



Simple Parliamentary Procedure

Guidelines for Better Business Meetings

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Have you attended a disorganized meeting? A meeting with no flow or focus? A meeting where no votes were taken and attendees did not feel like they made decisions? Chances are people left feeling like their time was not valued.

Utilizing parliamentary procedure can help an organization, board, or governing body to have a productive, orderly meeting. A presiding officer can lead a more effective meeting when all members of the group have basic knowledge of parliamentary procedure. These five basic principles are a starting point for everyone:

- Extend courtesy and equal rights to all.
- Consider only one thing at a time.
- The majority rules.
- The minority must be heard.
- The purpose is to facilitate decision making.

This publication reviews basic steps and procedures that are most often applicable. *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised In Brief* or the full volume are great resources for any group to have on-hand.

Order of Business and Agenda

An order of business is a basic outline for a business meeting. An organization may choose to define an order of business in standing rules. However, an organization that has adopted *Robert's Rules of Order* as its parliamentary authority may follow the general order of business it includes versus enacting its own.

An agenda typically incorporates the order of business but sets a more defined schedule for a meeting. A well-designed agenda helps the meeting run smoothly and lessens the possibility of items of business being forgotten.

Every meeting should follow a standard order of business or have an agenda. Consider these key elements as an agenda is planned.

1. *Call to Order.* The presiding officer calls the meeting to order after he or she has determined a quorum is present. The presiding officer says, "The meeting will come to order."
2. *Opening Ceremonies.* An organization may have a specific pledge, reading, or ritual to open its meetings. This could include the pledge to the flag, a thought for the day, or any other custom of the group. If a roll call is routine, it will take place at this time.
3. *Reading of the Minutes.* The presiding officer asks the secretary to read the minutes. Following the reading, the presiding officer asks, "Are there any corrections to the minutes?" The chair then states, "The minutes are approved as read," or "The minutes are approved as corrected." If the draft minutes are sent out in advance or provided in writing, reading is only required if requested by a member. The presiding officer can state, "The minutes from the previous meeting have been

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distributed. Are there any corrections?" Following the call for corrections, the presiding officer can state, "The minutes are approved as distributed," or "The minutes are approved as corrected." A vote to approve the minutes is not required. A motion and vote are only necessary if there is a dispute or debate regarding an item in the draft or any proposed correction.

4. *Reports of Officers.* The next item on the agenda is typically reports by officers. The presiding officer will recognize those who have reports. The secretary may be asked to read correspondence. The treasurer is asked to provide the treasurer's report. (Further detail regarding treasurer's reports is included on Page 5 of this publication.) Any other elected officers who have reports are called upon one by one. If the presiding officer is uncertain about a report, he or she may ask, "Does the [officer] have a report?"
5. *Reports of Standing Committees.* Standing committees are called on for reports in the order they are listed in the bylaws. No motion or vote is required to accept a committee report but is needed if the report includes a specific item of business for consideration or adoption. Motions arising out of any committee report should be handled immediately. Motions made by a committee do not require a second.
6. *Reports of Special or Ad-hoc Committees.* Any special or ad-hoc committees that are to report should be called on in the order in which they were appointed. No motion or vote is required to accept a committee report but is needed if the report includes a specific item of business for consideration or adoption. As with motions from standing committees, no second is required.

7. *Unfinished Business.* When the minutes from a previous meeting show that the decision on an item of business was postponed to the present meeting or that a question from a previous meeting is pending, it should be listed on the agenda under “unfinished business.” The chair should not ask, “Is there any unfinished business?” but simply proceed through the items listed. An idea discussed informally at a previous meeting and agreed to be brought up at the next meeting should be included under new business.
8. *New Business.* After unfinished business is addressed, the presiding officer asks, “Is there any new business?” At this point, members may introduce new items for consideration. If members are claiming the floor to introduce business, the chair may not deprive them of their rights by hurrying through the proceedings.
9. *Announcements.* When all new business has been handled and no member wishes to bring further items to the group for consideration, the presiding officer proceeds to announcements. However, urgent announcements may be made by the chair at any point during the meeting.
10. *Program.* If the meeting agenda includes any type of program, it usually is presented before the meeting is adjourned since the group may want to act as a result of the information provided. It is acceptable to have the program immediately following the opening ceremonies or just before adjournment. The presiding officer can move the program to an unscheduled portion of the agenda with consent of the group by stating, “If there are no objections, we will have our program at this time.”
11. *Adjournment.* Once the full agenda has been completed, the presiding officer should ask if there is any further business. If there is none, the presiding officer can state, “Since there is no further business, the meeting is adjourned.” The meeting can be adjourned at any point during the agenda if a member makes a motion for adjournment, the next meeting is already established, and the motion is duly enacted. Alternatively, a motion to “fix the time to which to adjourn” can be made in cases where another meeting is not already scheduled (see Table 1).

