

# PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

BASED ON THE PRINCIPLES OF ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

## INTRODUCTION

The establishment of the rules of basic *Parliamentary Procedure* (so called because it was, in turn, based on the Rules of Debate as established within the English Parliament) and specifically of the **Rules of Order** codified by General H. M. Roberts in 1876 and revised in 1893, was based on the realistic notion that no group of more than two people in the English speaking world could get together for any practical purpose without the meeting turning into chaos without such a framework. In today's liberated society we like to believe we are above the need for such stringent codification and that reasonable people with reasonable goals can, indeed, do without them. Thus, we have prepared this chart to be easily carried and stored away, only to be brought out if absolutely needed. This should be about 15 minutes into the first meeting. Bear in mind, though, that, even at the time of its creation, the *Rules* themselves carried the apparatus to do away with or modify many, if not all of its strictures. In short, this is a tool that can be extremely useful in containing and moving an agenda. It is not, nor was it ever meant to be, Holy Writ.

*A Note on structure: We have followed herein the framework established by General Roberts and all his subsequent followers. Due to the fact that the Rules attempts to codify an almost overwhelming subset of structures, wherein each part of a meeting is dependent upon what comes before it and what goes after it, almost every section refers to one or more other sections. For ease of understanding, we have placed any "cross-reference" sections (and there are many) in parentheses immediately following the section explanation.*

## ORGANIZING A MEETING TO CONDUCT BUSINESS

Parliamentary Procedure is used within **Organizations** established to conduct **business** in the form of a **Meeting**. An **Organization** can be a formally chartered group with long term and diverse goals, or any group of people getting together for one or more specific purposes. **Business** is the reason for the get-together. And the **Meeting** is the specific period during which the group is together at any one time.

Prior to formally beginning a meeting of any group for the first time, the following is necessary:

### 1. Selecting a Chair and a Secretary.

To begin the first meeting of any organization, the two officers needed are a **Chair** and a **Secretary**. The **Chair** (so named because he/she will occupy the **Chair of Office**) is the person who will control the meeting and keep it orderly. The **Secretary** will record the **minutes** (literally: a minute by minute log of all events) of the meeting for a formal record. In practice, any one can step forward and nominate anyone (including him/herself) to be

**Chair**. This is done by simply announcing: "I move that so-and-so be named **Chair**." Someone else must then second the motion by saying...well... "I second the motion." (Others may then "move" other names in nomination.) In any event, after one or more names are moved and seconded a vote is called for

## MEETING

There are, for all practical purposes, two types of meetings: **Regular** and **Special**.

- Regular meeting is one held according to a prearranged schedule (daily, weekly, monthly, etc.) to consider the ongoing work of an existing organization.
- Special meeting may be called within an organization or may be set up by an ad hoc (literally: for the moment) body. Although there is no actual limit on matters that can be brought up at a special meeting, it usually confines itself to one or two topics of discussion. The meeting now begins:
  - The Chair calls the meeting to order.
  - In a Special Meeting the Chair "recognizes" (i.e. calls upon) a member of the audience who will make a motion to discuss the matter for which the meeting was called. In a Regular Meeting the Chair proceeds as discussed in the Articles that follow.
  - Whether the meeting is "Special" or "Regular" from this point on, it is guided by, and follows, the procedures that follow.

## ARTICLE I. INTRODUCTION OF BUSINESS SECTION 1.

### INTRODUCING BUSINESS

- Make a Motion.
  - Present a plan of action for the committee to undertake.
    - Formally presented as: "I move that..."
      - It cannot be stressed enough that a "motion" is for action. It is not a "suggestion." When, ultimately, a motion is "carried" (i.e. voted for), it will be implemented.
- Present a Communication.
  - May come from within or outside of the group.
    - Demand/request the group to undertake certain actions.
      - Some groups may require a motion to receive a communication, but this can be waived.

