

SOP-GN-002	PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES	Date Approved:
Approved by:	Date Revised: Revised by:	Page 1 of 6

Introduction

Parliamentary Procedure is a time tested method of conducting business at meetings and public gatherings that allows everyone to be heard and to make decisions without confusion. The CTN has adopted Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised as its basic handbook of operations.

The Basic Rules

1. ***The rights of the Organization supersede rights of individual members.*** The organization has the right to make its own rules, which then must be observed by all members. Should a conflict arise between the rights of a member and the right of the organization to do its business, the rights of the organization prevail.
2. ***All members are equal and their rights are equal.*** Those rights are to 1) attend meetings, 2) make motions and speak in debate, 3) nominate, 4) vote, and 5) hold office.
3. ***A Quorum must be present to do business.*** A quorum is the number of members who must be present to legally transact business. The number is stated in the Bylaws. The purpose of a quorum is to prevent an unrepresentative group from taking action in the name of the organization.
4. ***The majority rules.*** 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 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.
7. ***One question at a time and one speaker at a time.*** No motion is in order that does not directly relate to the question under consideration. In addition, once a member has been recognized, he or she has been granted "the floor" and another member may not interrupt him or her.
8. ***Debatable motions must receive full debate.*** The presiding officer may not put a debatable motion 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 a question is decided, it is not in order to bring up the same motion or one essentially like it at the same meeting.*** Such motions should be ruled out of order.
10. ***Personal remarks in debate are always out of order.*** The presiding officer must rule all personal remarks out of order. Debate must be directed to motions and not motives, principles, or personalities.

SOP-GN-002	PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES	Date Approved:
Approved by:	Date Revised: Revised by:	Page 2 of 6

Procedures for Making and Voting on Motions

The method used by members to express themselves is in the form of moving motions. A motion is a proposal that the entire membership take action or a stand on an issue. Individual members can 1) call to order, 2) make or second motions, 3) debate motions, and 4) vote on motions.

There are four basic types of motions:

1. *Main Motions:* The purpose of a main motion is to introduce items to the membership for their consideration. They cannot be made when any other motion is on the floor and yield to privileged, subsidiary, and incidental motions.
2. *Subsidiary Motions:* Their purpose is to change or affect how a main motion is handled and is voted on before a main motion
3. *Privileged Motions:* Their purpose is to bring up items that are urgent about special or important matters unrelated to pending business.
4. *Incidental Motions:* Their purpose is to provide a means of questioning procedure concerning other motions and must be considered before the other motion.

The following steps apply to the presentation, delivery, debate, and vote on a main motions. Other types of motions will follow a similar course, with exceptions made for seconding, debate, amendments, and the required vote for acceptance (see the attached chart).

STEP ONE: Presenting a Main Motion

1. Obtaining the floor
 - a. Wait until the last speaker has finished.
 - b. Rise and address the Chair.
 - c. Wait until the Chair recognizes you.
2. Make your motion
 - a. Speak in a clear and concise manner.
 - b. State the motion affirmatively (“I move that we...” rather than “I move that we not...”)
 - c. Stay on the subject
3. Wait for someone to second the motion
4. Another member will second the motion or the Chair will call for a second.
5. If there is no second, the motion is lost.
6. The Chair states the motion
 - a. The chair will say, “It has been moved and seconded that we..” This places the motion before the membership for consideration and action.
 - b. The membership either debates the motion or may move directly to a vote.
 - c. Once the Chair presents the motion to the membership, it becomes “assembly property,” and cannot be changed without the consent of the members.

STEP TWO: Expanding on the motion

SOP-GN-002	PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES	Date Approved:
Approved by:	Date Revised: Revised by:	Page 3 of 6

1. Discussion

- a. At this point, the mover may speak in favor of the motion.
- b. The mover is always allowed to speak first.
- c. All comments and debate must be directed to the Chair.
- d. Speaking must be within the time limit that has been established.
- e. The mover may speak again only after other speakers are finished, unless called upon by the Chair.

2. Putting the question to the membership

- a. The chair asks, "Are you ready to vote on the question?"
- b. If there is no more discussion, a vote is taken.
- c. On a motion to move, the previous question may be adapted.

STEP THREE: Voting on the Motion

There are five common methods used to vote. The method of vote on any motion depends on the situation and the CTN By-Laws and Constitution. The basic methods are:

1. By Voice—The Chair asks those in favor to say "aye," those opposed to say "no." Any member may move for an exact count.
2. By Roll Call—Each member answers "yes" or "no" as his or her name is called. This method is used when a record of each person's vote is required.
3. By General Consent—When a motion is not likely to be opposed, the Chair says, "If there is no objection...." The membership shows agreement by their silence. However, if one member says, "I object," the item must be put to a vote.
4. By Division—This is a slight verification of a void vote. It does not require a count unless the Chair so desires. Members raise their hands or stand.
5. By Ballot—Members write their vote on a slip of paper; this method is used when secrecy is desired.

OTHER POINTS

1. The Chair can require a long motion to be submitted in writing.
2. The maker of a motion has first right to speak to it.
3. A member can vote against his or her own motion, but cannot speak against it.
4. A member can modify her or his own motion before the Chair states it. The member can also offer an amendment after her or the Chair has stated his motion.
5. A member can withdraw his or her motion up to the time it has been stated by the Chair, and after that he or she must have permission from the group.

SOP-GN-002	PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES	Date Approved:
Approved by:	Date Revised: Revised by:	Page 4 of 6

Robert's Rules of Order Motions Chart

(Based on *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* (1990 Edition))

Motions are listed in order of precedence; a motion can be introduced if it is higher on the chart than the pending motion.

YOU WANT:	SAY:	INTERRUPT?	2ND?	DEBATE?	AMEND?	VOTE?
Close meeting	I move to adjourn	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Take a break	I move to recess for...	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
Register complaint	I rise to a question of privilege	Yes	No	No	No	None
Make follow agenda	I call for the orders of the day	Yes	No	No	No	None
Lay aside temporarily	I move to lay the question on the table	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Close debate	I move the previous question	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
Limit or extend debate	I move that debate be limited to...	No	Yes	No	Yes	2/3
Postpone to a certain time	I move to postpone the motion to ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Refer to committee	I move to refer the motion to a committee	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Modify wording of a motion	I move to amend the motion by...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Kill main motion	I move that the motion be postponed indefinitely	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority

SOP-GN-002	PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES	Date Approved:
Approved by:	Date Revised: Revised by:	Page 5 of 6

Bring business before assembly (a main motion)	I move that (for "to")...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
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SOP-GN-002	PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES	Date Approved:
Approved by:	Date Revised: Revised by:	Page 6 of 6

Robert's Incidental Motions Chart

(Based on *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* (1990 Edition))

Incidental Motions have no order of precedence; they arise incidentally and are decided immediately.

YOU WANT:	SAY:	INTERRUPT?	2ND?	DEBATE?	AMEND?	VOTE?
Enforce rules	Point of Order	Yes	No	No	No	None
Submit matter to assembly	I appeal from the decision of the Chair	Yes	Yes	Varies	No	Majority
Suspend rules	I move to suspend the rules	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
Avoid main motion altogether	I object to the consideration of the question	Yes	No	No	No	2/3
Demand a rising vote	I call for a division	Yes	No	No	No	None
Parliamentary law question	Parliamentary inquiry	Yes	No	No	No	None
Request for information	Point of information	Yes	No	No	No	None
Divide motion	I move to divide the question	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority