



# Parliamentary training

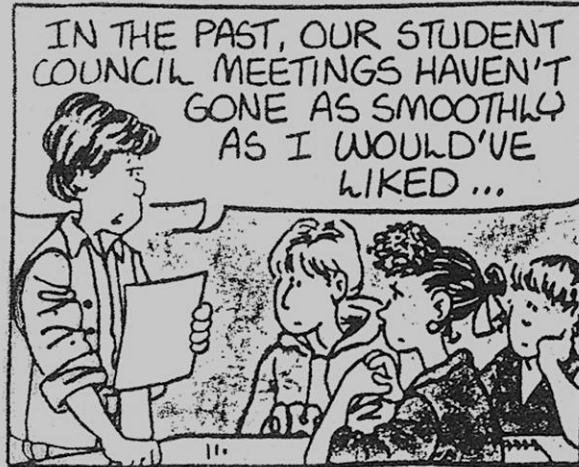
December 2023

*Dennis Clark, PPP*

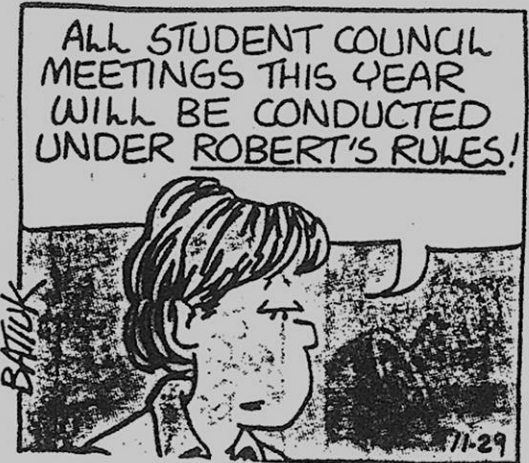


Wisconsin State Journal  
November 29, 1987

# FUNKY WINKERBEAN



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by Tom Batiul

THIS IS ROBERT...



## UNDER THE GAVEL



*They said I didn't  
follow Robert's Rules at  
our student council  
meeting this morning.*

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*I don't get it,  
who's Robert and  
why did he get  
to make the rules?*



**Brigadier General Henry Martyn Robert (1827 – 1923)  
Chief of Engineers, U. S. Army**

**“Where there is no law, but every man does what is right in his own eyes, there is the least of real liberty.”**

**Preface to *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*.**

THE GREAT SEAWALL PROTECTING GALVESTON, TEXAS



**Galveston Sea Wall**

# Basic Principles of Parliamentary Procedure

1. Only one question to be considered at a time.
2. The *majority* rules but the minority has the right to have its say.
3. Absentee members also have rights. \*\*
4. There must be free and impartial debate within a reasonable amount of time.



# RESTORATORY MOTIONS

A) Reconsider: May only be made on the same day a motion is adopted or the next day (of a session). Must be made by a member who voted on the prevailing side. Majority vote to adopt.

B) Amend something previously adopted

C) Rescind

B & C may be moved by any member but require a 2/3 vote without notice or a majority vote with notice (or majority vote of the *entire assembly*) for adoption.

**Meeting vs. Session**



ALL IN FAVOR, RAISE YOUR HAND.  
..JUST ME? OKAY, THE EYES HAVE IT.



Col. Robert's Rules of Order

5. **Equal *justice* to all members from other members and the chair.**
6. **Courtesy to and from others *at all times*. \*\***
7. **Meetings are to be conducted as *efficiently* as possible.**
8. **The society has the right to protect itself from unruly, obnoxious members.**

***“ 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.”***

# COURTESY

**“I don’t know how to explain common courtesy.”**



I shall not today attempt further to define the kinds of material [pornography]... but I know it when I see it.

(Potter Stewart)

izquotes.com

# cour·te·sy

*/'kərdəsē/*

*noun*

- the showing of politeness in one's attitude and behavior toward others.
- a polite speech or action, especially one required by convention.

*origin*

Middle English: from Old French *cortesie*, from *corteis*.