### SECTION 2. OBTAINING THE FLOOR

- Rise and address the Chair by Title (i.e. "Mr./Madam Chairperson") and, when recognized, make motion or statement.
  - The Chair, however, has the highest priority as "mover." If the Chair rises first, you must remain seated. (36)
- If two or more rise at the same time, Chair decides whom to recognize based on:
  - Maker of Motion takes initial precedence, in discussion.
  - New speaker takes precedence over one who has already spoken to motion. (26)
  - Allowance for opposing view.

*Note: There are certain motions that take precedence over any others which are discussed at the appropriate place. (11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 27)*

(usually, but not necessarily, by the initiator of the motion) and the **Chair** is selected by the majority. The **Chair** now calls for nominations for **Secretary**. One or more names will be put into nomination, and a vote will affirm the winner.

*Your first official meeting is now ready to begin*

## ARTICLE I CONTINUED

### SECTION 3.

#### WHAT PRECEDES DEBATE ON A QUESTION

- Motion is made. (46)
- Motion is seconded. (For exceptions see 13, 14, 15)
- Motion is stated by the Presiding Officer so that all are clear on exactly what is, and is not, under discussion. (65)

### SECTION 4.

#### MOTIONS TO BE PUT IN WRITING AND DIVISIONS THEREOF

- All principal Motions (6), Amendments, and Instructions to Committees should be in writing although this is not mandatory. It is, however, common sense.
- Motions may be divided, as long as the component parts are not interdependent. If they are, an Amendment (23) - not a division - is called for.
  - A motion to hire a blue bus can be divided into a motion to hire a bus and a motion to decide the color.
  - A motion to rent a car instead of a bus must be an amendment to the "bus" motion.

### SECTION 5.

#### MODIFICATIONS OF A MOTION BY THE PERSON MOVING

- A modification to a motion already on the floor cannot be made by the mover, prior to disposition of the motion, if any other person objects (17, 3).
  - First the motion to rent a blue bus must be voted upon (and presumably defeated) before a motion to rent a red bus can be moved/seconded/voted on.

## ARTICLE II. CLASSIFICATION OF MOTIONS

### SECTION 6.

#### PRINCIPAL/MAIN MOTIONS

- A new motion on any topic/subject.
  - Does not take precedence over any other motion.
  - Cannot be made while any other motion is on the floor.
  - Cannot conflict with rules, by-laws, etc. of the organization.

### SECTION 7.

#### SUBSIDIARY/SECONDARY MOTIONS

- Applied to another motion for purposes of disposing of the other motion.
  - Types of Subsidiary Motions are: **Table** (19); **Previous Question** (20); **Postpone to Certain Day** (21); **Commit/Refer** (22); **Amend** (23); **Postpone Indefinitely**. (24)
- Take precedence over Principal but not **Privileged** (9) or **Incidental**. (8)

### SECTION 8.

#### INCIDENTAL MOTIONS

- Arise out of, and take precedence over, other motions.
- Yield only to Privileged Motions.
- Cannot be amended or (except for **Appeals**) debated.
- Types of Incidental Motions are: **Appeal** (14); **Objection to Consideration** (15); **Reading of Papers** (16); **Withdrawal of Motion** (17); **Rule Suspension**. (18)

### SECTION 9.

#### PRIVILEGED MOTIONS

- Unrelated to Pending Motion.
- Take Precedence over all other motions.
- Not debatable. (35)
- Types of Privileged Motions are: **Set Adjournment Time** (10); **Adjourn** (11); **Questions of Privilege** (12); **Call for Orders of the Day** (13)



## ARTICLE III. MOTIONS AND ORDER OF PRECEDENCE

### PRIVILEGED MOTIONS

#### SECTION 10.

##### SETTING ADJOURNMENT TIME

1. Takes precedence over all other motions.
2. *Not Debatable* when made while another motion is on the floor.
3. *Debatable* when presented as a Principal Motion with no other motion on the floor.
  - A. Should, but is not required to, be made with a provision for next meeting time.

