

PARLIAMENTARY GEMS



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WHAT IS PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE?

Simply stated, it's an organized system that allows a group to come together and make decisions. The fundamental concepts upon which it is based:

- **One thing at a time.** Only one main motion is allowed on the floor at a time.
- **One person, too.** Only one person may talk at a time.
- **Only one time per meeting.** The same motion, or practically the same motion, cannot be made more than once per session. (The only exception is of a member changes his/her mind.)
- **Enough have to be there to decide.** The group decides the minimum number (called a quorum) that must be present to make a decision for the group.
- **Protected even if absent.** The rights of the members who are absent are protected.
- **Vote requirements are based on members' rights.** If an action gives rights to members, it requires a majority vote to pass. If an action takes away rights, it requires a two-thirds vote to pass.
- **Silence = consent.** If a member chooses to abstain from voting, the member is giving his or her consent to the decision made by the group.
- **Everybody is equal.** All voting members have equal rights. The majority rules, but the minority has the right to be heard and to attempt to change the minds of the majority.

Information from Nancy Sylvester, professional registered parliamentarian

SOME PARLIAMENTARY DEFINITIONS

- **Adjournment** – Ending a meeting
- **Agenda** – Refers to the order of business that will be presented at a meeting. Unless a specific order of business is defined by an organization's bylaws, the order should be:
 1. Reading and approval of minutes
 2. Reports of Officers, Board and Standing Committees
 3. Reports of Special Committees
 4. Special Orders
 5. Unfinished Business and General Orders
 6. New Business
- **Amend** – To modify or change a motion.
- **Bylaws** – Also known as the organization's constitution, the bylaws define the basic rules that an organization will follow.
- **Chair** – The presiding officer and the position where the presiding officer is located during a meeting.
- **Debate** – Any discussion that takes place to determine the merit of a motion.
- **Minutes** – A record of all proceedings that take place during a meeting. The minutes should not contain all of the items discussed and all debate given about each topic, but should at least contain the items that the organization or committee decided to undertake as a result of the meeting.
- **Motion** – A formal proposal during a meeting that the organization take certain action. There are many different types of motions that represent the different types of actions the organization can take.
- **Obtain the Floor** – Before a member may make a motion or speak in debate about the pending business, he must first be recognized by the chair as having the exclusive right to speak at that moment. This process of being recognized by the chair is called obtaining the floor.
- **Point of Order** – When a member thinks the rules of the assembly are being violated, he may call for a point of order which requires a ruling by the chair and enforcement of the regular rules.

- **Postpone Indefinitely** – This is a motion that the assembly take no position on the main question. Its adoption effectively kills the main motion.
- **Presiding Officer** – The leader of the meeting, who ensures the rules are observed, often referred to as president or the chair.
- **Previous Question** – This motion forces debate to be ended and does not allow new amendments to the pending question. It forces an immediate vote on the pending question.
- **Pro Tem** – means for the time being and often refers to someone who is appointed to fill a position if the elected or appointed member is unable to attend the meeting.
- **Quorum** – “The minimum number of members who must be present at the meetings of a deliberative assembly for business to be legally transacted.” The quorum should be established by an organization’s bylaws, but if the number is not specifically defined certain rules go into effect as explained in RONR section 40.
- **Unanimous Consent** – Also known as general consent, this is a quick way to process a motion if it is known that there will be little or no opposition to the motion. It does not necessarily mean that every member is in favor of the proposed action, but any opposition realizes that debating the motion is useless.
- **Unfinished Business** – Unfinished business refers to questions that have come over from the previous meeting as a result of that meeting being adjourned without completing its order of business. (The term Old Business is not the correct term to use).

PARLIAMENTARIAN, INITIALS

For a little fun I have taken the letters of Parliamentary and assigned words or phrases pertaining to parliamentary procedure. I hope you enjoy it.

- P – Preside, chairing the meeting
- A – Assembly, a group meeting to discuss issues
- R – Respect opinions, especially those different from yours
- L – Learn parliamentary terms. Then it won’t seem like a foreign language.
- I – Insure the rights of all
- A – Amend, to modify a pending motion before it is voted on.
- M – Make a motion before discussion, not the other way around
- E – Entertain a motion, a request from the presiding officer for a formal motion.
- N – New Business, a heading on the agenda for items that are new
- T – Tellers, people elected or appointed to count votes
- A – Adjourn (I think you all know what this means)
- R – Robert’s Rules of Order, the most used parliamentary authority
- Y – Yield the floor; give some of your speaking time to another

If this piques your interest in any way, look for a parliamentary study club near you or start one of your own.

PARLIAMENTARY POINTERS: THE PARLIAMENTARIAN

A parliamentarian serves an important role in running a smooth and fair meeting. If they do their job well, you may not even notice they are there. The parliamentarian is also a resource for other officers, committees, and other members on parliamentary procedure matters and may be asked to do other duties, such as teaching classes or holding office hours.

The president should be allowed to choose the parliamentarian. While the choice may need the ratification of a board, the choice should still be the president's so that she is comfortable.

The parliamentarian should always be seated next to the president so that they can pass a note to the president with a suggestion of a point of information. A parliamentarian is a consultant, and it is up to the president whether or not they want to follow that advice.

The parliamentarian should be aware of all upcoming business and should try to identify what parts of that business may be points of contention. They should have reviewed *Robert's Rules of Order* in relation to those points. They should have a numbers chart, purchased or homemade, that shows how many votes are needed for a majority vote and for a two-thirds vote. They will need to know the number of members present to determine that number. When a parliamentarian attends a meeting, they need a copy of *Robert's Rules of Order*, the organization's bylaws and standing rules, and the agenda.

The parliamentarian may not vote in any way during a business session unless it is a ballot vote and they are a member of the organization. They may then fill out a ballot vote when all the other members vote. They may not make motions, participate in debate, or in any way speak to a question. Unlike the president, the parliamentarian cannot temporarily relinquish their position to exercise their rights as a member. In extremely rare circumstances, the presiding officer may ask the parliamentarian to address the assembly to explain a point of parliamentary procedure.

By GFWC Parliamentarian Deen J. Meloro, RP

THE RANKING ORDER OF RULES

There are a number of laws and documents that govern an organization. Your organization cannot be in violation of federal or state laws, and the governing documents of a parent organization ranks higher than any branch.

