

Roberts Rules 101
Training
Parliamentary Procedures

1

History of
Parliamentary
Procedures

- English Parliament Journal 1580
- Virginia House of Burgesses 1619
- Jefferson's Manual 1801; others followed
- Henry M. Robert
 - 1863, Captain, New Bedford MA meeting
 - 1876, Brig. Gen., Pocket Manual, "vanity publication" by Griggs & Co.
 - 1912, Roberts Rules, Revised – modern format
 - 1923, Family trusteeship
 - 1970, Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised
 - 2000, RONR, 10th Edition

2

Why Robert's
Rules of
Order?

[A] very brief pocket manual, so cheap that every member of a church or society could own a copy, and so arranged as to enable one quickly to find when any particular motion could be made.

- Henry M. Robert

3

Who should follow PP?

The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure by Alice Sturgis states:

- *Deliberative bodies, such as business, cultural, religious, social, fraternal, professional, educational, labor, civil, scientific, medical, and governmental organizations, are subject to the principles of common parliamentary law. All profit and non-profit corporations and associations and the boards, councils, commissions, and committees of government must observe parliamentary law.*
- <http://www.jimslaughter.com/parliamentaryprocedure1>

4

What is Parliamentary Procedure?

- Parliamentary procedure, or parliamentary law, is the code of rules and ethics for working together in groups.
- Parliamentary law refers to the rules, laws, or regulations of organizations, governing the orderly, expeditious and efficient transaction of business and meetings and conventions. Without rules, there would be injustice and confusion. Hence, it is as necessary to follow the rules of parliamentary law as it is to follow the rules of a ball game or a card game.

5

Robert on PP

- *The assembly meets to transact business, not to have members exploit their knowledge of parliamentary law. A business meeting is not a class in parliamentary law.*
- *Parliamentary law should be the servant, not the master, of the assembly.*
- Henry M. Robert

6

What is the goal?

- The application of parliamentary law is the best method yet devised to enable assemblies of any size, with due regard for every member's opinion, to arrive at the general will on the maximum number of questions of varying complexity in a minimum amount of time and under all kinds of internal climate ranging from total harmony to hardened or impassioned division of opinion

7

Why is it important?

- All members have equal rights
- Minority rights must be protected
- Full and free discussion is an essential right
- Use simplest and most direct procedure
- Only one question considered at a time
- Logical precedence governs order of discussion

8

Why is it important?

- Members must be recognized before speaking
- All remarks are directed through the chair
- No member may speak twice to the same question until all others have had an opportunity to speak
- Members may not question the character or motives of other members
- Members have a right at all times to know what question is before the assembly and what affirmative and negative votes mean

9

Basic Tools - Definitions

- Quorum: more than half of active membership*
- Majority: more than half of those voting*
- 2/3 Majority: 2/3 or more of those voting*
- Motion: A proposal by a member to take a particular action
- Nominate: To propose an individual for office
- * Note: Unless specified otherwise in the By-Laws

10

Effective Meeting

- Publish Agenda before Meeting
- Each item is assigned a time limit
- Start the Meeting on Time
- Follow the Agenda
- Changes to the Agenda require vote
- End the Meeting on Time

11

Typical Agenda

- Call to order
- Roll call of members present
- Reading of minutes of last meeting
- Officer reports
- Committee reports
- Special orders
- Unfinished business
- New business
- Announcements
- Adjournment

12

**Basic Tools –
The Chair**

- Must have a quorum to conduct any business at all
- Except as provided in the Rules, members must be recognized by the Chair before speaking
- Except when appealed to the assembly, the Chair rules on all procedural issues
- Chair may not make motions nor debate questions, except speaks first and last in an appeal
- Chair may vote only to make or break a tie vote

13

**Basic Tools -
Motions**

- Member obtains recognition by the chair
- Member states the motion
- Another seconds the motion when required
- – Recognition not necessary
- – Need not be in favor of the motion
- Chair restates the motion for the assembly
- The motion is debated
- A vote is taken
- The Chair announces the result of the vote

14

**Basic Tools –
Nominations**

- Chair announces nominations are open
- Member obtain recognition by the chair
- Member nominates one candidate
- Chair announces nomination and asks for further nominations
- Nominations remain open until closed by motion or unanimous consent

15

Cooperation and Harmony

- *The purpose of parliamentary procedure is to facilitate the transaction of business and to promote cooperation and harmony.*
- Alice Sturgis

16

Making a Motion

- How are Motions Presented?
- Obtaining the floor
- Make Your Motion
- Wait for Someone to Second Your Motion
- The Chairman States Your Motion
- Expanding on Your Motion
- Putting the Question to the Membership
- Voting on a Motion

17

Results of Vote

- Majority
- Some Motions – 2/3 Majority
- Plurality
- Special Resolutions – 3/4 Majority

18

Motions

- Main Motions
- Subsidiary Motions
- Privileged Motions
- Incidental Motions

19

Types of Motions

- **MAIN MOTIONS** -- a main motion brings business before the assembly. It can only be made when no other motion is pending and ranks lowest in the order of precedence of motions
- **SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS** -- subsidiary motions assist the assembly in considering or disposing of a main motion (and sometimes other motions). Subsidiary motions fall into the order of precedence.

20

Types of Motions

- **PRIVILEGED MOTIONS**
· Privileged motions do not relate to the pending business, but have to do with special matters of immediate and overriding importance which, without debate, should be allowed to interrupt the consideration of anything else. Like subsidiary motions, the privileged motions fit into an order of precedence.
- **INCIDENTAL MOTIONS**
· Incidental motions deal with questions of procedure arising out of other motions or business. They have no order of precedence among themselves. Instead, they arise incidentally and are decided as they arise.

21

Subsidiary Motion

- Postpone indefinitely
- Amend
- Refer
- Postpone to a certain time
- Limit or extend limits of debate
- Previous question
- Table

22

Privileged Motions

- Orders of the Day
- Question (point) of privilege
- Recess
- Adjourn
- Fix time to which to adjourn

23

Incidental Motions

- Point of order
- Suspension of the rules
- Objection to consideration
- Consideration seriatim
- Division of the meeting
- Motions related to methods of voting
- Motions related to nominations
- Requests and inquiries

24

Precedence of Motions

- Privileged Motions
 1. Adjourn
 2. Recess
 3. Question of privilege
- Subsidiary Motions
 4. Lay on the table
 5. Previous question (end debate)
 6. Limit or extend debate
 7. Postpone to a certain time (or "postpone" definitely)
 8. Commit or refer (to committee)
 9. Amend
 10. Postpone indefinitely
- Main Motion

25

Exceptions

· The conduct of business in a board or committee often varies by size. According to *RONR*, business should be transacted in a large board (more than a dozen members) according to the same formal rules of procedure as in other deliberative assemblies. However, such formality in a meeting of not more than about a dozen members may actually hinder business. As a result, *RONR* provides that the procedure in a smaller board can be less formal and include the following characteristics:

26

Becoming less Formal

- Members are not required to obtain the floor and can make motions or speak while seated.
- Motions need not be seconded.
- There is no limit to the number of times a member can speak to a question, and motions to close or limit debate generally should not be entertained (unless the group has adopted a rule to the contrary).
- The chair need not rise while putting questions to vote.
- The chair can speak in discussion without rising or leaving the chair, and
- Subject to rule or custom within the particular group, the chair usually can make motions and usually votes on all questions.

27