Quorum

A quorum is the minimum number of members who must be present for a group or organization to officially conduct business. Typically, this minimum is specified in the organization's bylaws, with terms such as “a majority of members (half plus one)” or “two-thirds of membership” commonly used. If an organization does not have a defined quorum in its bylaws, *Roberts Rules of Order* generally defines a quorum as more than half of membership.

When a group does not have a quorum present, no formal business action can be taken. The group can only set a time for another meeting and continue with any general programming. If attendance drops below the minimum during the meeting, then no further business actions can be taken unless the attendance rises back to quorum.

Presenting and Processing a Motion

A motion is a proposal for the group to consider a specific item of business or take a defined action. Motions may grow out of reports or other communication. Often a committee report, letter, or memorandum will introduce information requiring action. The following steps outline the process for a motion.

STEP 1: OBTAINING THE FLOOR

Before a motion can be made, the member of the group must obtain the floor (be recognized by the presiding officer to speak). To be recognized, the member rises (or raises his or her hand) when no one else has the floor, then addresses the presiding officer by the proper title (i.e., Madam President, Mister Chairman, etc.). The presiding officer recognizes the member by stating his or her name or title or with a statement such as, “The chair recognizes the member to my right.” In a small group or setting where it is obvious only one person is seeking the floor, the presiding officer may recognize that person by nodding. Once the member is recognized and has the floor, no one else may interrupt. The presiding officer must recognize any member who seeks to obtain the floor and is entitled to it.

STEP 2: MAKING A MOTION

A member makes a motion by stating, “I move that....” As soon as the motion is stated, the member should be seated. The member will have the right to speak first in debate, if desired, after the presiding officer has stated the question. To ensure the motion was heard by all members, it can be repeated by the maker, the secretary, or the presiding officer.

STEP 3: SECONDED A MOTION

After a motion has been made, another member seconds the motion by saying, “I second the motion,” or “Second.” The member seconding the motion does not have to rise or obtain the floor. A second to a motion indicates that another member wishes the question to be considered by the group; it does not necessarily mean that he or she is in favor of the motion. If no one seconds a motion immediately, the presiding officer normally asks, “Is there a second to the motion?”

Once a motion is seconded, the presiding officer will state the question, thus placing it before the group. The motion then belongs to the group and the maker may no longer withdraw the motion without the group’s consent.

If there is not a second to a motion, the motion is not before the group for discussion and decision. Motions made by direction of a board or committee do not need a second since they are made by a majority vote within the committee, indicating support from more than one member of the group.

STEP 4: DEBATING THE MOTION

After stating the motion, the presiding officer should ask, "Is there any discussion?" or "Are you ready for the question?" Each person wishing to speak must obtain the floor and be recognized by the presiding officer before speaking. The presiding officer will coordinate the discussion following these general guidelines:

- The person making the motion has the right to speak first. If the maker of the motion does choose to speak, he or she must speak in favor of the motion.
- During discussion, each member has the right to speak twice on the same question. No members may speak the second time if another member who has not spoken desires the floor.
- Speakers must limit their remarks to the pending motion.
- If the presiding officer knows the preference of members who wish to speak, the discussion should alternate between those in favor and those opposed.
- Speakers should address the chair, speak in a courteous tone, and not attack or question the motives of another person. Remember, the question or action addressed in the motion is the subject of debate.
- The presiding officer cannot close debate if any member wishes to discuss the motion.

STEP 5: PUTTING THE QUESTION (CALLING FOR A VOTE)

When it appears that debate has ended, the presiding officer asks, "Are you ready for the question?" or "Is there further discussion?" If no one rises to obtain the floor, the presiding officer states the motion again and calls for the vote. Example: "Those who in favor, say 'aye.' Those opposed, 'no.'" The vote is usually taken by a voice vote; a standing vote or show of hands are acceptable options. The presiding officer always asks for the negative vote, even when the affirmative appears unanimous. Though the maker of a motion is not allowed to speak against it, he or she may vote against it.

