

A Short Course On Parliamentary Procedure

American Postal Workers Union Seven State Conference

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THE SEVEN BASIC PRINCIPLES OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

1. ONLY ONE MOTION MAY BE CONSIDERED AT A TIME.

Certain motions may interrupt motions on the floor, and they, in turn, may be interrupted by other motions, but the last interruption made shall be considered and disposed of before any action is taken on the previous motion-interruption or the original main motion.

2. THE ASSEMBLY SHALL ENJOY FULL AND FREE BUT NOT EXCESSIVE DEBATE.

Each speaker who wishes to speak on any question, should normally be allotted 10 minutes per "turn" but the assembly reserves the right to cease debate by a 2/3 majority upon the moving of the previous question.

3. ALL MEMBERSHIP HAS EQUAL RIGHTS WITHIN THE RANK.

All regular members have the same rights and privileges as other regular members; all associate members have the same rights and privileges as other associate members, etc.

4. THE WILL OF THE MAJORITY SHALL GOVERN AND THE RIGHTS OF THE MINORITY SHALL BE PROTECTED.

Democracy has decreed that the opinion of a larger portion of the society shall be preferred to the opinion of a smaller portion of the same society. However, it has also stated that said smaller portion of the society shall be granted every opportunity to express its opinion.

5. THE INDIVIDUAL IS MERGED WITH THE SOCIETY.

One of the sorriest spectacles that one can imagine is a person who is a member of an organization, and refuses to accept the decisions of that organization. No matter what opinion an individual may personally hold, once a question has been decided

by the organization you are morally charged to uphold that decision or get out of that organization. This is not to deny the fact that you may choose to fight this decision within the organization by means of the normal parliamentary procedure, but outside of the business meeting the organization should give every appearance of acting as one individual.

6. ALL AUTHORITY FOR ANY OFFICE OR ACTION LIES WITH THE ASSEMBLY.

The highest court of appeal that a member has within an organization is a 2/3 vote of the assembly. No chairman or any other official, regardless of his office is "boss." The assembly is "boss" and shall grant or take away what authority it deems necessary.

7. NO OFFICE POSITION OR DUTY SHALL INTERFERE, IMPINGE OR ABRIDGE THE RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES GRANTED TO ANY INDIVIDUAL BY HIS ORDINARY MEMBERSHIP.

Every member of a society is first and foremost a member, secondly he may or may not be an officer of this society. Everyone may vote, discuss and make motions. Tradition has dictated certain processes, such as the chairman discussing a motion while sitting in his office as chairman, to be in bad taste. However, he still basically has this right because he is first an ordinary member, secondly a chairman.

CONDUCTING BUSINESS

The following are some of the simple but necessary principles to be observed in conducting business in an orderly and efficient manner.

I. Obtaining the Floor

- A. A member desiring to speak on any matter before the assembly should observe the following procedure:

1. He should rise in his place and address the presiding officer by his title such as "Mr. Chairman", "Mr. President", "Madame Chairman", etc.
 2. After addressing the chair he or she should then wait to be recognized by the chair before continuing to speak.
 3. The chair recognizes the member by name or by title if he or she is an officer.
 4. When the member has been recognized by the chair, he or she has the floor and may discuss any motion which has been made, seconded and put before the house, or make a motion if there is no pending business before the house.
- B. In case two or more members address the chair simultaneously, the chair must use his judgment as to which should be permitted to speak. He should keep in mind such questions as the following:
1. Has either previously spoken on the question before the house? If so, the floor should be given to the One who has not already spoken.
 2. Is there any special reason why one or the other should be given preference?
 3. Ordinary consideration, tact, and courtesy on the part of the chairman should always prevail.

II. Making a Motion

- A. If a member desires to have a matter discussed by the assembly, he should always present it in the form of a resolution or motion.
1. If the subject is complicated, it is best to bring it up in the form of a written resolution, a copy of which should

be handed to the secretary. Usually, a resolution is unnecessary and a simple motion is enough.

2. Simple motions are not presented in written form. In making such a motion the speaker should say: "I move that such and such an action be taken" Or "I desire to offer a motion to the effect that such and such a thing be done. The expressions, "I move you " and "I make a motion are incorrect.

III. Stating a Motion

- A. Stating a motion is the action of the chairman in getting a motion before the assembly. The following procedure is the correct form:
 1. When a motion has been presented by a member, the chair should ask "Is there a second?"
 2. A second may be offered by any member without rising and addressing the chair.
 3. When the motion has been seconded, the chair should say: "It has been moved and seconded that such and such action be taken. Are there any remarks?" This opens the whole matter for discussion.

IV. Discussing a motion

- A. No subject should be discussed by the assembly until it has been seconded, stated by the chair, and debate called for. In discussing a motion, no member should be allowed to speak twice if anyone who has not had an opportunity to speak is asking for the privilege of the floor. Common sense, fairness, and courtesy should guide the conduct of the presiding officer.

V. Methods of Voting

A. There are four principle methods of ascertaining the will of an assembly on a motion that may be before the house.

1. The most common way of voting is called viva-voice. In this case, the chairman, after everyone who desires to speak has done so, says: "Are you ready for the question? If so, all those in favor (stating the motion) will please say 'aye'. All those opposed will please say 'no'. The motion is carried." (or "The motion is lost" depending on the judgment of the chair as to how the vote has gone.)
2. A rising vote means that the chair asks those in favor of the motion to rise. The vote is counted and then those opposed rise, and they are counted. A show of hands is the same type of vote.
3. On very important matters on which it is desirable to allow each member to express his own opinion without being influenced by the voting of anyone else, the vote is may be by written ballot.
4. The roll-call vote is used very rarely. In this type of balloting, the secretary calls the roll and each member states his vote.

MOTIONS

I.. The Proper Form of Stating Motions

A. Main motions (Main motions start the consideration of any subject.)

1. Original main motions (start the consideration of a subject for the first time.)
 - a. The proper form for a simple main motion is "I move that... ."

b. The proper form for a resolution is "I move that the following resolution be adopted" The resolution is then read and a copy submitted to the secretary.