Generally, the ranking order looks like this:

- Federal laws
 - State statutes
 - Articles of incorporation
 - Governing documents of the parent organization
 - The organization's constitution
 - Bylaws
 - Special rules of order
 - Parliamentary authority
 - Standing rules
 - Policies and procedures
- **Federal Laws and State Statutes** – Federal tax laws govern many of the procedures of tax-exempt organizations. In addition, each state has laws that apply to organizations.
 - **Parent Organization** – Bylaws of the local organization can't conflict with the bylaws of the parent organization.

- **Articles of Incorporation** – The articles are the legal instrument required to incorporate the organization. They must be filed with the state of incorporation. Articles of Incorporation are the highest legal document of an organization.
- **Constitution** – Parliamentary authorities have recommended combining constitution and bylaws. It's easier for members to look up information if there is only one document.
- **Bylaws** – Bylaws are rules that, for the most part, cannot be suspended (unless the bylaws themselves provide for a method of suspending them, which is self-defeating). They should include the rules the group considers so important they cannot be changed at the whim of members present at a single meeting.
- **Special Rules of Order** – Sometimes organizations need additional rules of order, called special rules of order that differ from the parliamentary authority. Most groups do not find a need to have special rules of order.
- **Parliamentary Authority** – Most organizations use Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised as their parliamentary authority.
- **Standing Rules** – Standing rules govern the administration of the organization as opposed to rules regarding parliamentary procedure. At the beginning of a convention, rules are adopted specific to that convention.
- **Policies and Procedures** – Some groups have additional detailed policies and procedures regarding administration of the organization. Sometimes policies and procedures are combined into one document.

This information is from The Complete Idiot's Guide to Robert's Rules, 2nd edition, by Nancy Sylvester.

MOTIONS

Before a group can do anything or even take a stand on an issue, someone must make a motion. A motion states specifically what the maker wants the organization to do.

Kinds of Motions

There are two kinds of motions – main motions and secondary motions.

- **Main Motions** bring business before the assembly. They can be further subdivided into two categories:
 - a) **Original Main Motions** bring before the assembly a new subject, sometimes in the form of a resolution, upon which action by the assembly is desired.
 - b) **Incidental main motions** are incidental to, or related to, the business of the assembly or its past or future action.
- **Secondary motions** are any motions that are made while a main motion is pending. They can be further divided into three different classes:
 - a) **Privileged motions** don't relate to the main motion or pending business but relate directly to the members and the organization. They are matters of such urgency that, without debate, they can interrupt the consideration of anything else.
 - b) **Subsidiary motions** aid the assembly in treating or disposing of a main motion. They are in order only from the time the main motion has been stated by the chair until the chair begins to take a vote on that main motion.
 - c) **Incidental motions** relate to matters that are incidental to the conduct of the meeting rather than directly to the main motion. They may be offered any time when they are needed.

These motions will be discussed in further detail in future articles. For now, it's important to simply keep in mind that there are different kinds of motions and that they have different rules. Thanks to Nancy Sylvester, author of The Complete Idiot's Guide to Robert's Rules

DECORUM IN DEBATE

- Confine remarks to the merits of the pending question.
- **Refrain from Attacking a Member's Motives.** When a question is pending, a member can condemn the nature or likely consequences of the proposed measure but must avoid personalities. If a member disagrees with a statement regarding an event both witnessed, do not say it "is false". The member might say, "I believe there is strong evidence that the other member is mistaken."
- **Address all remarks through the chair.** Members should not address each other directly, but through the chair.
- **Avoid the use of members' names.** As much as possible the use of members' names should be avoided in debate. Instead try "the member who spoke last" or the speaker from the XYZ Club."
- **Refrain from speaking adversely on a prior action not pending.** In debate, a member cannot reflect adversely on any prior act of the organization that is not pending, unless a motion to reconsider, rescind, or amend it is pending.
- **Refrain from speaking against one's own motion.** In debate, the maker of the motion, while able vote against it, is not allowed to speak against a motion made by that person.
- **Reading from reports, quotes, etc.** If any member objects, a member has no right to read from –or have the secretary read from – any paper or book as part of a speech, without permission of the assembly.
- **Be seated during an interruption by the chair.** If at any time the presiding officer rises to make a ruling, any member who is speaking should be seated (or should step back from the microphone if standing a distance from a seat) until the officer has finished. At that time the member may resume speaking unless denied the right as a disciplinary measure.
- **Refrain from disturbing the assembly.** During debate, during remarks by the presiding officer to the assembly, and during voting, no member should be permitted to disturb the assembly by whispering, walking across the floor, or in any other way. The key words here are *disturb the assembly*. This rule does not mean, therefore, that members can never whisper, or walk to another place during deliberations. However, the presiding officer should watch that such activity does not disturb the meeting or hamper transaction of business.

Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 11th Edition pages 391-394

STEPS IN MAKING A MOTION

Every motion should follow the following 6 steps:

STEP 1. A member is recognized by the Chair and makes a motion using the words, "I move".

- **Common Mistakes:** Members do not wait to be recognized or begin to discuss their motion before making a motion! In formal settings, members often forget to stand up.

STEP 2. Another member seconds the motion; must use the words, "I second the motion" or simply "second".

- **Common Mistakes:** Do not wait to be recognized by the Chair before saying, "Second", when making a second you need not stand.

STEP 3. Without rewording, the Chair restates the motion to the assembly; "it has been moved and seconded that we..."

- **Common Mistake:** Motion is restated differently from the wording of the maker!

STEP 4. The Chair asks for discussion and the members debate the motion; discuss in favor and opposed to the motion.

- **Common Mistakes:** debate gets out of control in temper, in duration, in relevance!

STEP 5. Chair asks for the affirmative votes & then the negative votes.

- **Common Mistakes:** The chairman states ‘All in favor’ and fails to tell the members what to do (for example, ‘say aye’, ‘stand up’, ‘raise your hand’, etc.) or the negative vote is never requested or counted.
- Chair uses voice vote and says, “all in favor say ‘aye’”; all opposed like sign.

STEP 6. The Chair announces the result of the voting.

- **Common Mistake:** Presiding officer fails to pronounce the result of the voting! Remember, if a voice vote is used and you feel the group could not determine the outcome (i.e., ayes and nays are similar in quantity) you can call for a hand count by saying, “Division of the Assembly” or “Divide”.