#### SECTION 11.

##### MOTION TO ADJOURN

1. Non-Debatable.
2. Takes precedence over all other motions except (10) above.
3. *Cannot* be made while someone else has the floor.
4. *Can* be made after a vote has been taken but before results are announced.
5. Can be for a "short term" adjournment used as a recess during long sessions.

#### SECTION 12.

##### QUESTIONS OF PRIVILEGE

1. Take precedence over all other questions except those above.
2. Not to be confused with *Privileged Motions* as a whole.
3. Usually pertain to immediate needs extraneous to business on the floor such as questions of comfort (Turn on/off heat; Open/close windows; Eject rowdy observers; etc.).

#### SECTION 13.

##### ORDERS OF THE DAY

1. Take precedence over all **but** the above.
2. Usually used to **get meetings back on track** by reminding assembly of that which was scheduled to be discussed when an "out-of-order" motion or discussion has intervened.
3. *Can* be over-ridden by a **majority** in circumstances where the motion before the assembly is felt to take precedence over the orders.

### INCIDENTAL MOTIONS

#### SECTION 14.

##### MOTION TO APPEAL (QUESTIONS OF ORDER)

1. Raises questions concerning some **point of order** within a motion.
2. Takes precedence over the motion to which it refers.
3. Must be decided by Presiding Officer without debate.
4. Appeal can only be made **at time of decision** by Chair.

#### SECTION 15.

##### OBJECTIONS TO QUESTION CONSIDERATION

1. Can only be made when Question is first introduced.
2. Cannot be debated (35) or amended. (23)
  - A. Purpose is to curtail **unproductive** or **irrelevant** questions.
    1. It is *not* used to close debate of relevant issues.

#### SECTION 16.

##### READING PAPERS

1. A one-time reading of relevant papers may be requested *purely for informational purposes*.
  - A. It *cannot* be used as a delaying technique to postpone vote.

#### SECTION 17.

##### WITHDRAWAL OF A MOTION

1. *If moved by the maker of the motion*, is granted **without debate** unless such is called for.

#### SECTION 18.

##### SUSPENSION OF THE RULES

1. Applies *only* to **Standing Rules** or **Rules of Order**.
2. Cannot be amended or debated.
3. Can **only be used once** in a meeting, but can be reintroduced in a subsequent meeting *even if same should occur within the same day*.

### SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS

#### SECTION 19.

##### MOTION TO TABLE

1. Temporarily postpones further action on a motion.
- A. Takes Precedence over other Subsidiary Motions. (7)
- B. Does not take precedence over **Incidental** (8) or **Privileged** (9) Motions.

## QuickStudy

## ARTICLE III. CONTINUED

### SECTION 20.

##### MOVING THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

1. Ends debate and calls for a vote on the pending motion.
  - A. Cannot be amended or have subsidiary motion (7) added.
  - B. Can be applied to Questions of Privilege (12) or other debatable motion.
2. If approved then the **Main** question, as well as all **Subsidiary Questions** and **Amendments** on the floor, are voted upon in *reverse order of their proposal*.

### SECTION 21.

##### MOVEMENT TO POSTPONE (TO A SPECIFIC TIME)

1. Takes precedence over Sections 22-24 below, but yields to all relevant sections above.
  - A. Postpones *all aspects of the motion and debate* until the stated time.
2. If several motions have been postponed and the specific time for discussion has passed, *the motions must be considered in the order to which they were postponed* (i.e. Motions postponed to, say, Tuesday are discussed before motions postponed to Wednesday *even if both Tuesday and Wednesday have passed* and the discussion resumes on Thursday).