STEP 6: ANNOUNCING THE RESULTS

The chair announces the result of the vote immediately to confirm the outcome. The confirmation should include:

1. The side that won. Example: "The ayes have it."
2. The result of the voting. Example: "The motion carries."
3. The action that must result. Example: "The organization will...."

Classification of Motions

Motions are described in five types depending upon their purpose. General information is provided below. Table 1 on pages 9 and 10 defines each type of motion in greater detail and shares the procedure for handling each.

1. Main motions are used to introduce a main item or question of business to the group. Only one main motion may be before the group at a time. It must be disposed of before another item may be considered but does yield to a secondary motion.
2. Subsidiary motions will modify, defer, remove, or dispose of a main motion. Subsidiary motions take precedence over main motions and must be handled first. They include motions to:
 - a. lay an item of business on the table
 - b. close debate
 - c. limit or extend debate
 - d. postpone to a fixed time
 - e. refer to committee
 - f. amend
 - g. postpone indefinitely
3. Privileged motions relate to order and the rights of the members. They rank higher than subsidiary motions or main motions. They include motions to:
 - a. call for the orders of the day
 - b. adjourn
 - c. recess
 - d. raise a question of privilege
 - e. set the time to adjourn
4. Incidental motions relate to procedures. Incidental motions have no rank and are considered before the motions from which they stem. Incidental motions include those that:
 - a. appeal a ruling of the chair
 - b. suspend the rules
 - c. rise to a point of order
 - d. withdraw a motion
5. Motions that bring a question again before the group. These motions allow the group to reopen an item of business during the same meeting, take up a motion that was temporarily disposed of, or change something previously adopted. These include motions to:
 - a. take from the table
 - b. rescind
 - c. reconsider
 - d. discharge a committee

Amending a Motion

When a motion is before a group for discussion, the motion may be modified or amended. Typically, amendments will:

- Add to the motion,
- Remove or strike out part of the motion, and/or
- Replace or substitute wording in the motion.

Proposed amendments must directly relate to the main motion. Only two types of amendments are allowed – primary and secondary. A primary amendment is a modification to the main motion. A secondary amendment is a modification to the primary amendment. Only one amendment of each type may be considered at one time. If both primary and secondary amendments have been proposed, the group must discuss and vote on the secondary amendment, then discuss and vote on the primary amendment, then discuss and vote on the main motion as amended. See the example below.

- John moved that the board hold a two-hour breakfast meeting on Friday, June 14th. The motion was seconded by Sally.
- During discussion, Simone moved to strike Friday, June 14th from the motion and replace it with Thursday, June 13th. Theo seconded the amendment.
- Ted then moved to add “at 7:30 a.m.” after “June 13th” in the primary amendment. Liza seconded the amendment.
- The presiding officer would restate the secondary amendment, then proceed with discussion and vote, (i.e., “The question is to amend the amendment by adding at 7:30 a.m. Is there any discussion?”)
- Following a vote on the secondary amendment, the presiding officer would proceed with the primary amendment, (i.e., “The question is to amend the main motion by striking Friday, June 14th and replacing with Thursday, June 13th at 7:30 a.m. [if secondary amendment was approved]. Is there any discussion?”)
- Following a vote on the primary amendment, the presiding officer would then proceed with the main motion, either as proposed if the amendment failed or as amended, (i.e., if both amendments were approved, “The question is to hold a two-hour breakfast meeting on Thursday, June 13th at 7:30 a.m. Is there any discussion?”)

When considering amendments, remember that the proposed change must relate to the main motion and that only one primary amendment and one secondary amendment may be considered at one time. Depending upon the discussion and potential modifications, groups may find it easier to vote down a proposed motion to allow restating rather than to consider a complex amendment.

Minutes

The minutes of the organization become the permanent record of the group’s actions. The minutes are a record of facts, not opinion. They are a record of what happened and not the thoughts or feelings of members or officers. The secretary is responsible for recording and keeping the minutes of all meetings. Minutes should be written clearly and in a manner that leaves no room to question actions taken by the group. An absent member should be able to read the minutes and have a clear understanding of the business transacted at the meeting. All names should be clearly recorded, such as Nancy Jones not Ms. Jones. Guidelines for writing minutes are included in Table 2 on Page 11 of this publication.