2. Incidental main motions (Reopen consideration of a subject.)

a. Reconsider -proper form: "I move that we reconsider"

b. Reconsider and enter in the minutes proper form: "I move to reconsider and enter in the minutes the motion to"

c. Rescind- proper form: "I move to rescind the motion to"

d. Rescind and expunge from the minutes- proper form: "I move to rescind and expunge the motion to . . . from the minutes."

e. To take from the table- proper form" "I move that the motion to . . . be taken from the table.

f. To adopt or accept a report- proper form: "I move to adopt the report of"

3. Special main motions:

a. To adjourn (main motion only when qualified or when its effect is to dissolve the assembly). Proper form: "I move that we adjourn."

b. To fix time at which to adjourn-proper form: "I move that we adjourn at ____ o'clock."

c. To fix the time to which to adjourn -proper form: "I move that we adjourn to ____." (name the time.)

B. Secondary or subsidiary motions (depend on main motions.)

1. Lay on the table-proper form: "I move to table the motion that . . ." or "I move that the motion be laid on the table."
2. Previous question (close debate)- proper form: "I move (or call for) the previous question."
3. Postpone to a certain time- proper form: "I move that the question be postponed to . . ." (state the time)
4. Limit or extend debate -proper form: "I move that debate on this question be limited to . . ." (state the time) or "I move that debate on this question be extended to . . ." (state the time)
5. Refer to a committee - proper form: "I move that the motion to . . . be referred to a committee." or: "I move that the chairman appoint a committee to consider the motion to . . ."
6. Amend - proper form: "I move to amend the motion by . . ."
7. Postpone indefinitely- proper form: "I move that the motion to . . . be postponed indefinitely."

C. Incidental motions (These motions arise incidentally in conducting business.)

1. Point of order - proper form: "I rise to a point of order."
2. Objection to consideration- proper form: "I object to consideration of this question."
3. Suspension of rules - proper form: "I move to suspend the rule which . . ."

4. Appeal from the decision of the chair - proper form: "I appeal from the decision of the chair."
 5. Consider by paragraph - proper form: "I move that we consider this resolution by paragraph."
 6. Division of the assembly (or House) - proper form: "I call for a division of the house."
 7. Division of the question - proper form: "I call for a division of the question."
 8. Parliamentary inquiry - proper form: "I rise to a point of parliamentary inquiry."
 9. Leave to withdraw a motion - proper form: "I ask leave to withdraw my motion."
 10. To be excused from a duty - proper form: "I ask leave to be excused from . . ." (name the duty)
- D. Privileged motions (Those motions concern matters of special importance to the organization or the welfare of its members.)
1. To fix the time of the next meeting - proper form: "I move that we adjourn, to such and such a time."
 2. To adjourn (when privileged) - proper form: "I move that we adjourn."
 3. To take a recess - proper form: "I move that we take a recess."
 4. To rise to a question of privilege - proper form: "I rise to a point of privilege."
 5. To call for the orders of the day - proper form: "I call for the orders of the day."

II. Purpose of Motions

A. To prevent action on a subject, you may:

1. Call for the orders of the day.
2. Object to consideration.
3. Move to lay on the table.
4. Move to postpone indefinitely.
5. Move to adjourn.

B. To delay action you may move:

1. To postpone to a certain time.
2. To lay on the table.
3. To amend.
4. To refer to a committee.
5. To adjourn.

C. To stop discussion and bring to an immediate vote, you may move:

1. The previous question.

D. To modify or alter a motion, you may move:

1. To commit, refer, or re-commit.

E. To change an action already taken, you may move:

1. To reconsider.
2. To reconsider and enter on the minutes.

3. To rescind or repeal.
 4. To rescind and expunge from the minutes.
- F. To secure rights and comforts of members or prevent breaking of rules, you rise:
1. To a question of privilege.
 2. To a point of order.
- G. To reverse rulings of the chair, you may:
1. Appeal from the decision of the chair.
- H. To substantiate a vote (unless taken by ballot), you may:
1. Call for a division of the house.
- I. To extend limits of debate or otherwise change the rules of the society, you may:
1. Move to suspend the rule which . . .
- J. To question a speaker in debate or secure information about any business before the assembly, you may:
1. Rise to a request for information.
 2. Ask the chair if the speaker will yield to a question.

III. Order of Precedence of Motions.

- A. Privileged motions:
1. To fix the time to which to adjourn,
 2. To adjourn (unqualified),

3. To take a recess,
4. To rise to a question of privilege,
5. To call for the orders of the day.

B. Incidental Motions

6. To suspend the rules,
7. To withdraw a motion,
8. To read papers,
9. To object to consideration,
10. To rise to a point of order,
11. To rise to a point of parliamentary inquiry,
12. To appeal from the decision of the chair,
13. To call for a division of the house,
14. To call for a division of the question.

C. Subsidiary (or secondary) motions:

15. To lay on, or take from, the table,
16. To call for the previous question,
17. To limit, or extend limits, of debate,
18. To postpone to a certain time (or indefinitely),
19. To refer to a committee,
20. To amend,

21. To postpone indefinitely.

D. Main questions

22. Original main motions,

23. Other main motions (The following motions have no particular precedence over each other.)

a. Reconsider,

b. Reconsider and have it entered on the minutes,

c. Rescind,

d. Rescind and expunge

e. To take from the table,

f. To adjourn (when qualified)

g. To fix time at which to adjourn.

Study Questions

1. When a member wishes to introduce a new item of business, that is, to make a main motion, what is the first thing to do?
2. May a speaker be interrupted by a member wishing to make a main motion?
3. Who has the right to speak to the question first?
4. How many times is the same motion restated while it is being processed?
5. Can the chair, on his own accord, close debate?
6. What does "Are you ready for the questions?" mean?

7. What does "put the question," mean?
8. What does the chair say if the motion is agreed to?
9. What does the chair say if the motion is not adopted?

10. Practice making main motions. .

Rearrange in proper sequence by placing the letters in front of each statement in the numbered spaces.

- | | |
|---|---------|
| A Chair states the motion | 1. ____ |
| B. Motion is seconded | 2. ____ |
| C. Member makes a motion | 3. ____ |
| D. Chair announces result of vote | 4. ____ |
| E. Motion is discussed (debated) | 5. ____ |
| F. Member rises and addresses the chair | 6. ____ |
| G. Chair takes vote | 7. ____ |
| H. Member is recognized by chair | 8. ____ |

Fill in the blanks to complete the statements.

