

## CONDUCTING A MEETING

### ORDER OF BUSINESS:

1. Meeting called to order;
2. Role call;
3. Reading of the minutes of the previous meeting;
4. Approval of the minutes;
5. Presenting names (or initiation) of new members;
6. Reports of officers and committees;
7. Unfinished business;
8. New business; and
9. Motion to adjourn

### MOTIONS

Business can be presented to an assembly in two ways:

1. By a simple motion; or
2. By a resolution.

Four kinds of motions:

1. Principal motion – made to bring any particular subject before the group for consideration. It can not be made when any other question is before the group and must give way to all other types of motions. Main motions are:
  - a. Adoption of a motion or resolution
  - b. Amending the constitution
  - c. Rescind or repeal a previous motion
  - d. Ratify or confirm an action taken
2. Subsidiary motion – used to modify the principal motion or dispose of it in some way other than by direct vote. It must be decided before the main motion. Subsidiary motions are:
  - a. To postpone indefinitely
  - b. To amend
  - c. To refer to committee
  - d. To postpone to a certain day
  - e. To limit or extend debate
  - f. To move the previous question
  - g. To lay on the table
3. Incidental motion – comes up incidentally when other motions are being considered. Must be disposed of before the principal or subsidiary motions can be acted upon. Incidental motions are:
  - a. To suspend the rules
  - b. To withdraw a motion
  - c. Readings of papers
  - d. Objection to consideration of a question
  - e. Appeals
4. Privileged motion – relates to the well being of the group or any of its members. Because of importance to individual members, it takes precedence over all other questions. Privilege motion are:
  - a. Orders of the day
  - b. Questions of privilege
  - c. To take a recess
  - d. To adjourn
  - e. To fix time to adjourn

## **HOW TO MAKE A MOTION**

1. Obtain the floor
2. State the motion carefully
3. The motion must then be seconded
4. The chairman must repeat the motion in full
5. The motion is then open for discussion
6. After the discussion, the vote is taken

## **HOW TO AMEND A MOTION**

An amendment to a motion is really a new motion made to change or modify the previous motion under consideration. An amendment may do one of four things:

1. Add or insert a certain word or words, or sentence
2. Strike out a certain word or words, or a sentence
3. Substitute another motion for the one being considered
4. Substitute words to replace wording under consideration

An amendment, like the principal motion, must be seconded. It is also debatable and may again be amended. The proper form for making an amendment is:

“I move to amend the motion to read....” or “I move to amend the motion by....”

An amendment, if seconded, must be voted upon before the original motion. If the motion is carried, the original motion must be voted upon as amended. If the amendment is lost, the motion is voted upon as originally stated.

In the case of an amendment to an amendment, the last amendment is always voted upon first. If it carries, the preceding amendment is then voted upon as amended.

## VOTING

### **Four ways of voting:**

#### **Voting by Acclamation: “Aye” or “Nay”:**

This is the most common method.

##### **Advantages**

1. Quickest method

##### **Disadvantages**

1. Minority group may not be heard or is drowned out by majority
2. Chairman has an unusual opportunity to favor an outcome if vote is close
3. Side voting first (which must always be the affirmative) has a decided psychological advantage

#### **Voting by Standing or Raising the Hand:**

This method overcomes the first two disadvantages of acclamation vote. The majority and minority are clearly identified. This method is advisable for all important matters and where result of vote would otherwise be uncertain.

#### **Voting by Roll Call:**

Roll call gives every voter a chance to register his choice. Used for important matters with each person's vote usually being made a matter of record.

#### **Voting by Ballot:**

This takes more time. First, pass out slips of paper to voters who write the name of the person they prefer or a “yes” or “no” on their slip. To speed up the process, tellers should be selected to collect and count the ballots.