**“Debate must be confined to the merits of the pending question. Speakers must address their remarks to the chair, **maintain a courteous tone**, and – especially in reference to any divergence of opinion – avoid interjecting a personal note into debate. To this end, they must never attack or make any allusion to the motives of members.”**

***RONR* – Rule 4:30 (P. 39)**



## Dennis The Menace



"YOU CAN ALWAYS WIN, JOEY, IF YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO KNOWS THE RULES."

# ORDER OF BUSINESS & AGENDA SETTING



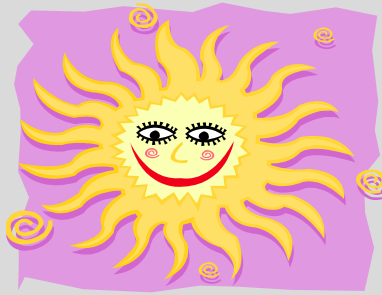
PSST, SENATOR, NOT  
THAT ONE - THAT'S  
YOUR *HIDDEN*  
AGENDA!





# The Agenda and The Meeting

## *Standard Order of Business*



**MRS  
SUN**



- **Call to Order**
- **Opening Ceremonies**  
(Song, Pledge, etc.)
- **Minutes**
- **R**eports of officers, boards and standing committees
- **S**pecial committee reports
- **S**pecial orders
- **U**nfinished business
- **N**ew business
- **Closing Activities**  
(Announcements, Program, Adjournment)

**Note:** The order of business in a convention is known as the *program*, or the *agenda*, depending on whether it is interwoven with, or separate from, the overall schedule of convention meetings, events, etc.

# SUGGESTED AGENDA

**CALL TO ORDER** – After determining that a quorum is present say, “The meeting will come to order.” (single rap of gavel)



## OPENING CEREMONIES

- Invocation (if an inspiration then the Pledge comes first)
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Welcome/introductions

**MINUTES** – “The secretary will read the minutes of the previous meeting. ...Are there any corrections? ... If not they are approved as read (or as corrected).”

*The minutes should contain only the business that has been transacted at the meeting (what is done) and not what has been said.*





" AFTER THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER, OUR EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT ASKED, 'WHY CAN'T THAT IDIOT C.E.O. EVER GET HERE ON TIME?' "



## MINUTES

1. Type of meeting (regular, special, adjourned)
2. Name of organization
3. Date and place of the meeting, and the time it was called to order
4. Fact that the regular presiding officer and secretary were present

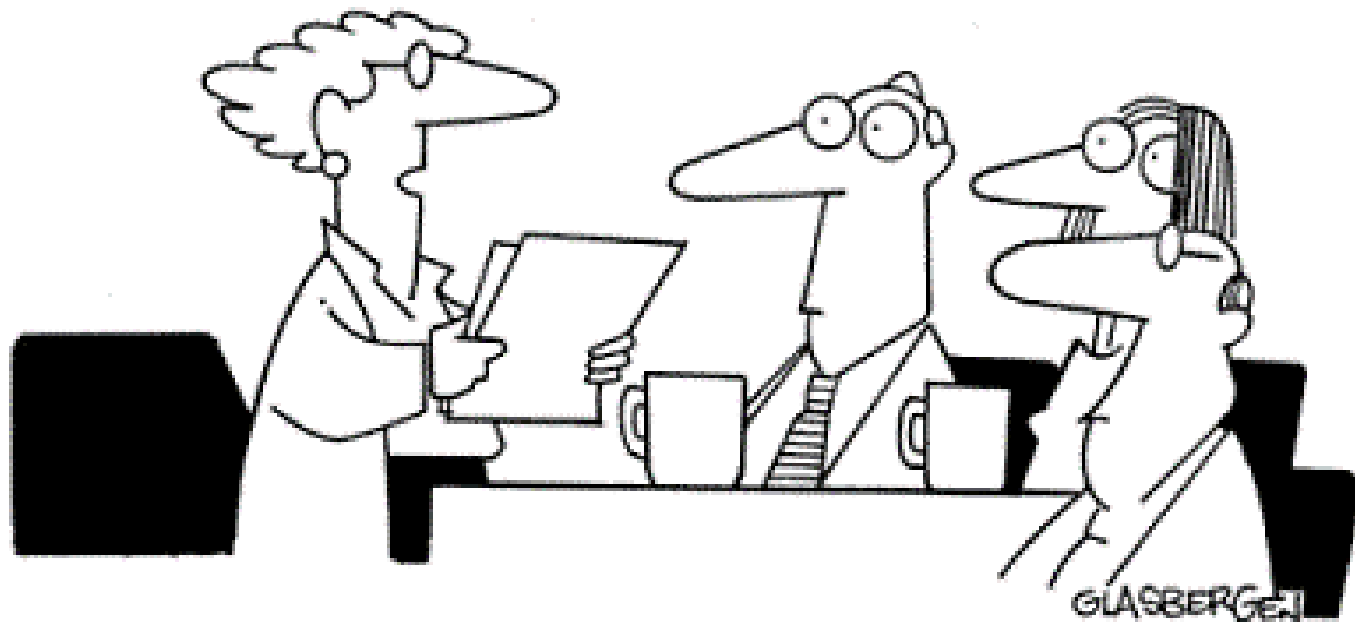
**Minutes should reflect only what has been *done* at a meeting NOT what was *said*.**