MAIN MOTIONS & SECONDARY MOTIONS

- **Main motions** are the lowest ranking motion on a precedence of motions chart. It is the motion that all of the other motions on the list can be applied to – they can be made while it is pending.
- **Main motions** are debatable, amendable, and can have all kinds of things happen to them. Not only can all of the other 13 motions be applied to a main motion, so can many secondary motions. As a general rule, a main motion needs a majority vote to pass.
- Because main motions are at the bottom of the precedence chart, they take precedence over nothing. This means that a main motion cannot be made while any other motion is pending. That means only one main motion is allowed on the floor at a time.
- **Secondary motions** – The content of a motion isn’t what determines whether it is a main motion or a secondary motion. Rather, it is the relationship to other motions that establishes the type of motion it is.
- If a motion is made while another motion is pending and it is ruled to be in order, it is a secondary motion. If a motion is made while no other motion is pending and it is ruled to be in order, it is a main motion. Confused? Stay with me.
- In the motion chart, you will find a motion to *Recess*, which introduces a break during a meeting. Say we are in a meeting and have been debating a motion for more than 30 minutes, and it looks like there

is still a long way to go. You notice others are squirming in their chairs. During debate, you get recognized by the chair and say, “I move that we take a 10-minute *Recess*.” Your motion passes, and you are the hit of the meeting. That is an example of a secondary motion, the motion to *Recess*.

- Go back to the same meeting. Discussion has ended after 60 minutes of nonstop debating, the vote is taken, and the motion passes. The next item looks to be in for a lengthy debate. You are recognized by the chair and say, “I move we take a 10-minute *Recess*.” This time, the motion to *Recess* is not a secondary motion because there is no other motion pending. In this case, it is a main motion, not a secondary one.

PRIVILEGED MOTIONS

Privileged motions are a class of motions that are important enough to warrant interrupting all other motions. Because they are urgent issues, debate on them is not allowed. Their content does not relate to the main motion or any other pending business but rather to the members and the organization.

The Five Privileged Motions

1. ***Fix the Time to Which to Adjourn***. This sets the time for another meeting to continue business of the session. Adoption does not adjourn the current meeting or set the time for its adjournment.
2. ***Adjourn***. A motion to close the meeting.
3. ***Recess***. A short interruption that does not close the meeting. After the *Recess*, business resumes at the point it was interrupted.
4. ***Questions of Privilege***. To bring an urgent request or a main motion relating to the rights of either the assembly or an individual up for immediate consideration.
5. ***Call for the Orders of the Day***. By the use of this motion, a single member can require the assembly to follow the order or business or agenda, or to take up a special order that is scheduled to come up, unless two thirds of the assembly wish otherwise.

Rules for Privileged Motions

- **Fix the Time to Which to Adjourn** needs a second, is not debatable, is amendable, but the amendment is not debatable; needs a majority vote.
- **Adjourn** needs a second, is not debatable, is not amendable and needs a majority vote.
- **Recess** needs a second, is not debatable, is amendable (only as to the length of the *Recess* and that amendment is not debatable), needs a majority vote.
- **Questions of Privilege** Can interrupt the speaker, if deemed appropriate to do so, needs a second, is not debatable on whether or not to admit a question, but once the motion has been made and is pending, it is debatable.
- **Call for the Orders of the Day** can interrupt the speaker. If orders are going to be followed, it takes only one member to make this motion, and no vote is needed. If the group is going to deviate from the established agenda, a vote is needed. It takes two thirds in the negative to deviate from the established agenda.

SOME INCIDENTAL MOTIONS

Point of Order. If a member feels the rules are not being followed, this is the motion to use. It requires the chair to make a ruling and enforce the rules. Point of Order must be called at the time of the violation. It does not need a second, may interrupt the speaker, is not debatable, and is not amendable.

Appeal from the Decision of the Chair (Appeal). This is a motion to take a decision regarding parliamentary procedure out of the hands of the presiding officer and place the final decision in the hands of the assembly. After a member makes a *Point of Order*, if a member disagrees with the ruling, the member can use this motion. It needs a second, is debatable unless it is made when the immediately pending motion is undebatable. In debate, no member can speak more than once except the presiding officer, who may speak two times and does not need to vacate the chair when speaking. It is not amendable and need a majority vote in the negative to reverse the decision of the chair.

Objection to the Consideration of a Question. Rarely used, the purpose of this motion is to prevent the assembly from considering the question/motion because a members feels the motion is outside the object of the organization or detrimental to the group. It must be made before there is any debate on the motion, does not need a second, is not debatable and needs a two-thirds vote in the negative to prevent consideration.

Suspend the Rules. This motion is used when the group wishes to do something that cannot be done without violating its rules. Some rules cannot be suspended, such as the constitution and bylaws, unless they contain a rule allowing for their own suspension. Other rules that cannot be suspended are ones that protect the rights of individual members, deal with voting rights, etc. This motion need a second, is not debatable, is not amendable and may be made while another motion is pending as long as it applies to that motion. If the rule is in the nature of a parliamentary rule of order, a two-thirds vote is required. If the rule is in the nature of guidelines relating to the way the organization carries out its business, a majority vote is needed.

MORE INCIDENTAL MOTIONS

Division of the Assembly: As the wording implies, this motion divides the members who are voting (by having members voting one way stand and those voting another way remain seated). Imagine a vote is conducted by voice vote. The Chair announces the results and you think, “No way”. All you have to do is call out “*Division*” and the presiding officer is required to take the vote again, this time by standing vote. This motion can only be called on a voice vote or show of hands. It only takes one person to call it out, does not require a second, is not debatable, and is not amendable.

Division of the Question: Sometimes, for the sake of speed, one motion includes multiple ideas. For example, a committee recommends that “we buy the outgoing president a gavel and the outgoing treasurer a calculator.” If you agree with both, it works. If you only like one part, you can use *Division of the Question*. The wording should be, “I move to *Divide the Question*.”

If there is an objection to dividing the question, it must be processed as a motion, needs a second, is not debatable, is only amendable as to how the motion is divided, and needs a majority vote. If the question is divided, each section is treated as a separate motion that has already been made. You discuss one, vote on it and go on the next one, discuss it and vote.

Parliamentary Inquiry: A question directed to the presiding officer concerning parliamentary law or the rules of the organization as they pertain to the business at hand. You rise and say, “I rise to a parliamentary inquiry.” The presiding officer should say, “Please state your inquiry.” You state your inquiry and the officer answers it.