##### **Advantages**

1. It is secret
2. No one person influences the vote of another
3. It is accurate
4. Every person has a chance to vote and get a fair decision
5. Decision is not known until all the ballots are cast

#### **Chairman's Vote**

In most cases, it is probably better that they do not vote, especially if the vote is public. The chairman is the conductor of the debate and should, in most cases, remain as impartial to either side as possible.

If the vote of the chairman will make a tie, and if he is a member of the body and has not voted, he may cast his vote and thereby cause a tie. The motion is then lost. Or, if the vote is a tie without the vote of the chairman, he may, if he wishes, cast his vote in the affirmative and thus carry the motion.

When voting by ballot there is one important difference. The chairman must vote with the other members, and then has **NO** deciding vote.

## HOW TO ELECT OFFICERS

### **Temporary Officers**

They served only until permanent officers are elected. Usually only a president and secretary are necessary. Two methods of choosing temporary officers are frequently used:

1. Simple motion
2. Motion from the floor, voting by “Ayes” and “Nays” or a standing vote.
- 3.

It is usually wise to ask the candidates to leave the room while the vote is being taken.

### **Permanent Officers**

Permanent officers should always be chosen by ballot. Three methods of bringing up names are popularly used:

1. Nominations from the floor
2. Informal ballot to indicate choice, followed by election via “formal” ballot
3. Suggestions by a nominating committee: a “slate” with one or two names for each office

Most organizations receive nominations from the floor since it is satisfactory and speedy. Informal ballot followed by formal ballot is least likely to offend any of the candidates. However, nominating committee’s “slate” usually permits some knowledge of the qualifications of the candidate for the respective office.

In all cases, balloting should continue until a majority vote, over one-half of all the votes, has been received by one of the candidates.

## **RECORDS, REPORTS AND COMMITTEES**

### **Records**

Good records are a valuable asset to any organization. They are an accurate report of what is done in the business meeting, by committees and by the officers. There are two kinds of records:

1. Minutes
2. Reports

### **Minutes**

Minutes of a business meeting should contain a complete record as to what happened, including every motion whether lost or carried, and the names of the persons making and seconding them. Details of the discussion are not necessary but a record should be made of what happened to every motion, indicating the number of votes on either side if votes were counted. No personal opinions or comments should be included.

As a suggested order of business, minutes of a meeting must be read and opened for correction at the meeting that follows.

### **Reports**

From time to time, officers and committees should submit written reports. Particularly:

1. Meeting to meeting reports; and
2. Annual reports.

### **Meeting to Meeting Reports**

These do not necessarily have to be made at every meeting but only when the occasion warrants them. These would include:

1. Treasurer reports
2. Occasional committee reports

### **Annual Reports**

Should come from all officers and standing committees. They should be given briefly and to the point. These reports are effective at the time that new officers and committees are chosen. An audit committee should be in place to audit the final report of the treasurer. This is a safeguard both for the treasurer and the organization.

### **Committees**

Committees usually consist of an odd number of members for the purpose of investigating some certain thing or doing some special piece of work.

Committees have two great advantages;

1. They allow more time and greater opportunity for consideration of a question
2. They are a means of delegating responsibility in the organization

Committees are subject to the same rules of the assembly but they can act with greater freedom.

### **Choosing Committees**

Committees are chosen in one of three ways:

1. They may be selected by the officers;
2. They may be selected by the "general committee"
3. They may be elected from the floor.

The first person named is usually the chairman although a committee always has the right to select its own chairman. The committee is always responsible to the main body and should report back to the assembly.

## **Kinds of Committees**

Two kinds of committees:

1. Standing or permanent
2. Special or temporary

### **Standing or permanent committee**

These are usually chosen at the same time that new officers are chosen or very soon thereafter. They are chosen to consider things that need constant attention, such as programs, the welfare of its members or some special long-time project they have undertaken.

### **Special or temporary committee**

These are usually chosen to take care of some special event, such as a picnic, debate, etc. They are usually chosen when they are needed, and then dismissed when their work is complete.