5. **Whether the minutes of the previous meeting were read approved**
  
6. **All main motions (except those withdrawn)**
  - a. **the name of the maker of the motion**
  - b. **facts as to how the motion was disposed of with mention of any amendments or debate mentioned w/o specificity, if at all**
  - c. ***If* the motion was temporarily disposed of (i.e. postponed or tabled) any amendments or other secondary motions that were pending**

7. **All Points of Order and Appeals**

8. **Hour of Adjournment**





**"Here are the minutes of our last homeowner's meeting.  
Some events have been fictionalized for dramatic purposes."**

# SUGGESTED AGENDA

## REPORTS OF:

- **Officers** – (Treasurer’s Report – “Are there any questions? ...
- **Board** – (Don’t read Boards minutes to general membership)
- **Standing Committees** – (don’t ask for reports unless you know the chairman – or officer actually has a report to give)

Reports are not voted upon – only recommendations that may be included in the report.

## REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES (also called ad hoc committees)





**UNFINISHED BUSINESS AND GENERAL ORDERS** – (Never ask, “Is there any unfinished business.” If the chair knows of none they should say, “The chair is unaware of any unfinished business...Is there any new business?” PROPER unfinished business includes a motion that was pending at the last adjournment, motions that were postponed from a previous meeting, and motions that may have been tabled at the last meeting can be taken from the table. (if someone wishes to make a motion to do so.)



**NEW BUSINESS** – Say: “Is there any new business?”

After the first item – “is there any further new business?”

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PROGRAM** – (This is just a suggestion – the program can be given after the meeting has been called to order or before or after the meeting).

**ADJOURNMENT** – Unless a motion to this effect has been made say, “If there is no further business ... the meeting stands adjourned.”

(Single rap of the gavel)



# HANDLING OF A MAIN MOTION



**"I make a motion that even if nobody seconds this motion, it passes anyway."**



"QUIET, LORETTA ... THERE'S A  
MOTION ON THE FLOOR."

# EIGHT ESSENTIAL STEPS OF A MAIN MOTION

## ACTION FROM THE FLOOR

1. **OBTAINING THE FLOOR:** Member rises and addresses the chair by saying: “Mr. President (or Chairman).”



## ACTION FROM THE CHAIR

2. **ASSIGNING THE FLOOR:** The chair recognizes the member by pointing to her or by speaking her name: “Mrs. Smith.”



3. **MAKING THE MOTION:** The proper form for introducing a motion is: “I move that (or to) . . . . .”





SATURDAY  
MORNING POST

“The chair recognizes Billy Armbruster’s mother . . .”



## ACTION FROM THE FLOOR

### 4. **SECONDING THE MOTION:**

Member States: “I second the motion” or “Second.” A second is necessary to avoid spending time considering a question that only one member favors.