### SECTION 22.

##### MOTION TO REFER TO COMMITTEE

1. Takes precedence over (23 & 24) but yields to all above.
2. There are three basic types of Committee:
  - A. **Committee of the Whole**. (32)
  - B. **Standing Committee** (permanently in existence and ongoing).
  - C. **Special** (also called **Select**) **Committee** established for discussion of the motion.
    1. The Make-up of a Special Committee may be established informally with a vote called for on the specific number on the committee (starting with the smallest) and a vote on the final committee make-up.

### SECTION 23.

##### AMENDMENTS

1. Take precedence *only* over the motion to be amended.
2. Amendments may come in various forms.
  - A. Add certain words.
  - B. Strike out (delete) certain words.
  - C. Strike out certain words and insert others (in some cases this can be treated as two separate amendments).
  - D. Substitute another resolution (or part) for one that is pending.
  - E. Divide the Question into two (or more) separate questions - each to be voted on separately.
  - F. "Fill in Blanks" (e.g. "A" proposes the group buy 5 new chairs; "B" proposes 6 new chairs). These proposals are not treated as canceling each other out, but as separate amendments voted on independently, since neither denies the motion to buy new chairs.
  - G. Nominations (e.g. "A" proposes John as Chairperson; "B" proposes Bobby). As above, these are voted on separately.
3. *The form* of a resolution cannot be amended.
  - A. A resolution to add cannot be "amended" into a resolution to delete (e.g. A motion to buy a new desk cannot become a motion to scrap the old one. This is a separate motion.)

### SECTION 24.

##### INDEFINITE POSTPONEMENTS

1. Applies only to **Principal** or *Question of Privilege*.
2. Useful in removing from consideration a motion for which opponents may not have sufficient votes to kill.

### MISCELLANEOUS MOTIONS

#### SECTION 25.

##### MOTIONS TO RESCIND

1. Used to **Annul** prior actions after time for **Reconsideration** (27) has passed.
  - A. Motion can be expunged from the record entirely if so voted and then has the legal standing of *never having existed*.

## ARTICLE III. CONTINUED

### SECTION 26.

##### RENEWAL OF MOTIONS

1. If subsequent discussion of vote alters or ignores the original motion, a **Motion to Renew** (i.e. bring back) the original motion can be in order.

### SECTION 27.

##### MOTIONS TO RECONSIDER

1. Can *only* be made on the same day/session the original motion was acted upon.
2. If a motion already acted upon is to be reconsidered at a subsequent/different session, then a new motion or a **Motion to Rescind** is in order.

## ARTICLE IV. COMMITTEES/INFORMAL ACTION

### SECTION 28.

##### COMMITTEES

1. Three types of Committee:
  - A. **Standing**-appointed for a particular session or specific period of time. (42)
  - B. **Special/Select**-appointed for a particular purpose.
  - C. **Committees of the Whole**-formed of the entire assembly. (32)
2. All *except Committees of the Whole* may appoint subcommittees.
3. **First person named to Committee acts as Chair**, Second named acts as Chair in absence of first, etc.

### SECTION 29.

##### FORMS OF REPORTS

1. Reports should be introduced by a variant on: "The (*name of Committee*) respectfully submits the following report on (*activity under consideration*)."
2. Reports do not have to be the unanimous opinion of the committee.
  - A. Disagreeing minorities may submit a "minority report."
3. Unless the report is of such importance that it is considered prudent to have all supporting members' names attached to it, the report is signed only by Committee Chair.

### SECTION 30.

##### RECEIVING REPORTS

1. Committee announces the report is ready.
2. Precluding any reason for postponement, Chair receives the report by having it read into the minutes.
  - A. There is no need to move the report be received. Reading of report *is* receiving it.
3. Unless the report is incomplete or the committee which prepared it is a Standing committee, the receipt of the report signifies that the committee has completed its work and is *de facto*, disbanded.
4. *Receiving* of the report is *not* to be construed as *adoption* (31) of same, although a vote to accept or adopt will make it so. Therefore, *do not vote on a report until you are ready to make it "law!"*
5. Minority reports may also be read into the minutes, but have no standing unless, after discussion, *a motion is made to adopt same in lieu of majority report*.