Point of Information: When at a meeting and debate is taking place, you believe it would be helpful to have further information on the motion that you do not have. To find out if someone else has that information, you rise and say, “Madam/Mister President, I rise to a *Point of Information.*” The presiding officer should respond, “Please state your point.” You state your question, and the presiding officer answers or calls on someone else to answer.

Withdrawal of a Motion

You make a motion, hear the debate and decide it isn't a wise motion. You can request permission to withdraw the motion. Whether this motion needs a vote depends on when you want to withdraw it.

Reviewing the steps in making a motion will help.

1. A member makes a motion.
2. There is a second.
3. The chair states the motion.
4. Members debate the motion.
5. The chair puts the motion to a vote.
6. The chair announces the results of the vote.

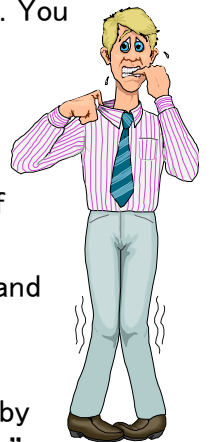
If the maker wants to withdraw the motion during steps 1, 2 or 3, the member can do so without anyone else agreeing. During step 4 the motion belongs to the assembly and permission must be given by the assembly. The presiding officer can ask if there is any objection to withdrawing. Hearing none, the motion is withdrawn. If there is an objection a vote must be taken.

HOW TO AMEND A MOTION

The purpose of an amendment is to change the words or meaning of the original motion. You must vote to pass the amendment.

Amendments can be made in 5 ways:

1. **Adding Words:** I move to amend the motion by adding the date “June 1st” after picnic.
2. **Striking Words:** I move to amend the motion by striking the word “green” in front of napkins.
3. **Striking and Inserting Words:** I move to amend the motion by striking the number “8” and inserting “15”.
4. **Substituting or Replacing:** This is to substitute by paragraph.
5. **Dividing the Motion into Two or more Separate Motions** I move to amend the motion by dividing the motion into “we hold a fundraiser” and “we use the funds for a scholarship”.



Common Mistakes: Don't forget to vote on the amendment to the motion. If it passes, then vote on the motion as amended.

The motion can be amended as many times as the group desires, however, only two amendments can be on the floor at a given time and they must be related.

“BRING BACK” MOTIONS

- *Rescind*
- *Amend Something Previously Adopted*
- *Take from the Table*
- *Reconsider*

Rescind

This motion is used to cancel something that the voting body did at a previous meeting. Things change and this motion allows you to respond to that change. For a motion to *Rescind*, any of the following votes are needed:

A two-thirds vote

A majority vote if previous notice is given

A majority of the entire membership

What Can't Be Rescinded?

A vote after something has been done as a result of that vote and it is too late to undo it.

An action in the nature of a contract, once either party in the contract has been informed (if, for example, a contract is signed or verbally committed to).

A resignation that has been acted upon.

An election to or expulsion from membership if the person was present or has already been notified.

A motion that could be reconsidered. (See Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised for a list).

Rules for a motion to Rescind

- Needs a second
- Is debatable
- Is amendable
- A vote is needed: a two-thirds vote, a majority vote if previous notice is given, or a majority of the entire membership.

Amend Something Previously Adopted

Everything that applies to the motion to *Rescind* applies to this motion. There are two differences. First, instead of cancelling a previously adopted motion, this motion changes it. Second, you must include how you propose to change the previously adopted motion in the motion to *Amend Something Previously Adopted*.

Rules for the motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted.

- Needs a second
- Is debatable
- Is amendable

(From "The Complete Idiot's Guide to Robert's Rules, by Nancy Sylvester)

MORE “BRING BACK” MOTIONS

Take from the Table

Lay on the Table allows a group to set aside a pending motion in order to attend to more urgent business. To bring the tabled motion back, a member must make the motion to *Take from the Table* before the end of the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Time Restrictions: A motion that was *Laid on the Table* can only be *Taken from the Table* during the remainder of the meeting where it was *Laid on the Table* or before the conclusion of the next regularly scheduled meeting. The “next regular meeting” must be within a quarterly time interval. Therefore, if you have an annual convention, you cannot *Lay on the Table* at one convention and *Take from the Table* at the next convention. If it is not acted on at the proper time it falls off the table. If you want to bring it up later, it is as though it was never moved in the first place and must come up as new business.

Rules for *Take from the Table*: Needs a second; is not debatable; is not amendable; needs a majority vote; may be made during the unfinished business or new business portion of the agenda.

Reconsider: This is the most complicated of all the motions. The motion to *Reconsider* is the only motion of American origin. To truly understand all of the intricacies, you need to check out Robert’s.

The effect of the adoption of this motion is to erase the original vote on the motion. If the motion to *Reconsider* passes, the motion is put back on the floor, as if the original vote had not occurred, and discussion continues.

The motion to *Reconsider* can be made only by a member who voted on the prevailing side. The idea is that at least one person has to have changed his/her mind. The motion can be made only on the day the original motion was made, except during a convention or when you are meeting multiple days in a row, it can be made on the next day.

Two Parts: Make It, Call It Up – This motion can be made at one time and processed (or called up) at another time. So even if you can’t process the motion for whatever reason, such as time constraints, you can still make the motion and then call it up to discuss at a later time. See Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised for a list of motions that can’t be *Reconsidered*.

Rules for Motion to Reconsider: Is debatable only if the motion being reconsidered was debatable; is not amendable; needs a majority vote; Can only be made by a member who voted on the prevailing side; can be moved only on the same or next succeeding day after the original motion was made.

From The Complete Idiot’s Guide to Robert’s Rules, 2nd edition

SUSPEND THE RULES

When an assembly wishes to do something during a meeting that it cannot do without violating one or more of its regular rules, it can adopt a motion to *Suspend the Rules* interfering with the proposed action – provided that the proposal does not conflict with the bylaws, with local, state or national law prescribing procedural rules applicable to the organization, or with a fundamental principle of parliamentary law.

Rules that cannot be suspended:

Remember that the constitution and bylaws of the organization are meant to be the rules that cannot be changed on the whim of the group attending one meeting. As a result, the constitution and bylaws cannot be suspended no matter how large the vote in favor of doing so or how inconvenient the rule in question may be. The only exception to that rule is if the constitution or bylaws include a rule allowing for their own suspension. Having such a rule would defeat the purpose of bylaws and constitution.