## ACTION FROM THE CHAIR

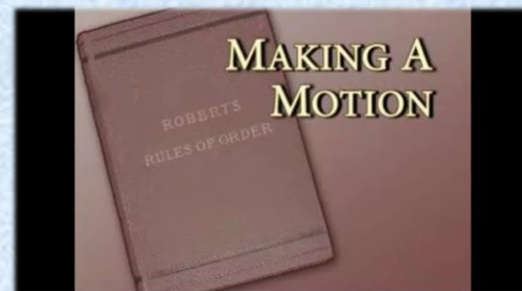
5. **STATING THE MOTION:** The chair states: “It **is** moved and seconded that . (restates motion) . . . is there any debate?” Only after the motion is stated by the chair is it before the assembly.







**"It has been motioned and seconded that this be a board meeting where nothing actually gets done."**



## ACTION FROM THE FLOOR

6. **DEBATE** must be addressed to the chair. It continues until no one wishes to speak or until someone moves to close debate and which is adopted by a 2/3's vote. It is during this phase that *Secondary Motions* may be introduced.



## ACTION FROM THE CHAIR



7. **PUTTING THE QUESTION:** Once it appears that no one else wishes to debate, the chair should ask, "Are you ready for the question?" The chair then states: "The question is on the motion (**restate motion**). Those in favor say aye. Those opposed say no." (The negative vote is called for on all motions except courtesy resolutions.)



## ACTION FROM THE FLOOR



## ACTION FROM THE CHAIR

8. **ANNOUNCING THE VOTE:** The chair states either, “The ayes have it and the motion is adopted . . .” or “The noes have it and the motion is lost.” The result must *always* be announced by the chair.



9. After announcing the outcome of the vote the chair should then state, *what the affect of the vote is*. He should then state “the next item of business is . . .” OR “**is there any further new business?**”

# RULES OF DEBATE

1. A member must be recognized by the chair prior to speaking to a debatable motion.
2. The maker of a motion has the right to be the first to speak to it.
3. Each speech must be limited to ten minutes.
4. A member can speak no more than twice on the same question on the same day.
5. No member may speak a second time to a motion so long as another is seeking recognition to speak their first time.



6. All remarks must be limited to the merits of the subject immediately pending before the assembly.
7. Debate should alternate between those speaking for and those opposed to the motion.
8. Personal remarks should be avoided. The motives of members must not be questioned; the motion, not the person, is the subject of debate.
9. Members may not speak against their own motion, however, they may vote against it.
10. The chairman may not debate from the chair.



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**"I was floating in a tunnel toward a very bright light  
when the board president finally called for a  
vote on the motion."**



# VOTING METHODS



Voice Vote  
(*viva voce*) or  
show of hands



or



To verify an  
inconclusive  
voice vote



# VOTING METHODS

Alternate methods must be proposed by a motion and then voted upon (by majority vote).

Rising Counted vote



Vote by Ballot

Voting Ballot	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	.....
<input type="checkbox"/> No	.....
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	.....
<input type="checkbox"/> No	.....
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	.....
<input type="checkbox"/> No	.....
© abcteach.com	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	.....
<input type="checkbox"/> No	.....
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	.....
<input type="checkbox"/> No	.....
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	.....
<input type="checkbox"/> No	.....