1. To introduce new business a member makes a _____
2. The maker of the motion must first be recognized by the _____
3. Another person agrees to have the motion discussed by _____ it.
4. Before the motion is put to a vote the chair must ask if there is any _____

5. The result of the vote is declared by _____

Study Questions

1. Write a simple main motion.
2. Write a resolution with at least two preamble clauses.
3. Act as the presiding officer and have a member read his resolution. Process it.
4. Who may make a motion?
5. Name the eight steps to take in processing a motion.
6. How many main motions may be on the floor at one time?
7. What vote is needed to adopt a main motion?
8. When debating a resolution, which part is discussed first?
9. Are the preamble clauses voted on separately?

Study Questions

- 1 What is an amendment?
- 2 What are the three most used methods of amending a motion?
- 3
- 4 What is an amendment to the main motion called?
- 5 What is an amendment to the amendment of the main motion called?
- 6 Give an example of a secondary amendment to the proposed primary amendment.
- 7 Give an example of a secondary amendment to the proposed primary amendment.
- 8 What does germane to the amendment mean?

- 9 How many primary or secondary amendments may be on the floor at the same time?
- 10 Which amendment is voted on first?
- 11 If the primary amendment is adopted is the original main motion automatically adopted?
- 12 Have a practice session amending motions using illustrations of the three methods.

THE RULES OF DEBATE

The term debate refers to the discussion of the merits of a pending question. Debatability is a characteristic of all main motions and certain other motions depending upon the parliamentary function they serve.

The right to debate a pending question is perhaps the most important right held by the union member. It is through debate that the rank and file union member exercises the right to persuade others to his or her point of view. In actual practice the amount of debate on a motion will depend upon such factors as its importance, how strongly it is contested, etc. Every member of the local, however, has the right to speak to every debatable motion before it is finally acted upon. This right is subject only to general limitations on debate established by parliamentary procedure or the rules of the body and cannot be interfered with except by a two-thirds vote.

SUMMARY OF PROCEDURES INCIDENT TO DEBATE

No issue may be debated until it has been brought before the group in the form of a motion proposing a specific action. As discussed elsewhere, the motion must be made by a member, in good standing, who has obtained the floor while no motion is pending, or while the motion (if not a main motion) is in order, after which it must be supported by another member and must be stated by the chair. After stating the motion the chair then should ask, "Are you ready for the question?" The floor is then open for debate with the maker of the motion having first option to speak if he or she desires

After debate has begun, amendments or other secondary motions may be made and disposed of in accordance with the established rules for such motions.

When debate appears to have ended, the chair again ask, "Are you ready for the question?" and pauses for a reasonable amount of time. If no member rises to claim the floor, the chair assumes no one else wishes to speak and proceeds to put the question.

LENGTH AND NUMBER OF SPEECHES

Maximum Time For Each speech. If the local or international union has no special rules relating to the length of speeches, a member who has obtained the floor while a debatable motion is pending may speak no longer than ten minutes without consent of the assembly. Permission to speak longer may be given by unanimous consent, or by a motion to extend the limits of debate, which is non-debatable and requires a two-thirds vote.

Rights of debate are not transferable. A member may not yield any un-expired portion of his time to another member, or reserve any portion of his time for later unless the organization has a special rule on the subject.

When a member's time is exhausted, the chair or a designated timekeeper calls his attention to the fact by an appropriate signal. If the speaker does not conclude his remarks, the chair may interrupt him if necessary. The chair, or any other member, may ask unanimous consent to

extend the member's time for a short period, if it appears that a minute more will afford sufficient time for the member to conclude his remarks.

Number of Speeches on the Same Question Per Member Per Day. In the absence of a special rule providing otherwise, no member may speak more than twice to the same question on the same day. A member, however, may not make a second speech on same question the same day until every member who desires to speak on it has had an opportunity to do so.

Under this rule, each debatable motion is a separate question with regard to member's rights to debate it. Therefore, if a series of debatable motions is pending and a member has spoken twice while the main motion is pending, he has exhausted his right to debate the main motion; but he can still speak twice on a motion to postpone the main motion indefinitely, and twice on each amendment that may be made and so on.

MODIFICATION OF GENERAL LIMITS OF DEBATE

It is possible for an organization to change the general rules limiting the length and number of speeches in debate, which are stated above, to meet its needs.

Adopt a special rule. The general rule allowing each member two speeches of ten minutes' length on each debatable motion may be made more restrictive or more liberal for all meetings of a group by adopting a special rule of order by a two-thirds vote after notice has been given of intent to pass such a rule. It is common for local unions to impose more restrictive rules limiting speakers to not more than one speech of five minutes.

Changing The Limits For A Session. When a group wishes to change the limits of debate for a particular session it may do so by means of a main motion adopted by a two-thirds vote without notice. At a convention such a modification is usually adopted in the form of a standing rule of the convention which also requires a two-thirds vote.

Changing The Limits For the Pending Motion Only. When a debatable motion is pending, the length and number of speeches may be reduced or increased, for that motion only, by means of the motion to limit or extend limits of debate adopted by a two-thirds vote. This motion may also be used to close debate at a specified time in the future. By adopting the motion for the previous question two-thirds of those voting may close debate immediately.

DECORUM IN DEBATE

The following practices and customs observed by speakers and other members in attendance at meetings will assist the carrying out of debate in a smooth and orderly manner.

1. Confine remarks to the merits of the pending motion
2. Refrain from attacking a member's motives
3. Address all remarks through the chair
4. Avoid the use of members' names
5. Refrain from speaking adversely on a prior action which is not pending
6. Refrain from speaking against one's own motion
7. Read from reports, quotations, etc. only without objection or with permission
8. Be seated during an interruption by the chair
9. Refrain from disturbing the meeting

RULES AGAINST CHAIR'S PARTICIPATING IN DEBATE

If the chairperson is a member of the organization, as an individual, he or she has the same rights in debate as any other member. The chair, however, is usually precluded from exercising his or her right to debate by the impartiality which is required of that position. Under normal circumstances the chair should have nothing to say on the merits of pending motions. On those rare occasions when the presiding officer believes that a crucial factor relating to a motion has been overlooked and that his obligation as a member to call attention to the point outweighs his duty to preside, at that time he may exercise the right to debate. To participate in debate the chairperson must relinquish the chair to the highest ranking officer who has not spoken on the question and does not decline on the grounds of wishing to speak on it. The presiding officer who relinquished the chair should not return to it until the pending motion has been disposed of, because he or she has shown his or herself to be partisan on that particular matter. The chairperson who often takes part in debate may destroy members' confidence in the impartiality of his approach to the task of presiding.