Fundamental principles of parliamentary law – in other words, rules that protect the rights of individual members, deal with voting rights, and so on cannot be suspended. For example, rules that protect absent

members are not suspendable. If a rule requires previous notice, the members in attendance at the meeting cannot suspend that rule and consider a motion without previous notice.

Rules that can be suspended:

Rules that relate to business procedures and to priority of business can be suspended. In addition, rules that are in your Standing Rules or policies and procedures can be suspended.

Rules for the motion to *Suspend the Rules*:

- Needs a second
- Is not debatable
- Is not amendable

Can be made while another motion is pending as long as it applies to that motion.

A vote is needed. If the rule is in the nature of a parliamentary rule of order, a two-thirds vote is required. If the rule is in the nature of guidelines relating to the way the organization carries out its business, a majority vote is required.

From: Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (11th edition) and The Complete Idiot's Guide to Robert's Rules by Nancy Sylvester (2nd edition)

SUGGESTED "ORDER OF BUSINESS"

Call to Order: The presiding officer, using one tap of the gavel, announces: "The meeting of the _____ will come to order."

Opening Ceremonies: (Optional) Usually an inspirational message is given, and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America follows. Be sure that Flag is displayed in the proper position, always to the right of the speakers.

Introductions: Officers, "those seated at the head table," and Guests may be introduced or presented at this time or later in the day.

Reading of the Minutes: The presiding officer: "The secretary will read the minutes of the meeting of _____;" or the "previous meeting." Following the reading of the minutes the presiding officer asks, "Are there any corrections?" "The minutes are approved as read." Or if corrected, "Are there further corrections? The Minutes are approved as corrected."

Treasurer's Report: The presiding officer: "May we have the report of the treasurer?" following the report, "Are there any questions? This report will be placed on file." (No action is taken on the treasurer's report. It is for information only.) The auditor's report is adopted by the assembly.

Correspondence: The presiding officer: "The secretary will read the correspondence." Correspondence requiring action may be handled at this time or under New Business.

Reports of Officers: The presiding officer: "The next order of business is the reports of the officers." Officers are called on to report usually in the order as listed in the Club Yearbook (or bylaws), with the exception of the treasurer who reports at the beginning of the meeting following the reading of the Minutes.

Report of the Board: (also known as recommendations) The presiding officer: "May we have the report of the Board (Executive Committee)?" This report, which is read by the Secretary, usually contains

recommendations. Recording secretary: “The Board (Executive Committee) recommends the adoption of the following motion: _____. By direction of the Board (Executive Committee), I move the adoption of this motion.” No second is necessary. The presiding officer: “The question is on the adoption of the motion to _____. Is there any discussion? All those in favor of the motion to _____ please say aye. All those opposed please say no.” Always announce the result, “The ayes have it, the motion is adopted and we will _____.” Or “The no’s have it, the motion is lost and we will not _____.”

Reports of Standing Committees: The Chairman of the Committee usually presents the (written) report. Committees are called on in the order in which they are listed in the bylaws. Reports containing no recommendations for action are placed on file.

Reports of Special Committees: The Chairman reports (with a written copy). They are called upon in the order of importance. Special committees are automatically discharged when the special duty assigned to them is finished and a final report given.

Unfinished Business: This is any business which was postponed or any business which was not completed at the last regular meeting. Minutes of the previous meeting will give this information.

New Business: The presiding officer: “New business is now in order.” Or, “Is there any new business to come before the assembly?” Any member may introduce new business. The presiding officer may also introduce new business.

Announcements: “The chair has the following announcements.” “Are there further announcements?”

Program: The presiding officer: “The program chairman, _____, will present the program.” The presiding officer remains in the chair until the meeting is adjourned.

Adjournment: A motion from the assembly is not needed to adjourn a meeting. The presiding officer: “If there is no further business we are adjourned.” Or “If there is no further business the meeting is adjourned.”

BYLAWS, STRUCTURE

Bylaws contain the rules the organization considers so important that they (a) cannot be changed without previous notice to the members, and (b) cannot be suspended, with the exception of clauses that provide for their own suspension under specified conditions.

Bylaws are usually divided into articles, and information within the articles is divided into sections. The generally accepted articles are:

- **Article I: Name.** The full name of the organization, properly punctuated, should be included here.
- **Article II: Object.** A concise statement of the objective of the organization.
- **Article III: Members.** The classes of members, qualifications of membership, method of becoming a member, and the duties, rights and obligations of members.
- **Article IV: Officers.** Officers’ titles, terms, nomination and election process, duties and method of filling vacancies.
- **Article V: Meetings.** Information on regular, annual, and special meetings as well as how meetings are called, the quorum for a meeting, and any information on changing the meeting in case of emergency.
- **Article VI: Executive Board.** The composition, powers, and rules of the board.

- **Article VII: Committees.** Names of standing committees as well as their composition, manner of selection, and duties. Also the composition and requirements for special committees.
- **Article VIII: Parliamentary Authority.** The Parliamentary manual the organization will use as the basis for the rules for conducting business and the rights of members.
- **Article IX: Amendments.** How the bylaws can be changed, who can change them, what kind of vote and notice is required.

Additional articles might include:

- ✓ Dues and fees
- ✓ Finance
- ✓ Nominations and elections
- ✓ Dissolution

Articles are usually organized using roman numerals. Sections are usually organized using numbers. Subsections are usually organized using letters of the alphabet.

See page 584 of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 11th edition for example of bylaws.

BYLAWS – MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

Bylaws are rules that, for the most part, cannot be suspended (unless the bylaws themselves provide for a method of suspending them, which is somewhat self-defeating). Your bylaws should include all the rules the group considers to be so important that they cannot be changed at the whim of the members present at a single meeting and cannot be suspended.

The rights and responsibilities of members should be included in the bylaws. This is a basic concept of bylaws. It helps to think of the bylaws as a contract between the members and the organization. If a responsibility is not spelled out in the bylaws, members cannot be held to that responsibility.

Bylaw amendments go into effect immediately upon adoption unless the motion to adopt specifies another time for them to go into effect. While the amendment is pending, a motion can be made to amend by adding a clause such as, "with the proviso that this amendment shall not go into effect until (specify when)". Something that may be overlooked is how to handle vacancies.

According to Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (11th edition), The power to appoint or elect persons to any office or board carries with it the power to accept their resignations, and also, the power to fill any vacancy occurring in it, unless the bylaws expressly provide otherwise.