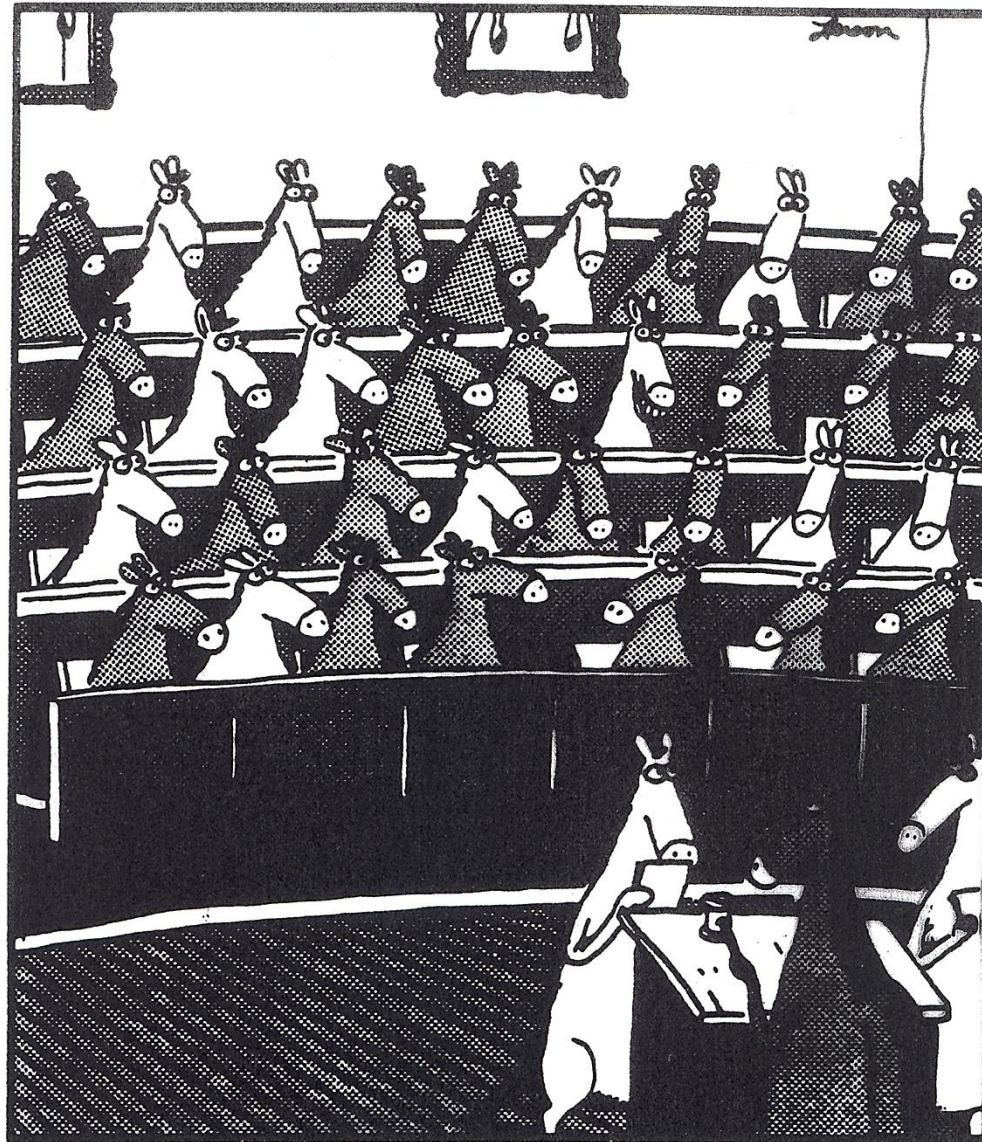


Roll Call Vote

ON MOTION TO CONCUR IN THE SENATE AMENDMENTS

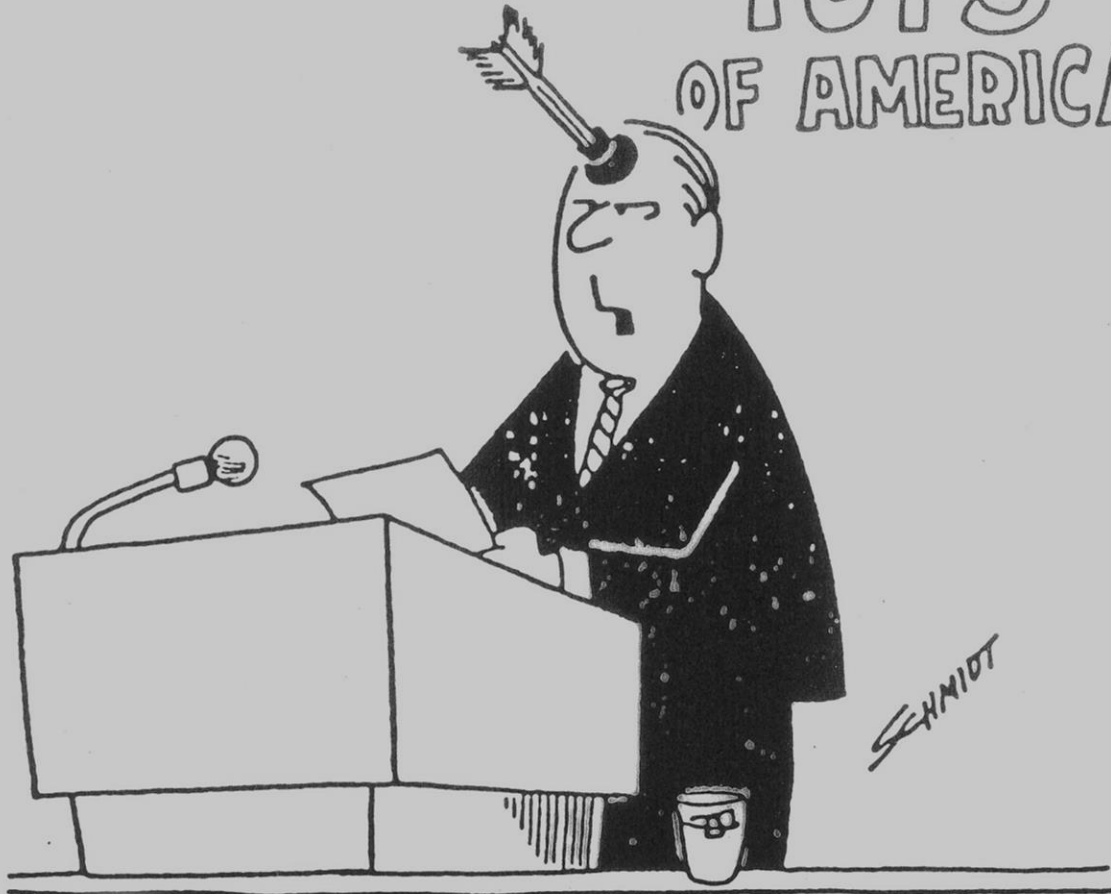
H R	8	YEA	NAY	PRES
REPUBLICAN		85	151	
DEMOCRATIC		172	16	
INDEPENDENT				
