



Dear Members,

Please review these helpful guidelines before each membership meeting. You should always bring your meeting guidelines and school handbook to every meeting.

Have you ever sat through a meeting and were unhappy with the outcome? You probably remained silent because you did not know what to do. Do you know what a motion is and how to make one? These are the kinds of things that will be addressed in the pages to follow.

Robert's Rules is designed to clarify important parliamentary rules, which are the tools of efficient, effective, democratic meetings. Parliamentary procedure protects the rights of people to join together to accomplish common goals and enables them to debate and take action in a fair manner with the least amount of controversy.

The rules of parliamentary procedure are based on common sense and logic. Parliamentary rules protect:

- The right of the majority to decide;
- The right of the minority to be heard;
- The rights of individual members;
- The rights of absentees;

All of parliamentary procedure is built on the principle that there must be a careful **BALANCE** of the rights of the organization as a whole, the rights of subgroups (committees) and the rights of individual members.

10 BASIC RULES OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

1. The rights of the organization supersede the rights of individual members
2. All members are equal and their rights are equal
3. A quorum must be present to do business

A quorum is the number of members who must be present to legally transact business.

Ready, Set, Grow! requires that the majority of the Board members and members must be present.

4. Majority rules

This rule is basic to the democratic process. The minority has the right to be heard, but once a decision has been reached by a majority of the members present and voting, the minority must then respect and abide by the decision.



5. Silence is **CONSENT**

Those members who do not vote agree to go along with the decision of the majority by their silence.

6. Two-Thirds vote rule

A two-thirds vote is necessary whenever you are limiting or taking away the rights of members or whenever you are changing something that has already been decided.

Example:

The debate on changing snack time to a group snack has lasted an hour. A member moves to cut off debate and to vote. The motion is seconded. This is not a motion that requires debate but does require a two-thirds vote because it will cut off discussion, in other words, a group is taking away the right to debate.

7. One question at a time and one speaker at a time

This is one of the most important rules. Once a member has been recognized, he/she has been granted "the floor" and another member **MAY NOT INTERRUPT HIM/HER.**

Every member is equal in his or her right to speak but not to interrupt. If an interruption occurs the Chair should state that the organization has the right to conduct business in an orderly manner.

8. Debatable motions must receive full debate

A debatable motion should not be put to vote as long as members wish to debate it. Debate can only be suspended by a two-thirds vote of the members present.

9. Once something has been decided, it is not in order to make a motion to bring it up again at the same meeting. Such motions should be ruled out of order.

10. Personal remarks in debate are always out of order.

Example:

Member A has the floor and states, "if Member B wants her child to have a sandbox to play in, she should take her child to me beach."

However, it is appropriate for the member with the floor to give their personal ideas.

Example:

Member B has the floor and states, "sandboxes are great fun for kids and also a wonderful learning tool."

Member A has the floor and states; "sandboxes are not a good idea because the kids get it in their eyes and hair. In addition, every cat in the neighborhood will use it as a litter box."



MOTIONS

Motions are tools used to introduce business to a meeting.

A motion to discuss business listed on the agenda is not necessary. The Chair will open the floor for the discussion.

If a member requests the floor to discuss business that is not on the agenda he/she makes a motion and that motion must be seconded. If a motion fails to get a second, the Chair states, "since there is no second, the motion is not before this meeting." A motion must be considered if two people are in favor of its coming before the meeting.

Business on the agenda is always the priority. If there is time after the agenda has been completed, an open floor will be established for any other business. It is always a good idea to have important issues on the agenda prior to the meeting. Contact the Chair (President) no later than 3 days before the meeting date.

You will find that some motions are not debatable.

HOW A MOTION IS MADE

A member requests the floor by raising his/her hand.

The Chair recognizes the member and assigns him the floor.

The member says, "I move or I motion" and states his/her business.

At this time the motion needs to have a second. Once the motion has been seconded, the member who has made the motion has the floor first for debate. The Chair will then recognize members who wish to speak by stating their name. Debate should continue as long as members wish to discuss the questions unless motions have been adopted to either limit or close debate.

When there is no further discussion, the Chair again restates the motion and puts the motion to a vote.

"All in favor please raise your hand and say YES."

"All not in favor please raise your hand and say NO."

A withdrawal of a motion requires general consent and is usually from the maker of the motion. The permission of the seconder is not needed. A withdrawn motion does not appear in the minutes. It is as if the motion was never made.



REPORTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

During membership meetings, officers or chairmen will have reports/announcements to give. Generally it is unnecessary to make motions or vote at this time. However, at the end of the report, questions can be asked regarding what has been reported.

Example:

Miss Cheri reports, " The month of March we will be having a St. Patrick's Theme, everything that we do will be green. Please wear green as much as possible. We will be in need of several egg cartons for green worms we will be making. Does anyone have any questions?"

An appropriate question would be, " Would you like the single egg, cartons or the double ones
An inappropriate question would be, "can't we do a Hawaiian theme because I don't like Irish people?"

Reports should be about school business and should move quickly. Occasionally it will be necessary to open the floor for discussion but should always be done after the report is completed.

VOTING

Types of votes:

1. Majority vote
2. Two-thirds vote
3. Ballot vote
4. General Consent

Use General consent when possible. Voting takes time. When business is routine or when the group is in agreement, general consent is appropriate. If there is a single objection, the matter must be put to a vote.

A tie vote is a lost vote because a majority was not obtained.

The Chair should call for a vote after discussion is completed. Not all issues being voted on will require discussion.



POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Membership meetings are mandatory by the State of California. The membership meets to transact business for organization.
- Parliamentary procedure should be used to help and not hinder decision-making.
- It is the responsibility of the Chairperson to be in control of the floor and to keep the meeting moving along. A phrase such as, "your question is out of order" does not mean that you are out of line. Remember that this is a business meeting and it is very important for us to stay on track.
- The rights of the organization supersede the rights of individual members
- Do not interrupt a member who has the floor. Do not talk to the person sitting next to you while a member has the floor. Every member will have his or her turn to talk.
- Following the agenda is a must for an efficient meeting. All business on the agenda should be discussed first. If you have an important issue to talk about, please contact the Chair (President) and he/she will put it on the agenda.

Please remember that it is OK for members to disagree.