Study Questions

1. Give an example of parliamentary inquiry.
2. Who usually answers the parliamentary inquiry? Does it need to be put to a vote?
3. Give an example of a point of information.
4. To whom are all questions in a business meeting directed?
5. What vote is necessary to limit or close debate? How is it taken?
6. What vote is necessary to limit or close debate? How is it taken?
7. Give three examples of ways to limit debate by motions.
8. Can debate be limited in committee meetings?
9. What motion orders debate to stop and to vote on the question?

10. Give an example of a motion that may be made to avoid voting on the Previous Question.

METHODS OF VOTING

RONE 103, 240,
339—360, 369-371

- 1 Voice (viva voice) – used most of the time.
- 2 Rising (used most when a 2/3 vote is required.
- 3 Show of hands.
- 4 General Consent
- 5 Ballot (used only when prescribed in the bylaws or when ordered by the assembly).
- 6 Roll Call.
- 7 Main (only if provided in bylaws.
- 8 Proxy.
- 9 Machine..

Voice Vote

The presiding officer should be certain that everyone understands what the issue to be decided is. The motion should be restated before the vote is taken.

The affirmative vote is called for first by saying, "All in favor say 'Aye'", then the negative is called for. "Those opposed say 'No'," the chair announces the results based on what he heard.

If the chair is in doubt, a second vote on the same question may be taken by rising or show of hands. The chair may order the votes to be counted or another member may move that the vote be counted.

Show of Hands

A show of hands vote is used in small assemblies to verify a voice vote. It may also be used to determine either a majority or a 2/3 vote.

A show of hands is not as effective as a rising vote and a member has the right to object to it and asking for a rising vote by calling out "Division". The request for a rising vote must be made immediately after the chair announces the result of the vote by voice or show of hands

Rising

A rising vote is used to verify a voice vote because it is more accurate than a vote by show of hands. It is normally used to determine a 2/3 vote. When the result appears too close to call, the chair may count the votes in a small group or have it counted by the secretary or by appointed tellers.

Division of the Assembly

A call of "division" by even a single member requires that the voice, or show of hands vote be retaken by rising. This call must be made by any member immediately after the negative votes are called for or when the chair announces the result. It is too late to call for a division, after a new motion has been stated by the chair. (RONR P 238)

Counted Vote

The chair may order the votes to be counted or a member may move to do so. This motion must be seconded, may be amended but is not debatable and requires a majority vote. The method of counting off must be clearly explained before the counting begins. The size of the group will determine who will do the counting. In a very large group enough tellers must be provided.

General Consent

General consent is a voting procedure by which action is taken without the formality of a vote and often without a formal motion. The chair may assume the motion, by, "If there is no objection we shall give the custodian an additional \$10.00. If any member call out, "I object," the question is presented for vote by voice, rising or whatever method is ordered. The results of this vote will determine whether or not the custodian will receive the \$10.00.

General Consent is useful to expedite business. It is most often used to approve minutes, to assign matters to specific committees and to adjourn the meeting when there is no further business.

Ballot

Secret voting is used mostly for election of officers and deciding important questions. If bylaws do not mandate ballot voting, a motion, if adopted, may order it.

Uniform pieces of paper or printed ballots are given to each eligible voter. Directions for marking them must be explicit and complete. The ballots are distributed, collected and counted by pre-appointed tellers.

The polls or the process of voting may be closed by the chair or by a motion from the floor. This motion needs a second, cannot be debated, but may be amended as to time and requires a 2/3 vote. The tellers report the count by giving a complete teller's report.

Voting by machine is a form of ballot voting.

Roll Call

The purpose of a roll call vote is to place on record in the minutes how each member voted on a particular issue. Instead of a roll call vote a member may move to have a signed ballot vote, the result of which will be recorded.

Absentee

Provision for this method of voting must be in the bylaws of the organization.

- 1 Voting by mail is useful in large societies with widely scattered membership. All voting members must receive information to be voted on with instructions and dates.
- 2 Proxy—proxy voting is allowing another to vote in a member's stead. It is not recommended for deliberative groups since it tends to place power of making decisions in the hands of a small group

Preferential Voting

This type of voting is permitted only if the bylaws provide for it. It is not popularly used because the counting of the ballots takes some skill. It is useful when there are three or more possible choices and there is not enough time for re-balloting if no one received a majority vote on the first ballot. (detailed procedure is found in RONR 357—360).

Study Questions

- 1 Name nine methods of voting.
- 2 Which is the most often used method of voting in deliberative societies?
- 3 What does the chair say in calling for the vote?
- 4 What are the Latin words for voice vote?
- 5 When are rising or show of hands votes counted?
- 6 May officers be elected by a voice vote?
- 7 What does "Division" mean when called out by a member following the taking of a vote?
- 8 When must a division be called for?
- 9 By which method of voting is a 2/3 vote generally taken?
- 10 Explain general consent.

- 11 What method of voting protects members' rights to privacy and secrecy?
- 12 Can a vote be taken by ballot on any question?
- 13 What is a teller? Who usually appoints the tellers?
- 14 What type of person is chosen to serve as teller?
- 15 What is the usual procedure when using paper ballots for voting?
- 16 Who closed the polls and when?
- 17 Of what value is a roll call vote?
- 18 When is voting by mail advisable?
- 19 Is proxy voting recommended in deliberative assemblies?
- 20 What is the voting procedure called where the voter votes for all possible choices in the order of his preference?

DETERMINING THE RESULT OF A VOTE RONR, 340

Voting is a means by which to express the preference of the voters. Results are determined by:

1. Majority Vote (Method used most often in meetings)

A majority vote is more than half of the votes, written or oral, cast by legally entitled voters at a properly called meeting with a quorum present. Blanks and abstentions are not counted as part of the vote.

Examples:

- 9 is a majority of 16 votes cast

- 9 is a majority of 17 votes cast
- 10 is a majority of 18 votes cast
- 10 is a majority of 19 votes

2. Two thirds Vote used to:

- a. Suspend or change a rule of order previously adopted;
- b. Object to consideration of a question;
- c. Close, limit or extend limits of debate;
- d. Close polls or nominations;
- e. Take away membership or office.