TOTALS		257	167	
		TIME REMAINING		0:00





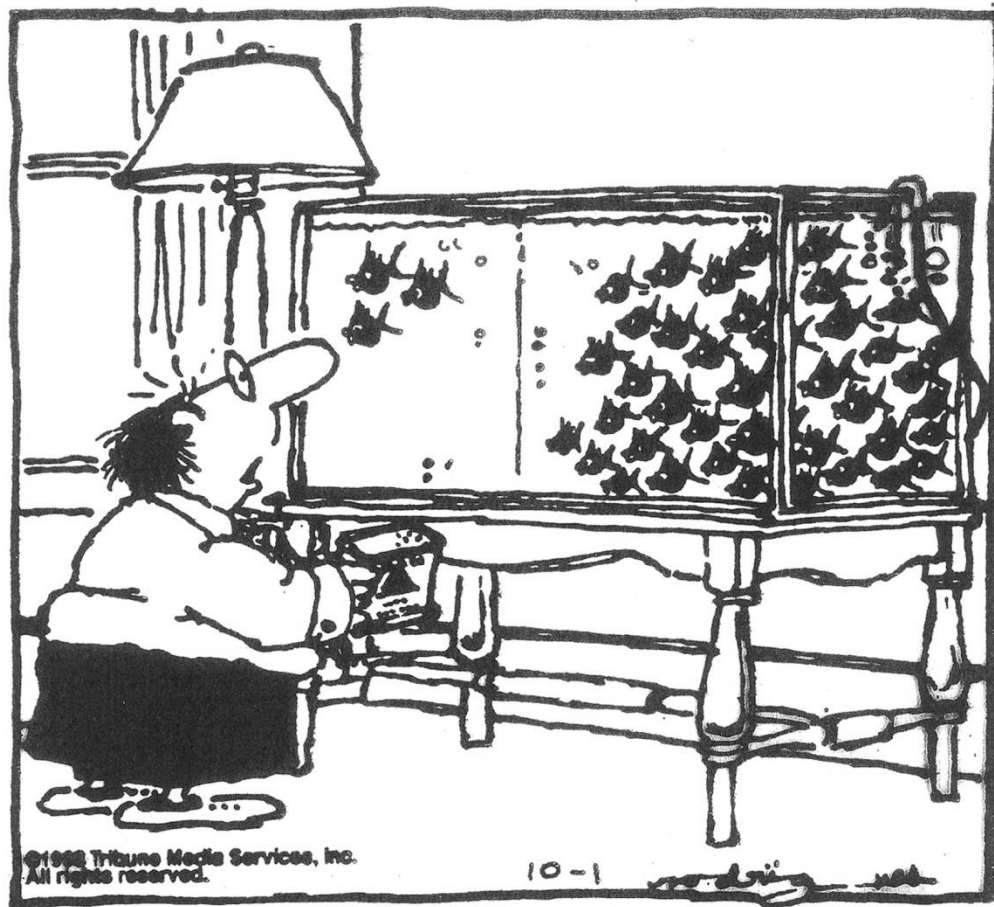
**The entire parliament fell dead silent.  
For the first time since anyone could remember,  
one of the members voted "aye."**