Treasurer’s Report

At each meeting of the organization, the chair may ask for a report from the treasurer. Unless the organization’s bylaws or standing rules define guidelines for financial reports, the report may be a statement of the balance on hand or the balance minus outstanding obligations. This report requires no action by the group.

Robert’s Rules of Order do dictate that the treasurer make a full financial report once a year, following the end of the fiscal year. The format and detail of the annual financial report will depend on the size of the organization, frequency of reporting, the nature of the activities, etc. This financial report is made to provide information to the members and should be at a level of detail to be easily understood.

The annual financial report does require action of the group and always should be audited. The audit may be conducted in one of two ways:

- When the amount of money is quite large, it is advisable to use independent accountants. This can be expensive and should be budgeted.
- In many organizations, the financial statements are audited by an internal committee including two or more of its members. This committee is usually appointed in advance of the when the annual report is to be presented. The financial statement is prepared early to assist the committee in completing their work.

If an annual financial report has been audited prior to being presented:

- When the audit report states that the treasurer’s financial report has been found to be correct, the treasurer can simply read this statement as part of his or her presentation. If needed, the chairman of the auditing committee can present a detailed report at this time. The presiding officer then proceeds with adoption of the report and may state, “All in favor of adopting this report, please say ‘aye.’ All opposed, ‘no.’” The adoption of this report simply relieves the treasurer of responsibility for

the period covered in the report, except in case of fraud.

- If the auditor finds the treasurer's books incorrect, the assembly may approve the auditor's report and consider the incorrect handling of funds as an item under new business. Alternatively, the assembly may choose not to approve the auditor's report and may ask for a new audit.

If an annual financial report has not been audited prior to being presented:

- When an unaudited year-end financial report is presented and the audit process is already in place, the presiding officer will say, "The financial report will be referred for audit." Once the audit is complete, the report should be presented to the organization for consideration and vote.
- When an unaudited year-end financial report is presented and no audit process is in place, the organization will need to adopt a motion to refer the report for audit. This motion should detail how a committee will be convened or auditor selected. Once the audit is complete, the report should be presented to the organization for consideration and vote.

Election of Officers

The bylaws of the group usually specify the procedure for the election of officers of the organization. However, if this is not the case for your group, the following parliamentary procedures may be used.

NOMINATIONS

Nominations can be secured in several ways. The two most common are nominations from the floor and nominations by committee.

PROCEDURE FOR FLOOR NOMINATIONS

For nominations from the floor, the chair declares the floor open for nominations and any member may nominate another member. The chair does not have to recognize the member for a nomination to be made. The member simply stands and says, "Madam Chairman, I nominate Susie Martin." No second is required for a nomination. Unless an objection is made, a member may nominate more than one person for an office, if there are no other members wishing to nominate someone. The same person can be nominated for more than one office. If elected to more than one office, the member may choose the office he or she prefers. If the member is absent, the group will decide by vote and then elect a person to fill the other office.

Presiding officer: "Nominations are now in order for the office of president."

Member: "I nominate Alice Adams."

Presiding officer: "Alice Adams is nominated. Are there any further nominations for the office of president?"

The chair may proceed in this manner through all offices in the order the positions are listed in the bylaws, until nominations have been made for each. Alternatively, the chair can consider the offices one-by-one, accepting nominations then proceeding with the election for each before moving onto the next position.

PROCEDURE FOR COMMITTEE NOMINATIONS

If a nominating committee is used, it should be elected by the members of the organization or the executive board. The president should not appoint this committee, nor be an ex officio member of the committee. In most organizations, the bylaws will provide guidelines for an election using a nominating committee. Any member of a nominating committee also may become a nominee for an office. Normally members of the committee will contact each person they wish to nominate to ensure that the candidate will accept the position if elected.

The reporting procedure to be used by the nominating committee is usually specified in the bylaws. Often the report is shared prior to the meeting where the election is to take place. The report should also be formally presented at a regular meeting, even if the membership has had prior notification. It is not necessary to adopt the nominating committee report, the voting process is the means to adopt.

In most cases, the following example applies. However, an organization's bylaws may detail a specific nomination process that does not allow for nominations from the floor. In that case, the presiding officer would not ask for further nominations.

Presiding officer: "Will the chairman present the report of the nominating committee."

Chairman of nominating committee: "Madam President, the nominating committee submits the following nominations: For president, Alice Adams; for vice president, Bob Brooks; and for secretary treasurer, Cindy Case." (Continue for all vacancies.)