There should be at least twice as many votes on the winning (prevailing) side as on the losing side. An easy method of counting is to double the number of negative votes, if that total is less than all the affirmative voters the negative side lost. If double the negative votes is more than all the affirmative votes, then the affirmative side lost.

3. Plurality Vote

A plurality vote is the largest number of votes received by any candidate or proposition. When the highest number of votes is less than a majority the bylaws must state that the decision is by plurality vote.

3. Unanimous Vote

When there are no dissenting votes, sometimes called “general consent” or vote without objection, it is called a unanimous vote.

4. When the Chair May Vote (If the presiding officer is a qualified voting member, while in the chair he should exercise this right with discretion. He may vote:

- When voting is by ballot;
- By voice, show of hands or rising only if chair’s vote makes or breaks a tie. In such case the chair may vote but is not obligated to do so.

5. Announcing the Result of the vote by the chair

- Reports which side “has it” or whether there is 2/3 in the affirmative. If votes were counted, the total count is announced first.
- Declares the motion is adopted or lost.
- States the effect the vote has or what will be done because of the result of the vote.
- Announces the next item of business.

6. Changing a Vote

A member has the right to change his vote before the chair announces the result of a voice vote, show of hands, rising or roll call. After chair announces result, member may change vote only by permission of assembly, by a motion to do so adopted by a majority vote or general consent.

Study Questions

1. Give a definition of voting.
2. What is a majority vote?
3. What is a majority of 25, 26, 27, 28?
4. Give four situations when a 2/3 vote is required.
5. What does the chair say when announcing the result of a 2/3 vote?
6. Which of these results indicate the affirmative won in a 2/3 vote?
 - a. 24 affirmative, 12 negative
 - b. 25 affirmative, 13 negative
 - c. 26 affirmative, 14 negative
 - d. 27 affirmative, 13 negative

7. What four points should be covered in the chair's announcement of the results a vote?
8. When is an election determined by a plurality vote?
9. Define a plurality vote.
10. Can a member change his vote? When and how?

COMMITTEES AND THEIR REPORTS

COMMITTEES AND BOARDS

RONR 399-417

Committees

A committee is a body of one or more persons elected or appointed to consider, study, investigate, or take action on assigned matters. Committee assignments are time savers for the general membership. A few people can do the work of many and often in less time. Serving on a committee also provides good leadership training and experience.

Kinds of committees

1. Standing – Standing committees are continuous committees, which are usually established by the bylaws. Program, Finance, Membership and Hospitality are example of standing committees.
 - a. The members of Standing Committees are usually appointed by the chair at the first meeting of each new administration.
 - b. The duties of committees are listed in the bylaws or assigned by the assembly or by the chair.
 - c. The chair of committees are elected by the assembly or appointed by the chair.
2. Special Committees – Special Committees are established as the need for them arises and cease to exist when the assigned task has been completed or a final report has been made. Luncheon, Celebration for Anniversary and Special Purchase are examples of special committees.
 - a. Membership on special committees is determined at the time the motion is made to create the committee.
 - b. The duties are assigned at the time the committee is established.

- c. The Chair may be the first person named or agreed upon by the committee itself.
3. Committee of the Whole – A committee of the whole is a device by which the entire assembly may discuss a main motion without the usual limitations of the rules of debate.

Size of Committees – The size of committees is determined by the size of the task

1. Small Committees – Small committees are expected to take action. The members should be in sympathy with the assigned task or should not agree to serve.
2. Large Committees – Large committees are committees for investigation. Members should present various points of view for fair consideration.
3. Uneven Number of members – An uneven number of members on a committee will reduce the probability of a tie vote.

Selection of Committee Members

1. The method of selecting members of a committee should be in the bylaws,
 - a. Appointed by the Executive Board;
 - b. Appointed by the chair or the chairman of the committee;
 - c. Appointed by the chair and approved by the Board.
2. When not specified in the bylaws members of a committee may be:
 - a. Elected by ballot;
 - b. Nominated from the floor and elected by voice vote or ballot;
 - c. Nominated by the chair and elected;
 - d. Appointed by the chair;
 - e. Appointed by adoption of a motion creating the committee and naming its members.

3. If the bylaws so provide the president is an ex-officio member of all committees, except the nominating committee. As such he has the same privileges as other committee members, including voting, but is not counted in the quorum of the committee.

Chairman of the Committee

Unless specified in the bylaws the chairman may be the first one named to the committee, may be elected by the assembly or the committee may choose its own chairman.

Duties of the Chairman

1. Notifies all committee members, including ex-officio members of every meeting;
2. Explains exact duties, what is to be achieved, and helps secure needed information;
3. Conducts meetings in an informal manner;
4. Reports to the assembly or board on progress of the committee and accomplishments.
5. If the chairman neglects to call a meeting, after a reasonable period of time, any two members of the committee may do so provided all committee members have been notified. A quorum must be present to conduct business. (A majority of a committee constitutes a quorum.)

Conduct of Business in Committee Meetings

1. The procedure is informal;
2. Neither chairman nor members rise to speak;
3. Chairman may make motions, debate and vote;
4. Motions do not need a second;
5. No limit on the number of times a member may speak;
6. Motions to limit or close debate not permitted in committee meetings;
7. A decision may be reconsidered as often as necessary by a motion to reconsider made by one who did not vote on the losing side, including absentees and abstainers;
8. Only committee members may attend meetings, others may be invited or granted permission but must leave during deliberations.

Boards

Boards consist of elected and appointed officers, chairmen and others as prescribed in the bylaws, who act for the organization. The officers of the board are customarily the same as of the organization

What powers do boards have?

The bylaws must specify what powers the board may exercise. Board action may not conflict with any action taken by the assembly. In an organized society, the board is subordinate to the society and must carry out its instructions.

The assembly may countermand any action taken by the board, if it is not too late, and can give the board instructions, except in such matters as are placed by the bylaws exclusively under the control of the board.

By what other names are boards identified?

Board of Directors
Board of Trustees

Executive Board
Board of Governors

The elected officers make up the Executive Board or Executive Committee. It is a “board within a board” with power between the full board meeting just as the whole board has power to act for the assembly between regular meetings of the society.

How do boards conduct business?