In the case of a society whose bylaws confer upon its executive board full power and authority over the society's affairs between meetings of the assembly without reserving to the society itself the exclusive right to fill vacancies, the executive board is empowered to accept resignations and fill vacancies between meetings of the assembly.

Notice of filling a vacancy in an office (including a vacancy in an executive board or executive committee) must always be given to the members of the body that will elect the person to fill it, unless the bylaws or special rules of order clearly provide otherwise.

OFFICERS

It should be specified in the bylaws what officers the organization requires, how they will be elected or appointed, their term of office, and any qualifications for holding office or any duties different from or in addition to those stated in the parliamentary authority.

Presiding Officer – It is the duty of the presiding officer:

1. To open the meeting at the appointed time, having determined there is a quorum.
2. To announce in proper order the business that comes before the assembly, using an agenda.
3. To recognize members who are entitled to the floor.
4. To state and put to vote all questions that legitimately come before the assembly as motions or that otherwise arise in the course of proceedings (except questions that relate to the presiding officer) and to announce the result of each vote.
5. To protect the assembly from obviously dilatory motions by refusing to recognize them.
6. To enforce rules relating to debate and those related to decorum within the assembly.
7. To expedite business in every way compatible with the rights of members.
8. To decide all questions of order, subject to appeal – unless, when in doubt, the presiding officer prefers to submit such a question to the assembly for decision.
9. To respond to inquiries relating to parliamentary procedure or factual information of concern to the business of the assembly.
10. To authenticate by signature, when necessary, all acts, orders, and proceedings of the assembly.
11. To declare the meeting adjourned when the assembly so votes or –where applicable–at the time prescribed in the program, or at any time in the event of a sudden emergency affecting the safety of those present.

Presiding Officer should have at hand:

- a copy of the bylaws and other rules of the organization;
- a copy of the parliamentary authority;
- a list of standing and special committees and their members; and
- an agenda of the complete order of business listing all known matters that are to come up, in proper sequence under the correct headings.

Watch for articles covering responsibilities of other officers.

EX OFFICIO

One of the duties of the President that should be included in bylaws is to serve as an ex officio member of committees. Ex officio means a person is a member by the nature of the office held.

Robert's suggests that certain committees be excluded from this duty. One is the Nominating Committee and if the group has a disciplinary committee the president should also be excluded from serving on it. Possible wording, "The president shall be an ex officio member of all committees with the exception of the Nominating and Disciplinary Committees".

As an ex officio member of a committee, the president has the same rights as the other committee members, but is not obligated to attend meetings of the committee and is not counted in determining the number required for a quorum or whether a quorum is present. This means the president has a vote on the committee.

Without a provision in the bylaws, the president has no vote within committees, nor can that person attend the meetings unless invited by a particular committee.

When the vice president assumes the authority for the president only for a particular meeting, the authority is limited. For example, if the bylaws require the president appoint all committees, when the vice president presides over a meeting for the president and a committee needs to be appointed, the vice president cannot appoint the committee members. The vice president should only assume those duties prescribed in the bylaws, which usually means conducting the meeting. In addition, if the bylaws indicate that the president is an ex officio member of all committees, the vice president does not attend those meetings for the president.

P. Bolinder, Feb. 2020

OFFICERS

The Vice President: Second, Third, or Fourth in Command

If there is no president-elect and only one vice president, the position of vice president is straightforward – the vice president presides when the president is absent or must vacate the chair and fill a vacancy in the office of president. Once a president-elect or more than one vice president is added to the mix, things are a bit more complicated. For example, if the organization has a position of president-elect and the bylaws *do not* specify that the president-elect presides when the president is absent and fills a vacancy in the office of president, the vice president performs those tasks. If the bylaws *do* specify that the president-elect fulfills those duties, obviously the president-elect, *not* the vice president, does them.

From this point on, we will assume that there is no position of president-elect.

The main job of the vice president is to be familiar with the president's duties so that, if the president becomes unable to serve, the vice president is prepared to step in and take over. Many organizations assign other duties to the vice president such as oversight of specific committees. In Federation, for example, the 1st vice president is usually Dean of Chairmen and the 2nd vice president is Membership.

Sometimes there is more than one vice president. In that situation, the vice presidents should be numbered 1st vice president, 2nd vice president, 3rd vice president, and so on. When there are multiple vice presidents and the positions are not numbered, it creates uncertainty. When they are numbered and a vacancy in the office of president, the 1st vice president becomes president, the 2nd vice president becomes 1st vice president and so on.

One of the main duties of the vice president is to be prepared to take over for the president should it become necessary. Therefore, it is inappropriate to accept the position of vice president if you are not willing to become president in the case of a vacancy.

When the VP Fills In for the President

When presiding in the absence of the president, the vice president should refer to herself as the “chair” or the “presiding officer”, not as the “vice president” and certainly not as the “president.”

When the vice president assumes the authority of the president only for a particular meeting, her authority is limited. For example, if the bylaws require the president appoint all committees, when the vice president

presides over a meeting for the president and a committee needs to be appointed, the vice president cannot appoint committee members.

OFFICERS

The Secretary: More than Minutes

The secretary is the official record keeper of the organization. This goes far beyond keeping the minutes – it includes keeping an accurate list of members, the roll call list, the governing documents, delegate information, committee membership, and so much more. This position is usually an elected position.

Some organizations choose to split the secretary position into two positions: recording secretary and corresponding secretary. When that is done, the bylaws should specify the responsibilities of each position. It is most common for the recording secretary to take minutes and the corresponding secretary send out notices of meetings and handles the general correspondence of the group.

Responsibilities

- Keep a record of all proceedings, usually called the *minutes*, and distribute them following meetings.
- Keep on file committee reports.
- Keep the official membership roll (unless another officer has this duty); call the roll where required.
- Make minutes and records available to members upon request.
- Notify officers, delegates, and committee members of their election or appointment.
- To sign certified copies of acts of the organizations.
- Maintain record book(s) in which bylaws, special rules of order, standing rules and minutes are entered. Have the current record book on hand at meetings.
- Work with the president to prepare the agenda.
- In the absence of the president and vice president, to call the meeting to order and preside until the immediate elections of a chairman pro-tem.
- Have ballots in case of a ballot vote.
- Sit near the president and serve as a resource to the president.