Presiding officer: "Alice Adams has been nominated for president. Are there any further nominations for president?"

(If there is a nomination from the floor the chair repeats the name of the nominee. "Denise Dove has been nominated for president. Are there any further nominations?")

Presiding officer: "Bob Brooks has been nominated for vice president." Are there any further nominations for vice president?

*(The chair proceeds in this manner through all offices.)
"Are there any further nominations for any of the offices?"
[pause] Hearing none. The chair declares the nominations closed."*

VOTING

As with nominations, most organizations will have an established custom or a prescribed method for voting in the bylaws. Election by ballot generally is used by organizations. Election by voice vote also is appropriate when the election is largely uncontested and when the bylaws do not require a ballot vote.

ELECTION BY BALLOT

If no voting takes place before all nominations are closed, one ballot may be used. When nominations are known prior to the meeting, ballots may be prepared in advance. Space should be left on the ballot for writing in additional nominees for each office.

The chair appoints tellers to distribute, collect, and count the ballots. The number of tellers varies depending on the size of the voting assembly. It is the tellers' responsibility to see that no member casts more than one ballot. This voting procedure also should be fixed by rule or custom. When everyone seems to have voted, the chair asks, "Have all voted who wish to do so?" If there is no response, the chair says, "If no one else wishes to vote, [pause], the chair declares the polls closed." The tellers collect the ballots and begin counting the votes, usually in another room.

In recording the ballots, tellers are instructed to:

- Not include blank ballots or blanks on a ballot in determining the total number of votes cast
- Accept ballots which may contain small technical errors such as a misspelled name
- Declare illegal two or more ballots folded together
- Declare illegal sections of ballots where the member votes for more than one candidate for an office and no clear choice can be determined
- Declare illegal illegible ballots; if the number of illegible ballots will affect the outcome of the election, the chair of the tellers should report this to the presiding officer who will ask the assembly to decide how these ballots should be recorded

All illegal ballots should be counted in determining the total number of votes cast for figuring the majority. However, no candidate benefits with a vote from an illegal ballot.

When counting is complete, the chairman of the tellers prepares a report which contains:

- The number of votes cast
- The number required for a majority
- The number received by each nominee
- The number of illegal votes

The chairman of the tellers addresses the presiding officer, reads the report, and hands it to him or her. The presiding officer reviews the written report and declares the winners. If one or more of the candidates does not receive a majority

of votes, the presiding officer announces, "No election," and directs new ballots be distributed for the office where no candidate was elected. The procedure is repeated until one candidate is elected.

ELECTION BY VOICE VOTE

This method is generally used where the bylaws do not require voting by ballot and a candidate is unopposed. However, it also may be used when there is more than one candidate for an office by using the following procedure:

Presiding officer: "Those in favor of Alice Adams for president, say 'aye.' Those opposed 'no.'"

If a majority vote in favor of Alice Adams: "The ayes have it, and Alice Adams is elected president."

If a majority vote "no" for Alice Adams: "The no's have it, and Alice Adams is not elected president. Those in favor of Denise Dove [the next nominee] say 'aye.' Those opposed 'no.'"

When a candidate receives a majority, he or she is declared the winner and no other candidates are voted on. The chair moves on to the next office for which an election is being held.

When using this procedure, the members wishing to vote for a later candidate must vote against those preceding him or her. This is considered to give an unfair advantage to those voted on earlier in the procedure.

Remote or Virtual Meetings

Robert's Rules of Order does apply when an organization meets remotely via phone or videoconference. For an organization to conduct official business via a remote or virtual meeting, their bylaws should include specific language authorizing them to meet in this manner. The technology or system used should allow members to hear each other at the same time (and see each other if meeting via videoconference).

Key Reminders

Every member of the organization should know the basic rules of parliamentary procedure. The presiding officer will find it helpful to learn more rules than are typically used. Practice will ensure smooth meetings and fairness to all.

PARLIAMENTARY COURTESIES

When convening a meeting using parliamentary procedure, all participants are expected to model courtesy to others. The ten courtesies noted below are a good reference for all.

1. Stand when addressing the presiding officer, as in making a motion, discussing a question, or making a report.
2. Address the presiding officer by the correct title, i.e., "Mr. Chair," "Madam President," etc.