### SECTION 31.

##### ADOPTING REPORTS

1. A motion to **Adopt**, **Accept**, or **Agree** to a report (interchangeable words) accepts the report *as a whole*. Where the report is strictly factual, this poses no problem. Where the report recommends action, the motion, if passed, *accepts the action as well*.
2. Reports may be moved and then debated.
3. Reports may be adopted *with changes* which should then be noted in the minutes (e.g. "Report of the Committee was adopted with the changes in parentheses included").
4. Minority reports may also be adopted after debate over (majority) report, but, obviously, not concurrently with the latter



**ARTICLE IV. CONTINUED****SECTION 32.****FORMING A COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

- Forming a "Committee of the Whole" allows all members the freedom of discussion of an issue that may be denied them under regular standing rules of the group, since a committee may have the freewheeling capability of open discussion without necessary regard to "the rules."

A. May *not* refer matter to another committee.

B. May *not* amend a resolution under consideration unless the motion *originated* in the Committee of the Whole.

**SECTION 33.****INFORMAL CONSIDERATION OF QUESTIONS**

- Similar to (32) above without actually forming a Committee of the Whole.
- Constrained by same constraints as above and cannot pass resolutions or amendments but only report same and call for formal vote(s).

**ARTICLE V. DEBATES AND DECORUM****SECTION 34.****DEBATE**

- After a Motion is made, the floor is opened for debate.
- Person making motion has right to speak first.
  - If motion is from committee, *committee chair* is considered *maker of motion*.
- Each speaker must rise and be "**recognized**" by Chair.
- Each speaker is given a specific limit to presentation.
  - Usually 10 minutes.
    - Longer time can be allowed by a 2/3 vote. (39)
      - This vote is not subject to debate.
  - No speaker can speak more than twice on any question.
- Maker of motion calls for closure of debate.
  - Only after all who wish to have been heard.
- Call for **Previous Question** (20) closes debate.

**SECTION 35.****NOT DEBATABLE QUESTIONS/OPENING THE MAIN QUESTION TO DEBATE****NOT DEBATABLE**

- Time for Adjournment. (10)
- Motion to adjourn.
- Orders of Day. (13)
- Priority Questions.
- Appeals. (14)
  - If made during Previous Question.
  - Re:* Behavioral/decorum problems.
- Objections to Consideration of Question.
- Tabling/Untabing a Motion. (19)
- Previous Question.
- Reconsideration of Not Debatable question.

**Questions opening Main Question to Debate.**

- To Commit. (22)
- Postpone Indefinitely. (24)
- Rescind. (25)
- Reconsideration of Debatable Question. (27)

**SECTION 36.****DECORUM**

- Issues, not personalities, must be debated.
- Improper/inappropriate language is never to be used.

**SECTION 37.****HOW TO CLOSE DEBATES**

- Objection to Consideration of Question. (15)
  - Can *only* be made when Motion is introduced.
- Motion to Table. (19)
- Call Previous Question. (20)
- Time.
  - Group has previously set specific limit on debate on both individual speakers and total.

**Note:** Except for *Tabling Motion*, all others require 2/3 majority to close.

**ARTICLE VI. VOTING****SECTION 38.****VOTING**

- When Motion is not debatable (35) Chair immediately puts it to a vote.
- Debatable Motions are not put to a vote until debate is closed. (37)
- Unless *specifically stated by the membership beforehand or by the Rules itself*, a majority vote is sufficient for passage.
  - A *plurality* is not sufficient to pass unless this has been agreed to beforehand.
- Voting can take many forms (Voice vote, raising of hands, standing, secret ballot, etc.).
- Chair usually asks for those "in favor" to vote first.
  - Except, of course, in the case of secret ballot.
- Chair announces the result and Motion either passes or fails.

