



Parliamentary
Procedure

Why Parliamentary Procedure?

As a member of your local SWCD –

- Why do you need to know Parliamentary rules?
- What difference does it make?

Why Parliamentary Procedure?

Permits a SWCD Board of Directors to conduct business in the most effective and efficient manner and to maintain order while business is conducted



Think About Your Own Board Meetings

Let's have a little discussion...

- Have you attended a meeting where your board was trying to conduct business but having a difficult time doing so?
- What was the major cause as to why it was difficult to transact business?

Have you experienced...

- Meetings that seem endless because the business could have been completed hours ago?
- Confusion as to what exactly is being discussed and voted on?
- Irritation because one person or a small group of people dominate a meeting?
- The feeling that you never get your voice heard in group discussion?
- Anger about decisions made that do not reflect the feelings of the majority of the group?

Parliamentary Procedure

The Basics

SWCA Director Leadership Development

Adapted from FFA Leadership
Development Training

End the Frustration!!! Here's How...

- ❖ **What is Parliamentary Procedure?**
- ❖ **Why use Parliamentary Procedure?**
- ❖ **The Importance of an Agenda**
- ❖ **The Role of Board Members**
- ❖ **Basic Parliamentary Procedure Skills**

Let's talk about it!!

What is Parliamentary Procedure?

➤ A predetermined set of “rules” that will be used to “govern” the way business will be conducted

➤ A system of procedure that allows an organization to effectively conduct its official business in a fair and democratic manner

Why use Parliamentary Procedure?

- ✓ **Focus on one item at a time**
 - no more than one issue will be discussed
- ✓ **Extend courtesy to everyone**
 - all members have an opportunity to participate
- ✓ **Observe the rule of the majority**
 - no group decision is granted without majority
- ✓ **Ensure the rights of the minority**
 - all members have equal access to decision-making

The Importance of an Agenda

- An agenda is a formal listing of the business that is to be conducted at a meeting
- The agenda must be approved by board members at the start of the meeting in order to follow it
- Whenever possible, an agenda should be presented to membership well in advance of the meeting for membership review
- **REMEMBER** – a well-planned agenda is critical to a well run, organized meeting

Order of an Agenda

- It is up to your board to adopt an order of business to be used at every meeting – if it has not, the official order is as follows:
 1. Reading and approval of the minutes of the previous meeting
 2. Reports of standing committees and officers
 3. Reports of any special committees
 4. Special orders (guest speakers, etc.)
 5. Unfinished business
 6. New Business
 7. Adjournment

Getting Down to Business...

- Parliamentary Procedure and the rules that govern the conducting of business is based on motions
- The key to Parliamentary Procedure is learning and using these motions during meetings
 - **Refer to handout entitled “Summary of Motions”
- Do not be intimidated by the list of motions – anyone can learn to use these motions.
- **REMEMBER** – Using Parliamentary Procedure correctly takes practice and effort!!

Classification of Motions

- Privileged Motions (5) – do not relate to a pending question, however are of such great importance that they take precedence of all other questions (motions)
- Incidental Motions (8) – arise from another question that is pending and must be decided before the question out of which they arise (are made as the result of another motion)
- Subsidiary Motions (7) – applied to other motions for the purpose of appropriately disposing of them
- Main Motion (1) – used to bring up a new subject or idea to the group
- Unclassified (3) – have a definite purpose but are not classified as any other

Privileged Motions

1. Adjourn – allows the meeting to be officially over

*gain recognition from chair

"M/M Chairman, I move to adjourn the meeting."

*second required, not debatable, not amendable, majority vote

2. Question of Privilege – may be a group or personal request from the chair

*no recognition needed

"M/M Chairman, I rise to a group question of privilege – it is difficult to hear you would you please speak up?"

*no second, not debatable or amendable, no vote

Privileged Motions (cntd.)

3. *Fix a Time To Which to Adjourn* – allows for a continuance of the current meeting when it is obvious the meeting will not end in the allowable time frame

"M/M Chairman, seeing we will be unable to finish today's business in the time available, I move that when we adjourn we stand adjourned until 3:00 pm tomorrow."

4. *Recess* – a short break or intermission in the proceedings which does not close the meeting

*gain recognition from chair

"M/M Chairman, I move that we take a five minute recess to gather our thoughts on this matter."

*second required, not debatable, is amendable as to time only, majority vote

Privileged Motions (cntd.)

- 5. Call for the Orders of the Day – used when the group deviates from the agenda and you would like to follow the agenda

*no recognition needed, not debatable or amendable

"M/M Chairman, I call for the orders of the day."

President then asks the secretary to read the orders (agenda)

President then asks members if there are objections to following the orders of the day

If there are objections, a vote must be taken and need 2/3 vote of the membership to not follow the orders of the day

Incidental Motions

6. Point of Order – made when a member of the assembly makes a parliamentary error

*no recognition needed

"M/M Chairman, I rise to a point of order."

President asks member to state his/her point

Member states parliamentary error and chairperson agrees or disagrees

*no second, not debatable or amendable, no vote

7. Appeal – used when member feels that the chairperson has made a decision not in agreement with the group

*no recognition needed

Chairman says the group was volunteered to clean all of main street

"M/M Chairman, I appeal the decision of the chair."

*requires second, is debatable but not amendable, majority vote

Incidental Motions (cntd.)

8. *Suspend the Rules* – used to deviate from the agenda or allow for special circumstances

*need recognition

"M/M Chairman, I move to suspend the rules so that our guest speaker may speak at this time."

*requires a second, is not debatable or amendable, 2/3 vote

9. *Division of the House* – used when a member disagrees with the vote result stated by the chair

*no recognition needed

"I call for the Division of the House!"

President then calls for a revote – any other than voice and states result

*no second, not debatable or amendable, no vote

Incidental Motions (cntd.)

10. Parliamentary Inquiry – used when there is a question about parliamentary law

*no recognition needed

“I raise a parliamentary inquiry.”

President then asks member to state his/her inquiry

“Is this motion debatable?”

President responds

*no second, not amendable or debatable, no vote

11. Withdraw – used when a member wishes to withdraw his/her motion

Member may say “I withdraw my motion” before President restates it and it is dropped.

If the President restates the motion, requires a majority vote by the members to withdraw it.

*no second, not debatable or amendable, no vote

Incidental Motions (cntd.)

12. Division of the Question - used when a member feels the motion is really two motions in one

*recognition required

Example: “M/M Chairman, I move that our board have a bake sale for a fundraiser and we go out for pizza after our meeting.”

“M/M Chairman, this motion is really two motions in one. Therefore, I move to divide the question into two parts; the first stating that we have a bake sale and the second stating that we go out for pizza after our meeting.”

*second required, not debatable but is amendable as to how the question is divided, majority vote

Incidental Motions (cntd.)

13. Object to the Consideration of the Question – allows group to avoid a motion entirely if they feel it would not be in the best interest of the group to consider it

*no recognition, must be made before president restates the motion

“M/M Chairman, I object to the consideration of the question!”

*A 2/3 vote is then required to pass this motion and if done so, the motion is dropped

*no second required, not debatable or amendable

Subsidiary Motions

14. Lay on the Table – used to postpone decision on the motion until the next meeting (at the latest)

*requires recognition

“M/M Chairman, I move to lay this motion on the table.”

*requires second, not debatable or amendable, majority vote

15. Previous Question – used when member wants an immediate vote

*requires recognition

“M/M Chairman, I move the previous question (on all pending matters.)”

*requires second, not debatable or amendable, 2/3 vote

Subsidiary Motions (cntd.)

16. Postpone Definitely –
used to remove an issue from
the floor to be brought up at
the next meeting

*recognition required

"M/M Chairman, I move to
postpone this motion to our
next regularly scheduled
meeting."

*second required, is debatable
and amendable as to time,
majority vote

17. Limit/Extend Debate – used to
increase or decrease
debate/discussion

*recognition required

"M/M Chairman, I move to
limit/extend debate to five
minutes per side/three debates
per member."

*second required, not debatable
or amendable, 2/3 vote

Standard debate rules are twice
per motion/ten minutes per
debate

Subsidiary Motions (cntd.)

18. Refer to Committee – used to allow a committee to do more research or look into an issue more

**May be a standing committee or special committee

**Must state number of members on committee

**The power the committee is given (to act, or report back)

**How the committee is selected (appointed, volunteer, etc.)

**Must address who the chair will be if not a standing comm.

"M/M Chairman, I move to refer this motion to a committee of three, appointed by the chair, giving them the power to act."

*recognition, second, is debatable and amendable, majority vote required

Subsidiary Motions (cntd.)

19. Amendment – used to change a motion, but never the intent of the motion

** Three ways to amend a motion:

1. Addition – adding a word or phrase
2. Subtraction (striking out) – removal of part of the motion but not to change the intent
3. Substitution – removing part of the motion and inserting a new word or phrase

"M/M Chairman, I move to amend the motion by adding the words “and we pay our own way.”

**motions can only be amended twice, require recognition, a second, are debatable & amendable, and a majority vote

Subsidiary Motions (cntd.)

20. Postpone Indefinitely – used to remove an issue from debate permanently (not postponed, dropped)

*requires recognition

"M/M Chairman, I feel this motion should not be considered by our group, therefore I move to postpone this motion indefinitely."

*second required, is debatable but not amendable, majority vote

The motion may be brought up again, but is not required to be through the power of this motion

Main Motion

21. Main Motion – used to bring items of business to the group; can not be used if any other motion is on the floor

**The only acceptable way to start a motion is to say...

“I move...”

*recognition required

"M/M Chairman, I move that we take attend the next county commissioners meeting to ask for the annual funds they normally give us."

*second required, debatable and amendable, majority vote

(the main motion is the lowest ranking of all motions)

Unclassified Motions

22. Take from the Table – used to bring a motion that was previously tabled back on the floor

*requires recognition

"M/M Chairman, I move to take from the table the motion concerning our raffle fundraiser that was tabled at our last meeting."

*requires second, not debatable or amendable, majority vote

**If motion passes, the chair states that the motion is back on the floor in its debatable and amendable form. Then asks for discussion

Unclassified Motions (cntd.)

23. Rescind – allows a member to remove some action previously taken

*requires recognition

"M/M Chairman, I move to rescind the motion which states we meet with the county commissioners."

*requires second, D & A, 2/3 vote

24. Reconsider – allows discussion and a revote on action previously taken

**The member making this motion must have been on the side of the prevailing vote

*requires recognition, is debatable

"M/M Chairman, I move to reconsider the motion stating that we hire a new parliamentarian."

Chairman would then ask if member was on prevailing side and mention that motion is back on the floor

Final Thoughts...

- ✓ Do not get overwhelmed. Parliamentary Procedure takes practice, practice, practice and patience, patience, patience.
- ✓ Make a conscious group decision that meetings will be conducted according to Parliamentary Law and those laws will be followed by every member.
- ✓ Many parts of Parliamentary Procedure can be “modified” to fit the needs of an individual group.
- ✓ Work together to educate your members on the rules of Parliamentary Procedure to ensure effective meetings.
- ✓ **REMEMBER** – This is only a brief overview of how Parliamentary Procedure works – keep learning!

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Have a Super Day!!