3. Sit down promptly when finished talking.
4. During the business meeting, speak only when addressing the chair and after having been properly recognized.
5. Never talk or whisper to another member during the meeting.
6. Never stand to get recognition from the presiding officer when another member has the floor.
7. Confine discussion to the question before the group.
8. Refer to an officer by his or her official title and to members by “the member who spoke last” or other appropriate designation. It is recommended to avoid using names.
9. Willingly accept the decision of the majority.
10. Be punctual for meetings.

REMINDERS FOR THE PRESIDING OFFICER

The presiding officer sets the tone for the meeting, and the following are basic guidelines to follow.

1. Correct procedure should always be your goal.
2. If dealing with motions or amendments, always state the exact wording. Ask the secretary to read the motion if you are unsure how it was phrased.
3. Discussion is not in order until the motion has been stated by the chair.
4. The chair does not enter discussion while presiding. As a member of the assembly, the chair is entitled to his or her vote.
5. Always indicate clearly how a vote will be taken. Never call for the “usual sign.”
6. Always call for the negative vote (ex. “Those opposed say ‘no.’”).
7. Adoption of an amendment does not mean adoption of the main motion. Remember to state the main motion as amended.
8. Maintain focus on the business at hand, not a person or persons. It is better to say: “The motion is out of order,” than to say, “The member is out of order.”

The use of parliamentary procedure in all meetings will help the group transact business efficiently, protect the group from leaders who dictate policies, and protect the rights of everyone in the group. Remember, if you are overly strict with rules and procedures, members may be afraid to speak up. Parliamentary rules, like all other rules, should be applied with common sense.

Parliamentary Terms to Know

Before parliamentary procedure can be effective, members must be familiar with frequently used terms.

Adjourn - to end a meeting.

Amend - changing a main motion by striking out, inserting, adding to, or substituting.

Chair - the presiding officer; “addressing the chair” means speaking to the president or chairman.

Debate - the parliamentary name given to the discussion of a motion.

Division of the House - voting by standing and counting.

Ex Officio - members of a board or committee by virtue of another office or position held as defined in an organization’s bylaws. Unless otherwise stated, ex officio members have the same rights and privileges as other members, including the right to vote.

Floor - the privilege of speaking before the assembly.

Incidental motion - relates to procedures and are considered before the motion from which they stem.

Main motion - introduces a main item or question of business to the group.

Majority - one more than half of the number voting. If ten ballots are counted, six would be a majority.

Minutes - official record of business transacted in a meeting.

Motion - a formal proposal for action by the group.

Privileged motion - relates to order and the rights of the members and rank higher than subsidiary motions or main motions.

Question - the item of business before the assembly for discussion, debate, and vote.

Quorum - the number or proportion of members required to be present for official business to be transacted.

Resolution - a form of main motion that may or may not have a preamble describing the reasons for the proposal.

Second - an action that indicates interest of at least a second member in bringing the question before the group. Motions often require a second from a member of the assembly to allow the item of business to be discussed.

Subsidiary motion - modifies, defers, removes, or disposes of a main motion. Subsidiary motions take precedence over main motions and must be handled first.

Table - a motion to “lay on the table” allows the assembly to put aside the pending question temporarily when something more urgent has arisen.

Voice Vote - most common means of taking a vote where members respond by speaking in the manner requested.

Table 1. Types of Motions.

Motion	Second Required	Amendable	Debatable	Vote Required to Pass	Purpose of Motion
Main Motions					
Main motion	Yes ¹	Yes	Yes	Majority	Brings business before the assembly.
Privileged Motions					
Fix the time to adjourn	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	To set the time, and sometimes place, of another meeting to continue the business of the session.
Adjourn	Yes	No	No ²	Majority	A way to close the meeting.
Recess	Yes	Yes	No ²	Majority	A short intermission in the meeting.
Raise a question of privilege	No	No	No	None	A means of allowing a request or main motion relating to the rights and privileges of the members which is of immediate urgency, while other business is pending.
Call for the orders of the day	No	No	No	None	A means of requiring the assembly to conform to the agenda.
Subsidiary Motions					
Lay on the table	Yes	No	No	Majority	Allows an assembly to temporarily lay aside a pending question without setting a time to resume consideration.
Previous question	Yes	No	No	Two-thirds	A motion used to bring an assembly to immediate vote on a pending question.
Limit or extend debate	Yes	Yes	No	Two-thirds	The means by which an assembly can exercise control over debate on a question.
Postpone to a certain time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Delays action on a motion for a definite time or until after an event.
Refer	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Generally used to send a pending question to a committee.
Amend	Yes	Yes ³	Yes ³	Majority	Modifies the wording of a pending motion before it is acted upon.
Postpone indefinitely	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	Means the assembly declines to take a position on the main motion. It effectively eliminates the motion.