**SECTION 39.****MOVING TO REQUIRE A LARGER-THAN-MAJORITY VOTE**

*Although every group has the right to require any vote be 2/3 or larger, the following are those most commonly thought of as needing at least a 2/3 vote.*

- Amendment of Rules.
  - Prior notification to all members is required to assure all interested parties have opportunity to attend meeting.
- Suspension of Rules. (18)
- Special Orders. (13)
- Objection to Consideration of Question.
  - 2/3 must vote *against* Consideration.
- Debate Extension.
- Take Question out of order. (13)
- Limit/Close Debate. (37)
- Call Previous Question.

**ARTICLE VII. OFFICERS AND MINUTES****SECTION 40.****DUTIES OF CHAIR/ PRESIDENT**

- Opens meeting at correct time and "calls it to order."
- Announces Agenda *in order it will be considered*.
- States and puts to vote all motions.
- Announces result.
- Maintains order within debate.
  - If Chair cannot maintain order: Adjourns meeting.
- Enforces order and decorum *at all times*.
- Decides all questions of order.
  - May be appealed if two or more members disagree.
- Inform members of Points of Order or Practices as necessary.
- Authenticates actions, etc. by signature.
- Represents the Group and stands for same.
  - Must always state will of group, regardless of personal opinion, in all appropriate venues.

**SECTION 41.****DUTIES OF CLERK/ SECRETARY**

- To record, maintain, read the *Minutes of the Meeting*.
- To serve as Treasurer when said office is not independently filled.
- To serve as substitute Chair if Chair is unavailable in absence of Vice-President.
- To maintain custody of Minutes and all other documents that come before the group.
- To prepare the Order of Business before each meeting for the Chair's use.

**ARTICLE VIII. MISCELLANEOUS****SECTION 42.****SESSION**

- May be any number of meetings, spread over one or many days, but considered as a single unit (*i.e.* A Session of the U.S. Congress, Annual Conventions, etc.).

**SECTION 43.****QUORUM**

- The specific number of members required at a meeting to legally conduct business.
  - Usually, but not necessarily, a majority of the membership.
    - In the Electoral College, for example, 2/3's of the **States** must be represented, regardless of whether both representatives of any single state are present.

**SECTION 44.****ORDER OF BUSINESS**

- The ongoing/fixed format of any meeting.
  - Usually, but not necessarily, Reading of Minutes; Reports of Standing Committees; Reports of Select Committees; Unfinished Business; New Business.
    - A Special Order (13) takes precedence over all of the above, except Reading of Minutes.

**SECTION 45.****AMENDMENTS TO RULES OF ORDER**

- Require 2/3 vote of membership.
  - Must be scheduled in advance and schedule announced in writing to membership in a timely fashion.

**ARTICLE IX. ORGANIZATION/MEETINGS****SECTION 46.****OCCASIONAL/MASS MEETINGS**

- Not held by an organization, but by an Ad Hoc Group, or held by Organization on a one-time basis.
  - Follows organizing procedures of meeting (*i.e.* names Chair, Secretary, etc., then proceeds as Organizational meeting would).

**SECTION 47.****CONVENTIONS/ASSEMBLIES OF DELEGATES**

- At a Convention (*i.e.* a mass meeting of people with a similar interest) not all present may have legal voting rights. Thus a Committee must (either then or in advance) provide those who do - **Delegates** (often representing non-present members) - with **Credentials** (*i.e.* Voting and other legal authority).

**SECTION 48.****PERMANENT SOCIETIES**

- An ongoing group of people with similar interest in a specific area, legally established to act within this area.

**SECTION 49.****CONSTITUTION/BYLAWS/RULES OF ORDER/STANDING RULES****1. Constitution**

- Framework of the organization.
  - Contains *Name/Purpose* of organization; *Qualifications* for Membership; *Officers*, *Method of election*, *duties*; The **essentials** that constitute a Meeting of the organization (*not* the details); Plans for *Amendments* to the Constitution.