# TOYS OF AMERICA



... A "VOICE VOTE" WILL SUFFICE!

# Charlie



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“Okay, the nays have it. No more of this new fish food I bought yesterday.”

... AND, AS USUAL, THIS COMMITTEE IS DEADLOCKED...FOUR VOTING "AYE" AND FOUR VOTING "NAY"...



MARK  
PARISI

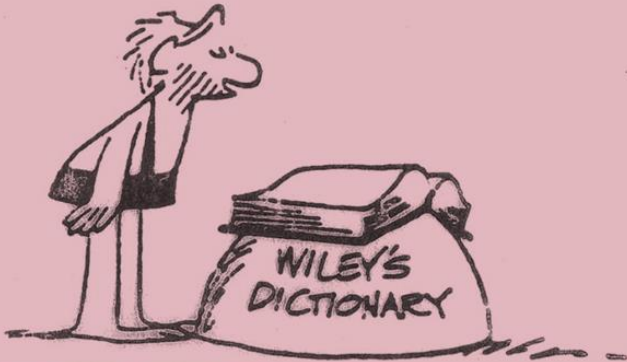
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B.C.

MOTION SICKNESS



THE OXFORD SYNDICATE, INC.

907

A COMMON DISORDER BROUGHT ON  
PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE.



72

# Understanding Class, Rules, and Rank of Motions

“Mastery of the *concepts in the chart of motions* will give you at once a 50 percent skeleton knowledge of basic parliamentary law and practice.”

George Demeter

*Demeter's Manual of Parliamentary Law*



# PARLIAMENTARY MOTIONS CHART

	Motions	In order When Another is Speaking	Requires a Second	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Required	Can be Reconsidered
<b>PRIVILEGED MOTIONS</b>	Fix the time to which to Adjourn <i>to</i> <sup>1</sup>	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	Yes
	Adjourn <sup>1</sup>	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
	Recess <sup>1</sup>	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
	Question of Privilege	Yes	No	No	No	Decided by Chair	No
	Orders of the Day	Yes	No	No	No	Can be set aside only by 2/3's vote <sup>2</sup>	No

<b>SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS</b>	Lay on the Table	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
	Previous Question <sup>3</sup> (close debate)	No	Yes	No	No <sup>4</sup>	2/3's	Yes <sup>5</sup>
	Limit or Extends Limits of Debate	No	Yes	No	Yes	2/3's	Yes
	Postpone to a Certain Time	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
	Refer to a Committee (Commit)	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
	Amend	No	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>6</sup>	Majority	Yes
	Postpone Indefinitely	No	Yes	Yes <sup>7</sup>	No	Majority	Yes