1. In small boards (less than 12 members) business is conducted as in a committee.
2. In large boards business is conducted according to the rules of a regular deliberative assembly.
3. Only members of the board have a right to be present in board meetings.
4. Every member must be notified of the meetings and a quorum is necessary to conduct business.
5. The secretary keeps a record of the proceedings in board meetings.

How are changes made in board membership?

A new board is created each time there is a change of officers except when filling a vacancy. When membership on a board changes all unfinished business falls to the ground. New committee chairmen are appointed or re-appointed as if the entire board membership had changed.

Study Questions

1. Do the same parliamentary rules apply in committee meetings as in a deliberative assembly?
2. How is a chairman of a committee established?
3. If a chairman fails to call a meeting of the committee within a reasonable length of time, what may be done by the other members?
4. What is the quorum for a committee?
5. May committee chairmen debate and make motions?
6. Who may attend a committee meeting?
7. How long does a special committee remain active?
8. For how long are the members of a standing committee appointed?
9. What does "ex-officio member of a committee" mean? What powers and duties does he have?
10. To whom does a subcommittee report?
11. What is a board?
12. To whom is the board subordinate?
13. What makes the difference between a small and a large board?
14. How is business conducted in a small board? In a large board?

15. What happens to unfinished business of a board when new officers are elected?
16. Conduct a meeting of a special committee appointed to purchase a computer for the organization.
17. Conduct a meeting of a standing committee to select programs for the meetings.
18. Assign an office or duty to every member of the class and conduct a large board meeting.

REPORTS

RONR 395-398, 417-

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Committee Reports

Every committee must report to the body, which created it. The official report must be approved by a majority of its members before it is given.

Written reports are preferred, although a very brief oral one is acceptable provided the secretary is able to record it accurately.

The report of the committee, not of its chairman, is written in the third person. The date of the report is that of the meeting at which it is presented and recorded in the minutes.

The committee report has three parts.

1. Opening

The first sentence identifies the committee, either giving its name if a standing committee or the subject referred to it if a special committee.

2. Body

The body should include:

- a. What the committee was expected to do;
- b. Procedure in handling this assignment;
- c. Information obtained and considered;
- d. Conclusions drawn;
- e. Recommendations or motions proposing action by the assembly.

3. Signing

The chairman alone may sign the report with the word “chairman” following his name. Or it may be signed by the committee member agreeing with the report. The chairman signs first and the others in alphabetical order. This time the word “chairman” need not be added.

What does the report contain?

The report may contain only what a majority of the committee agreed to at a proper meeting of the committee. The report is usually given by the chairman of the committee but it may be given by another member or by the secretary of the organization.

A copy of the report should be given to the presiding officer or to the secretary for the files.

If the chair fails to call for the report of a committee, the committee chairman may rise, address the chair and announce that the committee is ready to report. The committee chairman may report with approval from either the chairman or of the assembly.

No action is taken on a report that is made for information only.

If the report contains recommendations, a motion is required for the assembly to consider the findings of the committee. This motion does not require a second since it is from a committee, not from an individual. It is t

hen stated by the chair as any other motion would be. It is subject to debate, amendment and vote. The presenter of the report is entitled to speak first.

What is a Minority Report?

Committee members who do not agree with the majority report are privileged to present their views, with permission of the assembly. The minority report is read for information only and no action is taken on it unless a motion is made to substitute it for the report of the majority of the committee.

What are the qualities of a good committee report?

A good report is:

1. Brief – It gives facts without cluttering details.
2. Clear – It keeps to the point in simple language.
3. Inclusive – It includes complete responsibilities and duties and how they were carried out.
4. Selectivity – It records only what is relevant and significant.
5. Organized – It is orderly in its presentation and moves from point to point.

What should a good report include?

1. The title of the office or chairmanship,
2. The dates of serving in this position,
3. The duties which were carried out. These may be listed in detail or, in the case of an officer, may be referred to by naming the section of the bylaws complied with.
4. Any additional assignments completed relative to the organization.

What form does a report take?

Annual reports are written in the third person; factual information is given in clear concise sentences. Brief introductory and closing remarks are sometimes acceptable.

Motions or recommendations related to an officer's report are made from the floor by another member.

Motions included in a committee chairman's report may be made by the chairman.

Reports are signed with legal signature and title following or beneath it.

How many copies of a report should be made?

One copy must be given to the secretary for the official file. Additional copies may be made available for the president and others interested,

How are reports presented?

1. They are given orally at the annual meeting
2. Distributed in printed form.
3. The president may give a summarized report of all officers and chairmen in a single annual report.

Study Questions

1. To what body is a standing committee required to report?
2. May a committee report be given orally?
3. What date is put on the report?
4. What are the three main parts of a good report?
5. Who signs a committee report?
6. Who usually gives the report of a committee?
7. Who should receive a copy of the committee's report?

8. What action is taken on a committee report which contains no recommendations? What if it does make recommendations?
9. Who may have the floor first on behalf of adopting the recommendations of a committee?
10. If all members of a committee do not agree with the report given, what action may the dissenters do?
11. What is the purpose of annual reports?
12. Who are required to prepare annual reports?
13. Give at least three qualities of a good report.
14. Besides reporting on the duties that were carried out, what other facts should an annual report include?
15. All reports should be written in the _____ person.
16. If an officer has a recommendation this report, who moves its adoption?
17. If a committee chairman has a recommendation in his report, who moves its adoption?
18. How are reports signed?
19. What other ways are there of presenting an annual report other than orally?
20. Of what purpose is it for the president to give a composite report of the annual reports of other officers and chairmen?
21. You are secretary of the Future Physicians' Club; write an annual report.
22. As chairman of the program committee, write an annual report.

MOCK MEETING

The following mock meeting illustrates how motions are made to accomplish business smoothly and efficiently. You can use this sample meeting script in several ways. First, you can read through it as a way to reinforce what you learned about making motions in the previous sessions. Or, you may wish to use it as a way to refresh your memory before you chair or attend a meeting. It is also useful during a meeting; follow the script to help you dispose of business in the proper order.

Sample Meeting Script

This is the monthly meeting of Local Union XYZ. The meeting has been called for 7:30. The Chair is presiding.

CHAIR:

This is the January meeting of Local Union XYZ. A quorum is present, so the meeting will come to order. [The chair raps the gavel once.]