**2. Bylaws**

- Contains the specific details that amplify, control, and explain the Meeting.

**3. Rules of Order**

- The *specific* book (or *chart*) which will be used to define and govern *Robert's Rules* within the organization.

**4. Standing Rules**

- Specific to, and adopted by the organization (*i.e.* No smoking; Meeting will always adjourn by 10 P.M., etc.).



## ARTICLE X. OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

### SECTION 50.

#### CHAIR/PRESIDENT

1. Performs duties as stated in (40).

### SECTION 51.

#### CLERK/SECRETARY/RECORDING SECRETARY

1. Essentially interchangeable terms.
2. See: (42).

### SECTION 52.

#### TREASURER

1. Responsible for all matters of group finances.
2. Prepares and presents Financial Reports as dictated by Constitution and Bylaws.

### SECTION 53.

#### COMMITTEES

1. Subgroups of the whole appointed to examine and recommend action on specific matters.
- A. Should contain representatives of all viewpoints upon said matter.
  1. Committee recommendations are usually agreed to and acted upon by membership.

## ARTICLE XI. INTRODUCTION OF BUSINESS

### SECTION 54.

#### HOW TO INTRODUCE BUSINESS

1. Take the floor and state nature of Business.
  - A. Formally: Begin with "Resolved..." and state the proposed.
2. Can only be done when there is no other business on the floor.

## ARTICLE XII. MOTIONS

### SECTION 55.

#### METHODS OF DISPOSING OF, OR POSTPONING, A RESOLUTION UNDER DISCUSSION

1. In order of objective they can be:
  - A. Modify/Amend (56)
  - B. Defer Action (57)
  - C. Suppress Debate (58)
  - D. Suppress Question (59)
  - E. Reconsider Question (60)
  - F. Apply Orders/Rules (61)
  - G. Handling of Miscellaneous Matters.

### SECTION 56.

#### MODIFY/AMEND

1. Interchangeable Terms.
2. Motions to Amend include:
  - A. Adding of words.
  - B. Deletion of words.
  - C. Changing of wording by deletion and insertion.
  - D. Division of Question into two or more separate parts with votes on each part.
3. If a question is of such complexity that it becomes onerous or confusing for membership to track, it may be referred to a committee for analysis and report.

### SECTION 57.

#### DEFERRAL OF ACTION

1. Deferral to a Certain Time
  - A. Recognizes that action must be voted upon, but requires specific time frame in which to further study.
2. Table
  - A. Defers matter to no specific time and, in essence, kills it.

### SECTION 58.

#### SUPPRESSING DEBATE

1. Must be based on practical considerations such as time factors.
  - A. May *not* be used to stifle unpopular debate.
2. Call for "Previous Question" effectively ends debate.

#### NOTE TO STUDENT:

This QUICK STUDY® guide is an outline of the basic topics covered in Parliamentary Procedure. Due to its condensed format, use it as a Parliamentary Procedure guide but not as a replacement for assigned class work.

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## QuickStudy

## ARTICLE XIII CONTINUED

### SECTION 59.

#### SUPPRESSING THE QUESTION

1. Does not require second (15).
2. Called for when Question itself is considered of dubious benefit to some or all members.
3. Requires 2/3 vote to pass.
4. Must be made *before* debate begins.
5. Questions can be suppressed *after* Debate by a Motion to Postpone (decision) indefinitely or Motion to Table.
  - A. The result leads to a distinction without a difference although a Tabled motion can be brought up again at any time.
  - B. 2/3 vote should be required.

### SECTION 60.

#### RECONSIDERING THE QUESTION

1. Made at same session after a Motion has been Passed, Rejected, or Postponed.
2. Can *only* be made by member of the prevailing majority.

### SECTION 61.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY/SUSPENSION OF RULES

##### Orders of the Day

1. Called for when specific item of business has been scheduled for a specific time.
2. Requires no second.
3. If assembly agrees to call, Orders of Day are enforced and ends, or postpones, any other matter that may be under discussion at that time.

