

# Parliamentary Procedure & Roberts Rules of Order

Overview: Parliamentary law is an orderly set of rules for conducting meetings of organized groups for the purpose of accomplishing their goals fairly.

- Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised is the parliamentary authority adopted by the National PTA, and local PTAs are required to use it.
- Used by approximately 85% of organizations in the country.
- Not only maintains order, but also timeliness, fairness and productivity of meetings.

## Fundamental Principles of Parliamentary Procedure:

- Justice and courtesy to all;
- Rule of the majority reflected;
- Rights of the minority protected;
- Partiality to none; and
- Consideration of one subject at a time.

## Principles In Action:

- Each meeting follows an agenda (generally posted 10 days before an association meeting), and each agenda item is taken in order and disposed of before going on to the next item.
- Ideas come from the members and are presented to the association to decide upon via motion. *See reverse for steps on bringing a motion.*
- Ideas are discussed and decided with impartiality and fairness.
- All members have the right to present, discuss, and vote on ideas.
- The majority rules, but the rights of the minority members are protected by assuring them the right to speak and to vote.
- PTA operates with spirit of openness, not secrecy. Members have the right to know what is going on within the PTA by attending meetings, inspecting the official records, and receiving notices and reports from committees and officers.

## Some Ground Rules

- Only one motion can be pending at one time.
- Only one member can be assigned the floor at one time.
- No member can speak a second time on the same question as long as another wants to speak a first time.
- Each member may only speak for a total of 10 minutes on any agenda item. This time limit may be decreased, as needed, to allow everyone to speak.
- No decision can be made without a **quorum** (= minimum number of members that must be present for the legal transaction of business at a meeting).
  - Per our bylaws, **quorum for general meeting is 17.**
  - Attendance at board meetings very important for quorum purposes.
- Announcements may be made at the end of meetings. This is NOT a discussion forum, as only items on a noticed agenda can be discussed, as per our bylaws.

## Effective Meetings:

### Motion

### Action Taken

#### Obtaining the floor

(Only members are legally qualified to make motions, discuss and vote)

**Member:** Madam or Mister Chair”

#### Chair recognizing member

**Chair:** “Member is recognized by the chair”

#### Making the motion

**Member:** “I move that \_\_\_\_\_”

#### Stating the motion

**Chair:** There being no second, the motion is not before the assembly”

#### Seconding the motion

**2<sup>nd</sup> Member:** “I second the motion”

**Chair:** “It has been moved and seconded that \_\_\_\_\_”

#### Debate and discussion

**Chair:** “Is there any discussion?”

#### Vote

Usually a voice vote. If a standing vote is needed, the secretary will count. In a standing vote, proponents and opponents are asked to stand in turn.

#### Announcing the vote

**Chair:** “The motion is...All in favor say ‘aye’ (Pause) Those opposed say ‘no’. The ‘aye’s’ have it, and the motion is carried and we will \_\_\_\_\_” Or, “The ‘no’s’ have it, and the motion is defeated.”

#### Amendments

Before a vote is taken on A motion, its language may be amended.

**Member:** “I amend the motion by \_\_\_\_\_” Or “I amend the motion to read \_\_\_\_\_.”

1. If applied to a debatable motion
2. Rules of Order- 2/3 vote, standing rules- majority vote

Refer to Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised (10<sup>th</sup> edition) for rules)