

# Parliamentary Procedure at a Glance

## Robert's Rules of Order

Robert's Rules of Order date back to 1876 when General Henry M. Robert, frustrated with meeting logistics, decided to bring the rules of the American Congress to other groups. His publication of *Pocket Manual of Rules of Order* sold half a million copies before the revision of 1915 and made Robert's name synonymous with the orderly rule of reason for meetings. Now in its 10<sup>th</sup> edition, Robert's Rules of Order is the most accepted guide for parliamentary procedure.

### By using Robert's Rules of Order you will:

- Keep a meeting on track. Those speaking out of turn are asked to wait until item is up for discussion per the agenda
- Identify when discussion may occur and when to call for a vote
- Determine the quorum number and majority vote

### Some Common Motions Made at Board Meetings:

- ✓ "I move to approve the minutes of the last meeting as presented by the Secretary."
- ✓ "I move to approve the financial report presented by the Treasurer."
- ✓ "I move to spend \$25 on publicity posters for the upcoming chapter recycling project."

***Please refer the next page for examples of actions, what to say, if a second or vote is needed.***

### A Glossary of Parliamentary Terms

**ballot:** Voting in writing can take place if the issue being discussed is a sensitive matter and the chair or members wish the voting to be secret.

**chair:** The presiding officer of the meeting, generally the chapter President.

**floor:** A member is considered to "have the floor" when the chair calls upon him or her to speak. In most cases, it is improper to interrupt someone who currently has the floor.

**motion:** The method used to place an issue, question, or decision in front of the members so it can be discussed and voted upon. Discussion on an issue to be decided is out of order unless an appropriate motion has been made.

**order:** Comments or discussion presented by a member are "in order" if the chair has properly recognized the member and the comments made pertain to the issue being discussed. Likewise, the member is "out of order" if either of these two conditions is not met.

**quorum:** The number of members needed to be present to conduct business legally. This number is set in your chapter's bylaws.

**second:** Most motions need a second (that is, another member must agree that the question or issue should be discussed). This keeps items that are of interest to only one member from taking up time during a meeting.

**voice vote:** The chair requests that members indicate their preference on the issue by responding "yes" or "no" when asked to do so. The chair decides, based on the voices, whether the "yes" or "no" votes were in the majority. The chair may ask for a show of hands if it is unclear by voice vote how members voted.

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**Based on Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (10<sup>th</sup> Edition)**

**Motions** are listed in order of precedence. A motion may be introduced if it is higher than the pending motion.

<b>TO DO THIS:</b>	<b>SAY THIS:</b>	<b>SECOND NEEDED?</b>	<b>IS IT DEBATABLE?</b>	<b>CAN IT BE AMENDED?</b>	<b>VOTE NEEDED?</b>
Adjourn meeting (21)	"I move that we adjourn"	Yes	No	No	Majority
Lay aside temporarily without debate (17)	"I move to lay the question on the table"	Yes	No	No	Majority
Stop debate and move to a vote (16)	"I call the previous question"	Yes	No	No	Two-thirds
Give closer study to issue (13)	"I mover to refer the matter to the committee"	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Change issue or question discussed (12)	"I move to amend the motion by..."	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Introduce Business (10)	"I move that..."	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

**Incidental Motions:** No order of precedence. Arise incidentally and are decided immediately.

<b>TO DO THIS:</b>	<b>SAY THIS:</b>	<b>SECOND NEEDED?</b>	<b>IS IT DEBATABLE?</b>	<b>CAN IT BE AMENDED?</b>	<b>VOTE NEEDED?</b>
Protest a breach of parliamentary rules (23)	"Point of order"	No	No	No	No vote, Chair decision
Avoid considering or discussing an improper issue (26)	"I object to consideration of this motion."	No	No	No	Two-thirds
Verify a voice by having a show of hands (29)	"I call for a division"	No	No	No	No vote, Chair obtains appropriate information
Request information (33)	"Point of information"	No	No	No	No vote, Chair obtains appropriate information
Begin discussion on issue previously tabled (34)	"I move to take from the table..."	Yes	No	No	Majority