The minutes of the previous meeting have been distributed. Does everyone have a copy of the minutes? [Brief pause]

Are there any corrections to the minutes? [Note: The Chair should use the term corrections rather than the terms additions or deletions because corrections covers both these instances. Otherwise, the chair will have to call first for additions and then for deletions, clearly taking too much time on the matter]

Brother Jones:

I have a parliamentary inquiry. [The chair recognizes Brother Jones.] The minutes show every approved and defeated amendment as well as a summary of the discussion. Is it necessary that minutes be written in such detail?

CHAIR:

Detailed minutes are not necessary. When a motion is amended and adopted, the minutes should read, "A motion by Maria Sanchez was amended and adopted as follows:. . . " Also, debate is not summarized. Would the secretary please revise the minutes in this regard for approval at the next meeting.

Sister Smith:

At the last meeting, there was a long discussion and a resolution on the installation of the new heating system. Later in the meeting, the motion was withdrawn. Should mention be made in the minutes of the fact that a motion was made and then withdrawn without being voted on?

CHAIR;

Such mention is not necessary; withdrawn motions do not appear in the minutes. At this time, would the treasure please give a report?

TREASURER:

As of January 1, cash in the EAB money market account was \$213,693. Cash in the NW money market account was \$233,202.87. Cash in the Bank of NY money market account was \$140,931.40. Cash in the City Bank money market account was \$150,840.05. Cash in the checking account was \$10,122.67. In addition we have a \$100,000.00 Certificate of Deposit at NWB due at 10/21/94 @ 2.90% interest. This gives a total of \$858,736.76.

Our receipts are as follows: \$153,631.00 for a partial refund of overpaid per capita from the international and \$479.86 for December interest. Our liabilities are as follows.

Accounts Payable	\$187,485.00
Donations	286.00
Accrued Wages	431,907.98

This means that our total liabilities are \$619,678.98. This leaves a total fund balance of \$239,057.78, subject to the annual audit.

CHAIR:

Are there any questions on the treasurer's report? Hearing none, the treasurer's report will be filed for audit.

Brother Brown:

A point of order. [The Chair recognizes Brother Brown.] We failed to take any action on the treasurer's report.

CHAIR:

The treasurer's report is received or filed for audit. No action is necessary. The next item of business on the agenda is the report of the transportation committee. In the absence of the chair of that committee, will a member of the committee please give the report?

Sister Wilson:

At our last meeting, on December 15, we authorized the hiring of a bus company, Kay Cor Incorporated, to transport members to the demonstration in Washington D.C.. On December 17, the company was hired . At the same time, we also issued a memo to all shop stewards. The memo concerns the scheduled departure time.

CHAIR:

Thank you for your report. The next standing committee report is the curriculum committee.

Sister Smith:

Point of order. We did not take action on the transportation committee's report. Nor did we make a motion or second on the report.

CHAIR

Committee reports without recommendations are for information only and do not require any action on the part of the membership or the chair. Further, the only time a committee report would be seconded is when it is a committee of one. Now we will have the report of the apprentice program curriculum committee.

Brother Watson:

The committee recommends that the local host an informational night for parents of potential apprentices. We recommend that the program include seminars on the benefits of unionism as well as the need to develop the skills needed to qualify for journeyman status in our trade.

Brother Brown:

A point of information. I have a number of questions. First of all, who is going to run this program? Would it be offered during the day or at night? And then, how will it be funded? Do parents really want such a program? What attendance can we reasonable expect?

CHAIR:

[Speaking to Brother Watson] Would you answer these questions?

Brother Watson:

We will ask representatives from the International Apprentice program to make presentations which will be followed by presentations from local union officers and current members of the apprentice class. The expenses will be covered by the general fund. The program will be held at night, from 7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p. m. The Parent Teacher Association of the local high schools will agree to aid us in recruiting.

CHAIR:

Is there any discussion on the motion to host an informational night for potential apprentices? [Remember that the chair states every motion, second, and outcome of the vote.]

Sister Wilson:

I move to divide the question so we can consider and vote on the two questions separately.

Brother Jones:

Second.

CHAIR:

All those in favor of dividing the question say aye [pause to count votes]. Those opposed say no [pause to count votes]. The chair is in doubt of the outcome and will take a standing vote. All those in favor of dividing the question please rise. Thank you [pause to count votes]. Be seated. All those opposed please stand. Thank you [pause to count votes]. Be seated. The motion to divide is defeated. The question before us is that the apprentice program curriculum committee host an informational night for parents of potential apprentices. Is there further discussion on the question?

Sister Smith:

I move to postpone further discussion on the matter to the next meeting.

Brother Brown:

Second.

CHAIR:

It has been moved and seconded to postpone further discussion on the informational night project until the next meeting. Is there any discussion on this motion?

Sister Smith:

I move to refer the whole matter back to the curriculum committee for further study.

CHAIR:

The motion to refer to committee is out of order. [the motion to refer is of lower rank.] Is there any discussion on the motion to postpone further discussion on the informational night project until the next meeting? [pause]. Hearing none, all those in favor of the motion say aye [pause to count votes].

All those opposed say no [pause to count votes.] The motion to postpone is defeated.

The pending question is that the curriculum committee host an informational night for parents and potential apprentices. Are you ready for the question? All in favor of hosting an informational night for parents and potential apprentices say aye [pause to count votes]. All those opposed say no [pause to count votes]. The motion is defeated.

Sister Coats:

A point of personal privilege. I noticed that Brother Business Agent has arrived. I suggest that we interrupt our regular business to permit him to speak to us about the strike fund.

CHAIR:

With your general consent, we will have Brother Business agent speak now. [Consent is obtained and Brother Business agent delivers his speech.] Thank you, Brother Business Agent. When the last meeting adjourned, a motion was pending to spend \$500 for a new pool table. The question is now before you for consideration under unfinished Business. Is there any discussion on this matter? [pause].

Since there is no discussion, are you ready for the vote? All those in favor of the motion say aye [pause to count votes]. All those opposed say no [pause to count votes]. The ayes have it and the motion is carried.

We will now proceed to New Business. Is there any New Business?

Brother Jones:

At our last meeting, we approved the purchase of several pieces of furniture for the Executive Board Room at a cost not to exceed \$4,000. I have since learned that several members are willing to donate the furniture that we need and that it is in excellent condition. I therefore move to rescind the purchase of the office furniture.

