# Parliamentary Procedure

Making it work FOR you

#### Credentials and Quorum

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- For instance: if our 35-member club has a quorum in its bylaws of 25% then a quorum is satisfied when 25% or 9 members are in attendance.
- If 20 members are present but only 7 vote on a motion then the majority needed to pass the motion is 4.
- It is a majority of those VOTING not those who COULD vote.

Motion - a proposal to the organization for action

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"So moved"

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Purpose of a second

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In fact, that a motion was seconded is not included in the minutes.

Minutes will show the motion (exactly as voted on - not "improved" by the Recording Secretary) and the disposition of the motion - Passed, Defeated, Referred to Committee

The Presiding Officer's duty is...

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- To ensure all debate is civil and NEVER directed to motives, personalities or individual members

- A Point of Information
  - A Point of Information is a request for additional information to further clarify the motion on the floor
  - While the presiding officer (PO) should not speak to a motion without relinquishing the "chair" to the next in line, the PO may provide information for clarification when a Point of Information has been raised.
    - The PO should be careful to resist making his/her position on the motion known.

- A Point of Order
  - A Point of Order may be requested by a member who feels the rules of the organization are not being followed.
  - Most often used as a method to return to the agenda or the subject at hand if discussion has ventured too far off course. It's a nice way to say, "Hey, I thought we were discussing which tree to plant for Arbor Day?"

When an amendment is proposed remember:

- Discussion must only be directed to the amendment, not the entire motion.
- An amendment may be amended BUT THAT'S IT!! Any subsequent amendment must wait until the amendments before it are disposed of.

Example:

<u>Main motion</u>: I move to plant a tree in Grant Park.

<u>Secondary motion:</u> I move to amend by adding "sycamore" before the word "tree."

<u>Tertiary motion:</u> I move to amend by striking the word "sycamore" and inserting the word "maple."

No more striking, adding, inserting, replacing until the tertiary motion has been dealt with.

**Example:** 

<u>Tertiary motion</u>: I move to amend by striking the word "sycamore" and inserting the word "maple."

This motion passes.

NOW another tertiary motion <u>could</u> be offered to change "maple" to "poison ivy." But this motion fails for lack of a second!

Now we're going to the vote from the bottom up and debate can happen at each level:

**PO** "The motion before you is to amend by striking the word "sycamore" and inserting the word "maple."

"Is there debate?"

"All in favor say Aye" (pronounced EYE)

"Thank you."

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"All opposed say No" (pronounced KNOW)
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"Thank you and the Ayes have it and you have amended the amendment."

<u>PO</u> "The motion before you is to amend by inserting the word "maple" and before the word "tree."

"Is there debate?"

- "All in favor say Aye"
- "Thank you."
- "All opposed say No"
- "The ayes have it and you have amended the main motion"

<u>PO:</u> "The main motion before you is to plant a maple tree in Grant Park."

"Is there debate?"

"All in favor say Aye"

"Thank you."

"All opposed say No"

"The ayes have it and you have voted to plant a maple tree in Grant Park"

## Handling a Motion Voting on the motion

Voting may be accomplished:

By voice vote

When the presiding officer is in doubt of the vote then:

Show of hands vote

- Standing vote
- Counted standing vote

## Handling a Motion Voting on the motion

► REMEMBER:

- Take both positive AND negative votes
- Abstentions are not asked for- they vote with the majority by their silence
- Announce the results. "The ayes have it and you have voted to...." or "The noes have it and the motion is defeated."

#### Handling a Motion Voting on the motion

► GENERAL RULE OF VOTING THUMB:

- When the motion GIVES something to members, it's a majority vote
- When the motion TAKES something from members, it's a 2/3 vote

Formerly referred to as General Consent

- Use when there is no apparent opposition
- Use when the matter is of little importance

Precludes the necessity of going through the whole voting and debate process when taking routine votes.

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#### Never stifle debate

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- Debate can solve those problems if aired productively
- Debate may save your club money and trouble down the road!

What's the difference between Calling for the Question and Previous Question .....

# Nothing.

#### They are interchangeable terms.

However....

# That doesn't mean most groups use it correctly!

So let's learn its correct usage and educate our members.

Calling for the Question means:

- The motion is to end debate
- NOT vote on the main motion Just to end debate.

Because it "taking" the right to further discuss the motion from your members, this vote will require a 2/3 affirmative vote to end debate.
## Calling for the Question OR Previous Question

If the motion Calling for the Question passes then:

- The PO immediately says "You have voted to end debate - the main motion before is to .....all in favor say aye...."
- And even if someone raises their hand or says "Oh wait, I have one more thing to add."
- The PO might say, "I'm sorry, the assembly has voted to dispense with any further debate"

#### Calling for the Question OR Previous Question

The PO should be cognizant of the direction the motion is going in

Prior to anyone getting to the point that they feel the need to Call for the Question -The PO might say, "Barring any further information pertinent to this debate - are you ready for the question?"

#### Calling for the Question OR Previous Question

► NEVER use Calling for the Question for evil.

- This motion should never to be used to prevent relevant, productive debate.
- When someone has Called the Question the PO might say, "That motion is out of order at this time as there is still productive debate going on."

#### **Tabling a Motion**

Tabling should be used for setting aside a motion TEMPORARILY in order to take care of more pressing business.

Most of our clubs don't need to use tabling but one I can think of is....

#### **Tabling a Motion**

GENERALLY: A tabled motion must be taken from the table at the same meeting or it "falls off the table" and must be reintroduced at another meeting.

#### **Tabling a Motion**

Groups often confuse Postponing a motion with Tabling a motion.

Tabling is temporarily setting aside the current business.

Postponing is setting aside the current business to a specific time or meeting.

#### Role of the Parliamentarian

The parliamentarian is a helpmate, an advisor.

- The presiding officer makes rulings, never the parliamentarian.
- Temperature charts

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