member seconds the motion.
5. The presiding officer restates the motion, thus placing it before the assembly for consideration.
6. The assembly may discuss the motion if it is debatable and amend the motion if it is amendable.
7. The presiding officer takes the vote by asking that those in favor say aye, and those opposed say no.
8. The presiding officer announces the result.

What Are Minutes?

The minutes is a report, usually written by the secretary, of what occurs at a meeting.

Want to See What Minutes Look Like?

You can click [here](#) to see a example of minutes.

Additional Resources

Here are some Recourses that can help you learn Parliamentary Procedure.

Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised

Robert's Rules of order remains one of the most important resources on parliamentary law

Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised In Brief

It simplifies much of the information available in Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised allowing newer members to develop a basic understanding of parliamentary procedure with much more ease.

<http://www.rulesonline.com>

Outlines many of the major motions utilized in a large majority of meetings

Agenda

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What is An Agenda?

The agenda of a meeting outlines what business will be addressed at the meeting. It allows members to be informed of what will be discussed during the meeting.

Outline of An Agenda

Call to Order

The Presiding Officer calls the meeting to order with a tap of the gavel.

Reading and Approval of the Minutes

Secretary reads the minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes are either approved or amended if they are incorrect.

Reports of Officers, Boards, and Standing Committees

Reports from different officers, boards and standing committees are presented to the assembly.

Reports of Special Committees

Reports from Special Committees are presented to the assembly.

Special Orders

Motions that were designated as special orders at the previous meeting are addressed.

Unfinished Business

Business that was left uncompleted at the previous meeting is addressed by the assembly.

New Business

The presiding officer asks for new business from members of the assembly.

Announcements

The presiding officer asks if there are any announcements.

Adjournment

If there is no further business or announcements, the presiding officer will move to adjourn the meeting.