Sister Wilson:

Second.

CHAIR:

Is there any discussion?

Brother Meeks:

I call the previous question.

Brother Brown:

Second.

CHAIR:

The question has been called. All those in favor of the motion raise the right hands [pause to count votes]. All those opposed raise their right hands [pause to count votes]. The motion to call the question has been approved by a two-third vote.

Now to vote on the motion to rescind the motion to purchase the office furniture. All those in favor of the motion say aye [pause to count votes]. All those opposed say no [pause to count votes]. The no votes have it and the motion to rescind is defeated. Is there any further New Business?

Sister Smith:

I move that we have refreshments at the conclusion of all local union meetings.

Brother Brown:

Second.

Brother Watson:

I move to amend the motion by adding the words "the refreshments to be donated by members" at the end of the motion.

Sister Wilson:

Second.

CHAIR:

Is there any discussion? If not, we will vote on the amendment first and then the motion as amended. All those in favor of the amendment say aye [pause to count votes]. All those opposed say no [pause to count votes]. The motion has been approved.

We are now voting on the motion as amended to have refreshments at the conclusion of all local union meetings, the refreshments to be donated by members. All those in favor of the amended motion say aye [pause to count votes]. All those opposed say no [pause to count votes]. The ayes have it and the motion to serve refreshments, as provided by members, has been approved.

Sister Smith:

Earlier this evening we defeated a motion that the local host an informational night for parents and potential apprentices. I voted against that motion. I now move to reconsider that action.

Sister Wilson:

Second.

CHAIR:

it has been moved and seconded to reconsider the proposal to host an informational night for parents and potential apprentices. Is there any discussion? [Discussion ensues.]

Brother Jones:

I mover the previous question.

Brother Brown:

I second the motion.

CHAIR:

The previous question has been moved. All those in favor of moving the previous question please rise [pause to tally votes]. Please be seated. All those opposed to moving the previous question please rise [pause to tally votes]. Please be seated. The motion did not carry by a two-thirds vote. The motion before us now is to reconsider the proposal to host an informational night for parents and potential apprentices. The motion is now open for debate.

Are you ready for the question? All those in favor of the motion say aye. [pause to count votes]. All those opposed say no [pause to count votes]. The motion is defeated. Is there any other business? [pause].

Sister Smith:

I move that in response to recent surveys and a demonstrated need, we institute a voter registration campaign.

Sister Wilson:

I second the motion.

CHAIR:

It has been moved and seconded that we institute a voter registration campaign. Is there any discussion of the motion?

Brother Jones:

The hour is late, I move to postpone the motion until 7:30 p.m. at our next regular meeting.

Brother Brown:

I second the motion.

Sister Smith:

This is an extremely important issue and should be considered at once. The polls indicate that our candidates for political office will be defeated if voter participation is not improved.

Sister Wilson:

This motion is urgent, but it will require a great deal of discussion on our part, as well as a great deal of participation of union members. This issue deserves our full and fresh attention and it is very late. As a result, I support the motion to postpone.

Sister Smith:

The arguments are well taken. As a result I move to amend the motion to postpone, by adding "and make it a special order."

Brother Watson:

I second the motion.

CHAIR:

It is moved and seconded that the motion to amend to postpone the motion until the next regular meeting by adding "and make it a special order." Is there any debate on the motion? [pause]. Since there is no comment, the question before us is to amend the motion to postpone the motion to postpone the motion until 7:30 p.m. at our next regular meeting by adding "and make it a special order." Are you ready for the question? All those in favor of the motion say aye [pause to count votes]. All those opposed say no [pause to count votes]. The ayes have it and the amendment is adopted.

The question is now on the amended motion to postpone the motion until 7:30 p.m. and make it a special order. The motion needs a two-thirds vote to pass. Are you ready for the question? All those in favor of postponing the motion until 7:30 p.m. at our next meeting and make it a special order please rise [pause to count votes]. Thank you. You may be seated now. All those opposed please rise [pause to count votes]. Thank you. You may be seated now. The motion is carried, by a two-thirds vote. The motion is a special order for 7:30 p.m. at our next regular meeting.

Is there any further new business? There being none, we stand adjourned.
[The chair raps the gavel.]

Motion	Requires A Second	Vote Required	Debatable	May Be Amended	May Interrupt a Speaker	May Be Reconsidered	Motions To Which It Applies	Motions Which Apply To It	May Be Renewed
2. Adjourn	Yes	Majority	No	No	No	No	None	None	After Progress
3 Question of Privilege	No	Decided by Chair	No	No	No	No	None	None	After Progress
4. Orders of the day	No	Majority	No	No	Yes	No	Any special or general order	None except to postpone orders	Yes
5. Point of Order	No	None unless chair is in doubt	No	No	Yes	No	Any Motion	None	No
6. Appeal	Yes	Majority	No	No	No	Yes	Any decision of the chair	11, 12	No
7. Suspend the rules	Yes	2/3 Majority	No	No	No	Any Motion	None	None	No: Except by unanimous consent
8. Create special orders	Yes	2/3 majority	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	17	All	After Progress
9. Withdraw a motion	No	Majority	No	No	No	Yes	Any Motion	18	After Progress
10. Call for a Division of house	No	A single member	No	No	No	No	Not Applicable	No Applicable	Not Applicable
11. Objection to consideration	No	2/3 in negative	No	No	Yes	Yes	2, 17	18	No
12. Move to table	Yes	Majority	No	No	No	No	2, 5, 17, 18	None	After Progress
13 Close Debate	Yes	2/3 Majority	No	No	No	Yes	And debatable motion	18	After Progress
14. Postpone to a certain day	Yes	2/3 Majority	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	2, 17	12, 15, 18	After Progress
15. Move to commit	Yes	Majority	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	2 17	12, 15, 18	After Progress
16 Amend	Yes	Majority	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	12, 13, 14, 17	12, 15, 18	No
17. Postpone indefinitely	Yes	Majority	Yes	No	No	Affirmative vote only	2, 17	12, 18	NO
18. Main Question	Yes	Majority	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	None	All	Not at same session
19. Reconsider	Yes	Majority	Yes	No	No	No	Any motion except 1, 6, 11	11, 12, 13	No
20. Rescind or repeat	Yes	Majority with notice or 2/3	Yes	Yes	No	Negative vote only	2, 5, 17	All	Not at same session