

# Parliamentary Procedure for Club Meetings

Parliamentary procedure is the etiquette of organization. It is a uniform, businesslike procedure organizations use to ensure that all members have a chance to participate and yet reach conclusions. Parliamentary procedure is merely the application of good manners.

You must know some of the basic principles of parliamentary procedure in order to conduct a good meeting.

**Here are some points you need to know:**

1. How to call the meeting to order.
2. How to call for reading of minutes, approval, or corrections.
3. How to be recognized or to get the floor.
4. How to make a motion.
5. How to amend a motion.
6. How to table a motion.
7. How to postpone a motion.
8. How to call for questions.
9. How to call for committee reports.
10. How to call for various types of votes.
11. How to reconsider a motion.
12. How to adjourn the meeting.

**PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE** - By observing a few rules, your 4-H club meeting will move like clockwork. Here are a few things that will help you with parliamentary procedure in your club.

**To call the meeting to order** - The president stands, raps once on the table, and then says, "The meeting will please come to order."

**To call the roll** - The president, still standing, says, "Will the secretary please call the roll." Then the president is seated. The secretary may or may not rise as the roll is called.

**Reading and approving the minutes** - The president, standing, says, "Will the secretary please read the minutes of the preceding meeting." The president is seated and the secretary stands while reading the minutes. After the minutes are read, the president will say, "Are there any corrections to the minutes?" After a pause, he/she then continues, "If not, the minutes stand approved as read." Any corrections, are made before the minutes are approved.

**Reports of officers and committees** - It is not expected that every officer and committee will have a report, nor is it always necessary to call the names of all committees. To get these reports, the president should say, "We will now have the reports of officers (or committees)." Then the president calls the names of the Officers first, followed by the committees.

**Unfinished business** - Unfinished business is any item not completed at the last meeting and pending in the secretary's minutes. The president will call for these motions by saying, "Mr. (or Madam) Secretary, is there any unfinished business?"

## **New business**

After all postponed business has been taken care of, the president calls for new business by saying, "Is there any new business?"

After new business is completed, the president will present the program chairman who will introduce the program. At the end of the program, the program chair turns the meeting back to the president. The president then will entertain a motion to adjourn. (NOTE: The meeting may be adjourned before the program, with the president then presenting the program chair.)

## **Steps in Making and Voting on a Motion**

**The member addresses the chair (president)** - A member who wishes to speak in a meeting should rise and address the chair as "Mr. President" or "Madam President."

**The chair (president) recognizes him/her** - The president will do this by saying, "Bill" or "Jane." The use of first names for recognition is permitted. Once recognized, that person "has the floor." Only that person is allowed to speak and **should not be interrupted**. All remarks are directed to the president. There should be no talking between members.

**The member makes the motion** - Having been recognized, the member states the motion as follows: "I move that \_\_\_\_\_" not, "I make a motion that" or "I move you."

**The motion is seconded** - All ordinary motions must be seconded. This should be done promptly. To second a motion, it is not necessary to be recognized by the chair or to rise. Any member may say, "I second the motion." If there is no second, the president might call for a second by saying, "Is there a second to the motion?" If there is no second to the motion after a pause, the president will then say, "The motion is lost for want of a second." Then this motion cannot be considered for further discussion.

**The chair (president) states the motion** - After the motion has been seconded, the president repeats it clearly so that all members will know what the motion is. The president says, "It has been moved and seconded that \_\_\_\_\_. Is there any discussion?" This discussion is necessary so that all members have a chance to express their opinion or help clarify the question.

**The chair (president) puts the motion** - When it seems that all who wish to speak on the motion have done so, the president may say, "Are you ready for the question?" If they are ready to vote, the members say, "Question." The president then asks for a vote on the motion. A motion can be brought to vote by any member who calls out "Question." (It is not considered good manners to call for question unless all members have had a chance to discuss the motion.) The president always asks for both a "yes" and "no" vote.

**The chair (president) announces the results** - After the vote is taken, the president must announce the results. The usual form is, "The ayes have it and the motion is carried," or "The no's have it and the motion is lost."

**Recess** - This is a request to take a short intermission. This request may not be made when debating on an amendment or bylaws, but can be requested at other times.

**Fix time to adjourn** - Sometimes an ending to a meeting has not been specified. A member may wish to fix a definite time for adjournment and to set the time, and sometimes the place, of another meeting to continue the business of the group.

**Adjourn** - The correct way to adjourn the meeting is for a member to rise, be recognized, and say, "I move to adjourn," or "I move that the meeting be adjourned." This must be seconded and a vote taken. Sometimes the president, after all business has been transacted, might call for a motion to adjourn by saying, "Do I hear a motion for adjournment?" Two other privileged motions are "calling for the orders of the day" and "raising a question of privilege."

## METHODS OF VOTING

- Acclamation or voice – "Yes" or "No"
- Show of hands
- Rising
- Secret ballot (used most for elections)
- Roll call (members answer when name is called)

Whenever a voice vote is taken and a member feels that it was not clear, She/he might call for a "division of the house," which means that another Vote must be taken by either a show of hands or members rising. *The president should not vote. He or she may vote in case of a tie vote, but does not have to. If the vote is a tie, the motion loses.*

## INTERRUPTIONS

Two main types of interruptions are allowed. They are point of order and a question of information.

### **Point of order**

This is used to correct any errors in parliamentary rules. To rise to a point of order, the member rises and says, "Mr. (or Madam) President, I rise to a point or order." The president responds by saying, "State your point of order." The member then states his point and the president rules on it.

### **A question of information**

Any member may interrupt the speaker to ask a question to gain information on subject under discussion. To do this, the member rises and says, "Mr. (or Madam) President, I rise to a question of information. The president says, "State your question." The member states the question and the speaker answers it.