##### Suspension of Rules

1. Called for when strict adherence to rules may be felt to impede progress.
  - A. Needs 2/3 vote to pass.

### SECTION 62.

#### PAPERS/PRIVILEGES/WITHDRAWING MOTIONS

1. Person who makes a motion or has a paper to read in conjunction with same, may read paper or withdraw motion at will if none objects.
  - A. If objection is raised, then a motion to read/withdraw must be made and voted upon.
2. A *Question of Privilege* is called when some outside force, perceived misbehavior, or other disruption is felt to impinge upon the proceedings.
  - A. Chair decides if such question truly does exist.
    1. **Questions of Privilege supersede all others.**

### SECTION 63.

#### CLOSING A MEETING

1. Fixed Closing.
  - A. Motion made to "adjourn at (set time)."
    1. Can be made at any time during the meeting.
2. Motion to Adjourn.
  - A. Can be made at any time during meeting and calls for immediate adjournment, if passed.
3. Adjournment can be until next scheduled meeting, for a fixed period of time or indefinitely.
  - A. "Meeting is adjourned." Implies all know when next meeting will be.
  - B. "Meeting is adjourned until Tuesday at 6 P.M." Announces the next meeting.
  - C. "Meeting is adjourned *sine die* (without a day)." Effectively announces that there is no set time for the next meeting. It may occur at any time, or may never occur at all.

*Note: The Rules continues for another 5 sections that either reiterate material above or set a standard for legal punishments with an organization that are both archaic and unenforceable. It is our contention that they will never be used in 20th/21st Century America, and need not be dealt with herein.*

## PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE AT A GLANCE

*Every organization must, as a matter of course and to maintain reasonable standards of decorum, use some form or parts of Parliamentary Procedure. But how much and how stringently should it be applied? The following, based on discussions with people who have chaired numerous meetings under various situations, may be a helpful guide.*

### 1. Parliamentary Procedure was developed for the orderly operation of a large, contentious, body – The British Houses of Parliament.

A. Most organizations that will be using it today are smaller.

B. Local civic groups, school groups, clubs, etc.

B. Most organizations that will be using it will be less contentious.

1. They are formed through a commonality of interest.

2. They are not involved in political maneuvering upon which their jobs, or the fate of nations, may depend.

3. They are not designed *specifically* to present deliberately opposing viewpoints.

### 2. Therefore, many of the intricate "checks and balances" that are inherent in all the cross-referenced procedures may not be, indeed rarely are, necessary.

A. Most meetings can function perfectly well with only a handful of the more important guidelines.

### 3. The most important procedures in Parliamentary Procedure are:

A. Choosing of Chair and other officers.

1. Not only for establishing and maintaining order.

a. It is often a legal requirement in corporate-type situations.

B. Reading of, and adherence to the agenda.

1. Including *minutes* if there is any material within that will impact on the meeting.

a. The reading of the minutes is the most often "waived" procedure when doing so will merely take up time and have no productive effect.

C. Proper recognition of speakers.

D. Full, open, controlled, discussions of items.

1. "Control" in the sense of enforcement of time elements and assurance of representation of all relevant views.

2. *Not* in the sense of advancing a particular agenda.

E. Voting mechanism.

F. Hearing of all motions of privilege.

*Remember: Parliamentary Procedure rules were established in order to make meetings fair and equitable, while controlling time and relevance so that the work of an organization could be accomplished with a minimum of discord and a maximum of productivity. When Parliamentary Procedure is used in this manner it can be the most useful tool imaginable. However, when Parliamentary Procedure rules are either too strictly enforced, or enforced to advance the agenda of only one side in a debate, they can be the most destructive tool imaginable. It is therefore recommended that the rules of Parliamentary Procedure always be accompanied by two basic attributes:*

1. A strict adherence to fairness.

2. Simple, basic, common sense.

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