Refer to your bylaws to determine if the secretary has other specific duties.

OFFICERS

Treasurer

The size and kind of organization have a bearing on the duties of the treasurer. As with other offices, these should be spelled out in the bylaws. The treasurer, and any other officers who handle funds, should be bonded for a sum sufficient to protect the organization from loss.

The treasurer receives incoming money and disburses it according to instructions from the organization. This officer cannot disburse funds except by authority of the group or as the bylaws prescribe.

In addition, the treasurer is usually involved in preparing the budget, making sure the books are audited, and filing appropriate tax forms. Once the members have adopted the budget, it is the treasurer's responsibility to make sure the organization spends within the established budget.

The treasurer needs to keep accurate records and report regularly to the membership. No matter the format, whether done by hand or on a spreadsheet, the report should include the following items:

- Balance on hand at the beginning of the report period
- Receipts (money that came in)

- Disbursements (money that went out)
- Balance on hand at the end of the reporting period
- Include any encumbered funds and the usable amount in the account

Monthly treasurer's reports are for informational purposes only and should not be approved, adopted or accepted by the organization. (If you are the presiding officer say, "Thank you. The report will be filed for audit.")

The treasurer must also give an annual report. It should include the balance at the beginning of the year, all receipts, all disbursements, and the balance at the end of the reporting year.

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Before you begin the nomination and election process, you should read your bylaws. If rules regulating your nominations and elections are in the bylaws, you *must* follow them. In addition, you should review standing or special rules. If it is in the rules and they do not conflict with the bylaws, you must follow those rules.

Methods of Nominating: by a committee, from the floor, by the chair, by ballot, by mail or email, by petition.

Nominations by committee and from the floor are the most commonly used methods. They are usually done in connection with each other. After the Nominating Committee gives its report, the presiding officer asks for nominations from the floor.

Elections: Check your bylaws to see if there are rules that apply to the election.

- **Ballot election** – if the bylaws indicate the election is to be by ballot, it must be by ballot. You can't waive having a ballot vote, even if there is only one candidate for an office unless the bylaws allow it.
- **Majority vote** – Unless the bylaws indicate otherwise, it takes a majority vote to elect. Sometimes bylaws specify a plurality vote. In that case, the candidate with the highest number of votes is said to have a plurality.
- **No mail ballot with a rule.** You can conduct an election by mail ballot only if the bylaws authorize it.

An officer-elect takes possession of the office immediately upon the election becoming final unless the bylaws specify a later time. If a formal installation ceremony is prescribed, failure to hold it does not affect the time at which the new officers assume office.

Tellers:

During an election, tellers distribute, collect and count the ballots and then report the count. When counting ballots, follow these rules:

1. Blank ballots don't count; they can be thrown away.
2. Illegal ballots by legal voters are listed as illegal votes. They count in determining the number of votes cast. An example of an illegal vote is a vote for someone who is ineligible.
3. In determining whether or not a ballot should be counted, use common sense. If it is clear for whom the person intended to vote, but misspelled the name, the ballot counts.
4. When the ballot contains places for electing multiple offices, blank spaces do not affect the rest of the ballot.

The chairman of the tellers reads the teller's report, but the presiding officer declares who is elected for each office.

ENDORSEMENTS FOR OFFICE

According to many District Bylaws members who wish to be nominated for office need to receive an endorsement from a club. Running for a CFWC office also requires an endorsement from their Club and District Executive Board.

What is an endorsement? According to Webster, endorse means to express support or approval publicly. A side definition is to guarantee meeting a certain standard.

A person wishing to consider asking for an endorsement should:

- Be honest about skills and abilities required for the office.
- Know the time commitment and decide if you can make that commitment
- Consider if you know the organization well enough to be comfortable serving (or would a little more time learning be beneficial?)

A club or district asked to endorse a person for an office should:

- Take into consideration the qualifications for the particular office
- Look at the person's qualifications for the position
- Be honest about whether the person has fulfilled duties of the positions held previously. Ask yourself, "Would the club, district or CFWC be in a better position if this person is elected to the position she seeks?" If the answer is "No", perhaps voting no on the endorsement is in order.
- In general, we should not endorse a person just because she is a friend or has held several chairmanships or offices. We need people who have the skills and will to do their best in each position.

TIE VOTE

A presiding officer who is a member of the assembly can vote as any other member when the vote is by ballot. In all other cases the presiding officer, if a member of the assembly, can (but is not obliged to) vote whenever his vote will affect the results – that is, he can vote either to break a tie or to cause a tie; or, in a case where a two-thirds vote is required, he can vote either to cause or to block the attainment of the necessary two-thirds vote. In particular:

- On a tie vote, a motion requiring a majority vote for adoption is lost, since a tie is not a majority. Thus, if there is a tie without the chair's vote, the presiding officer can, if he is a member, vote in the affirmative, thereby causing the motion to be adopted; or, if there is more in the affirmative than in the negative without the chair's vote (for example, if there are 72 votes in favor and 71 votes opposed), he can vote in the negative to create a tie, thus causing the motion to be rejected.
- Similarly, in the case of a motion requiring a two-thirds vote, if, without the chair's vote, the number in the affirmative is one less than twice the number in the negative (for example, if there are 60 in the affirmative and 30 in the negative), the chair, if a member, can vote in the affirmative and thus cause the motion to be adopted; or, if there are exactly two-thirds in the affirmative without his vote (for example, if there are 60 in the affirmative and 30 in the negative), the chair can vote in the negative, with the result that the motion is rejected. Robert's Rules 11th Edition (page 405)

Priscilla Bolinder, CFWC Parliamentarian

THE LAW'S THE LAW

1. The Hierarchy of Governing Documents:
 - Federal Laws
 - IRS classifications
 - Tax-exempt, Health and welfare: 501(c)-3
2. State Statutes:
 - You can find state statutes that govern organizations on the Internet.
 - Always check to make sure that all are up-to-date.
3. Articles of Incorporation
 - Your organization is required to follow the statutes of the state in which the organization is incorporated.
4. Governing documents of the parent organization
 - Our parent organization has one document called “Constitution and Bylaws”
5. Bylaws
6. Special rules of order
7. Parliamentary authority (most use Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised)
8. Standing Rules
9. Policies and procedures

The least you need to know:

1. Ignorance is not bliss and not an excuse. Know the rules before you act.
2. An organization’s Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws cannot violate federal and state statutes governing the organization.
3. Bylaws should include all of the rules that the group considers to be so important that they cannot be changed at the whim of the members present at a single meeting and cannot be suspended.
4. Amendments to bylaws usually require previous notice and two-thirds vote to pass.

From: “The Complete Idiot’s Guide to Robert’s Rules” by Nancy Sylvester

ELECTRONIC MEETINGS

Any kind of meeting that is not an in-person meeting must be authorized in the bylaws. If, your bylaws don’t authorize e-meetings and your organization wants to add a clause addressing them, here is some wording that might work for you. These are examples from existing bylaws. Notice each example authorizes particular groups to have specific kinds of electronic meetings.

- “The Board of Directors, Executive Committee, standing committees and special committees are authorized to meet by telephone conference or through other electronic communications media so long as all members may simultaneously hear each other and participate in the meeting.”
- “The Board of Directors, Executive Committee, standing committees, and subcommittees of the Board of Directors are authorized to meet by electronic communication media so long as all members may participate.”

Some E-Meeting Venues: *Synchronous meetings:*

- **Telephoning Conference.** Each participant is on the phone at their own location. Members can hear each other but cannot see each other.

- **Videoconference.** This format gives the participants the advantage of being able to see and hear each other.
- **Chat rooms.** Some groups use chat rooms and/or instant messaging to conduct meetings. Members need to be in the chat room or instant messaging at the same time. They must have rules for how members are recognized.

Asynchronous meetings include:

- **Email.** All members are listed in the “to” part of the e-mail. When replying, you should reply to all so that participants receive the same information.
- **Email lists.** These are sometimes referred to as email groups. All participants are on the list and therefore get all the emails. You send an email to the list and it is automatically sent to all participants in the group.

Rules to Consider for E Meetings:

- Members shall state their name upon joining the meeting. Upon establishing a quorum, the chair will announce the names of all members in attendance.
- The meeting must be arranged at least 48 hours in advance.
- Each member should seek recognition from the chair before beginning to speak. (Identify the method acceptable to seek recognition.)
- Before a member can speak a second time on a motion, the chair shall ask if all who wish to speak a first time have had the opportunity to do so.
- Each member should identify herself prior to speaking.
- Motions will be voted on by voice vote. If the chair has a problem determining the vote, she may call for a roll call vote. The roll call vote is for determining the outcome of the vote and not be recorded in the minutes.
- The minutes are approved at the next in-person meeting.

Have a Trial Run:

Before your group amends its bylaw to include electronic meetings, you are encouraged to create an email list and use it for discussion purposes only. Then after you see how well it works, you can write the rules so your meetings can be decision making meetings instead of discussion only meetings.

An organization needs no special rules to discuss issues on an email list – it’s similar to discussing issues casually before or after meetings. However, until you have rules in place, you cannot make decisions on the list.

From The Complete Idiot’s Guide to Robert’s Rules by Nancy Sylvestry

Tie Vote – Robert’s Rules 11th Edition (page 405)

A presiding officer who is a member of the assembly can vote as any other member when the vote is by ballot. In all other cases the presiding officer, if a member of the assembly, can (but is not obliged to) vote whenever his vote will affect the results – that is, he can vote either to break a tie or to cause a tie; or, in a case where a two-thirds vote is required, he can vote either to cause or to block the attainment of the necessary two-thirds vote.

In particular:

- On a tie vote, a motion requiring a majority vote for adoption is lost, since a tie is not a majority. Thus, if there is a tie without the chair’s vote, the presiding officer can, if he is a member, vote in the

affirmative, thereby causing the motion to be adopted; or, if there is more in the affirmative than in the negative without the chair's vote (for example, if there are 72 votes in favor and 71 votes opposed), he can vote in the negative to create a tie, thus causing the motion to be rejected.

- Similarly, in the case of a motion requiring a two-thirds vote, if, without the chair's vote, the number in the affirmative is one less than twice the number in the negative (for example, if there are 60 in the affirmative and 30 in the negative), the chair, if a member, can vote in the affirmative and thus cause the motion to be adopted; or, if there are exactly two-thirds in the affirmative without his vote (for example, if there are 60 in the affirmative and 30 in the negative), the chair can vote in the negative, with the result that the motion is rejected.

Priscilla Bolinder, CFWC Parliamentarian

SOME LESSONS FROM THE VIRUS PANDEMIC

None of us could have imagined the challenges Covid 19 would give us. Hopefully we will never have to face anything like it again. However, clubs and districts can try to prepare for a similar situation.

GFWC Parliamentarian, Deen J. Meloro suggests that bylaws be amended by adding a new article to the bylaws just before "Dissolution". It could be titled "Emergencies" or whatever you feel is best. Suggested wording: "In the case of a national emergency, state emergency, or any type of event (man-made or natural) that could potentially put members in danger, the President, with the consent of the Board of Directors (or Executive Committee), may order elections be held by mail. See suggestions below for state, district or clubs.

State: A ballot will be sent to each voting member eligible to vote at State Convention. The voted ballots will be returned by US Postal Service mail by the designated deadline. Each club will be entitled to as many votes as the number of delegates it is allotted when a convention is held.

Districts: Similar wording, but make it fit your district.

Clubs: Each member will be sent a ballot. The voted ballots will be returned by US Postal Service mail by the designated deadline.

Since this proposal says that a ballot will be sent to each club (or member), that would allow emailing the ballot if the bylaws allow communication electronically. Otherwise, the ballot must be sent by USPS mail.

Unfortunately, this year the outgoing and incoming officers will not receive the recognition they deserve due to cancellation of conventions. If bylaws are changed soon, in future tears there will be a "Plan B" in place if a convention or meeting cannot be held. Please remember that those elected take office at the time designated in your bylaws. If the bylaws do not state a time, then they take office as soon as they are elected.

Personal Note: Thanks for the privilege of serving as CFWC Parliamentarian for the 2018-2020 administration. I've met members, some by phone and email, I otherwise would not have come in contact with. By answering questions, I have reviewed and learned more from Robert's Rules as the two years have gone by.

Stay healthy, Priscilla



Parliamentary Procedure

- ◆ Definition
 - Correct rules for conducting a successful meeting.
- ◆ Four goals of Parliamentary Procedure
 - Extend courtesy to everyone.
 - Focus on one thing at a time.
 - Observes the rule of the majority.
 - Ensures the rights of the minority.