Table 1. Types of Motions. (continued)

Motion	Second Required	Amendable	Debatable	Vote Required to Pass	Purpose of Motion
Incidental Motions					
Point of order	No	No	No	No vote	When a member "rises to a point of order," he or she indicates a question in the procedure being followed and asks the chair to make a ruling to enforce the regular rules.
Appeal	Yes	No	Yes ⁴	Majority ⁵	When two members question the ruling of the chair, one moves to appeal and the other responds to it by seconding the motion. The assembly then must vote on the matter of the ruling.
Suspend the rules	Yes	No	No	Two-thirds	This allows a body to do something not allowed by one of its regular rules.
Division of the assembly	No	No	No	No vote	A call for a division of the assembly requires the vote to be taken again, only by a standing count rather than voice.
Motions that Bring a Question Again Before the Group					
Take from the table	Yes	No	No	Majority	This will present again to the assembly a motion that has been previously laid on the table.
Rescind	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority with notice (2/3 without notice)	Used to change action previously ordered, this motion, can strike out or cancel a main motion, rule, bylaw, resolution, section, or paragraph.
Reconsider	Yes	No	Yes (if applied to a debatable question)	Majority	A way to bring back for further consideration a motion already voted on. The motion must be made in the same session as the initial action and be made by a member on the prevailing side of the previous vote.
Discharge a committee	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority with notice (2/3 without notice)	A means for a group to consider an item that was referred to a committee when the committee has not yet made a final report.

¹ A main motion coming from a committee does not require a second.

² Not debatable when another motion is pending. If no other motion is pending, it is treated as a main motion.

³ Only the first amendment to a motion is amendable and an amendment is debatable only if the original motion is debatable.

⁴ Not debatable when it (a) relates to a transgression of the rules of speaking, (b) relates to the priority of business, or (c) is made while the immediately pending question is undebatable.

⁵ Majority or tie vote sustains the ruling of the chair.

Table 2. Guidelines for Writing Minutes.

Guidelines	Example
<p>1. Include in the first paragraph:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. the kind of meeting (regular, special, annual, etc.),b. the name of the group,c. the date, time, and place of the meeting,d. whether or not the president and secretary were present and, in their absence, the name of their substitute(s), ande. the disposition of the minutes of the last meeting.	<p>The regular meeting of the Block County 4-H Council was held on October 5, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. at the Block County Extension Office, the president being the chair and the secretary being present. Following the roll call of members, the minutes of the last meeting were approved as read.</p>
<p>2. The body should include a separate paragraph for each subject matter and should show:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. All main motions or motions to bring a main question before the assembly, the exception being motions which were withdrawn. When recording a motion, include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. the exact wording of the motion as adopted or otherwise disposed of,ii. the disposition of the motion, including temporary disposition, and any primary or secondary amendments and all adhering secondary amendments that were pending, andiii. usually, the name of the person making the motion in all important motions.b. All points of order and appeals, whether sustained or lost, and reasons given by the chair for the ruling.	<p>The treasurer reported a disbursement of \$15.75 to the City Florist for the 4-H awards banquet centerpiece, leaving a balance of \$168.15 as of October 1, 2022.</p> <p>The membership committee report was received and placed on file.</p> <p>The special committee that was appointed to investigate the possibility of hosting a 4-H volunteer appreciation luncheon reported. Sam Adams, the chairman, moved that a volunteer appreciation luncheon be scheduled for May 15, 2023. After debate, the motion was adopted.</p> <p>Cindy Smith moved that the council pay the \$35.00 registration fee Bob Brown and Sandy Sloan to attend the area 4-H communications training on February 15, 2023, in Prime County. The motion was seconded and carried.</p> <p>The president announced the next meeting would be December 1, 2022, at the Block County Extension Office at 6:00 p.m.</p> <p>The president introduced the program, "4-H Thrive" presented by Jim Johnson, Block County 4-H Youth Development Agent.</p>
<p>3. Closing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The last paragraph of the minutes should contain the hour of adjournment.b. The minutes should be signed by the secretary or the person who took the minutes.	<p>The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.</p> <p><u>Jenny Jones</u>, Secretary Jenny Jones</p>

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