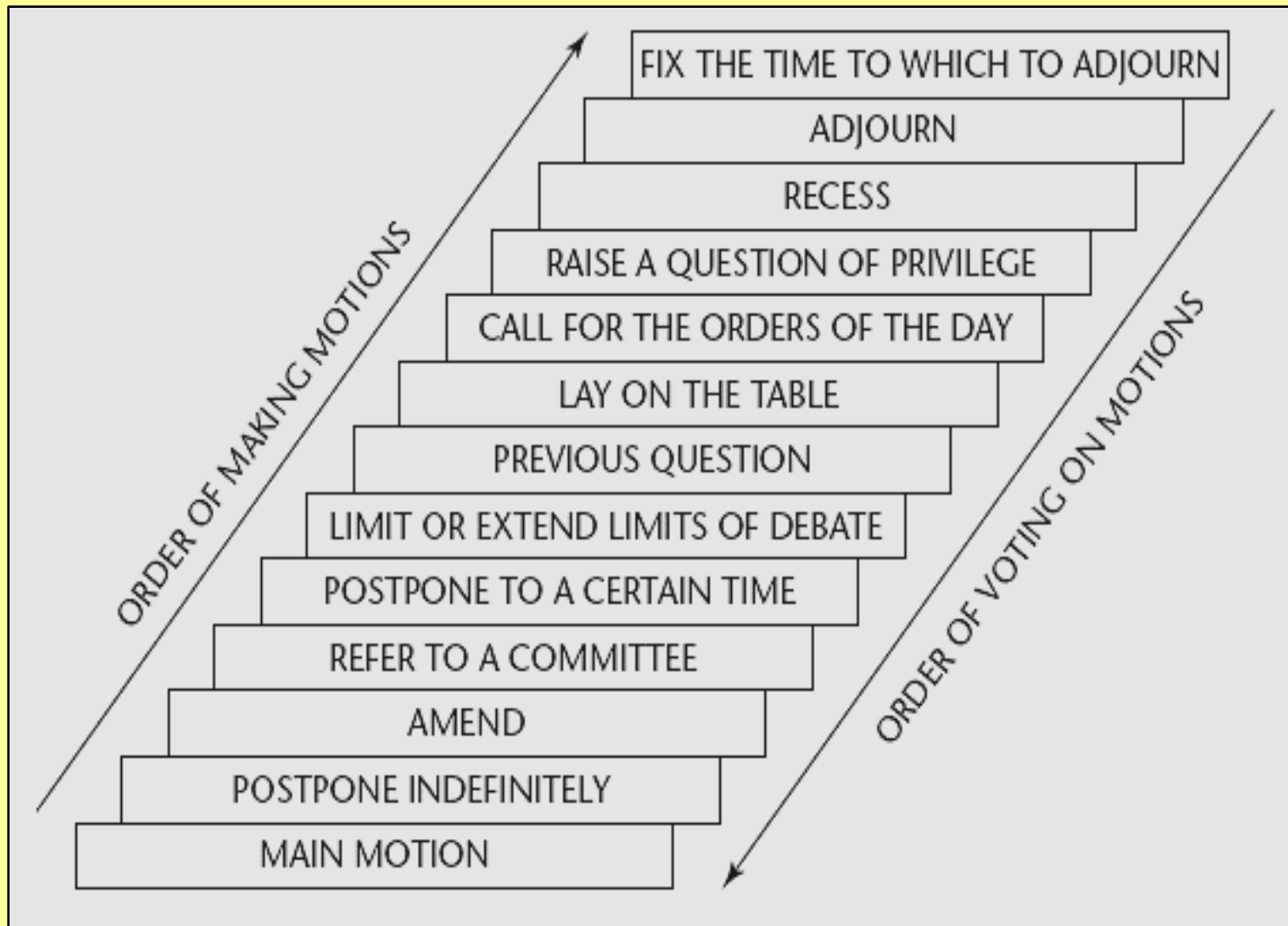
Main Motion	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
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# SECONDARY MOTIONS

Primary  
or  
Secondary?

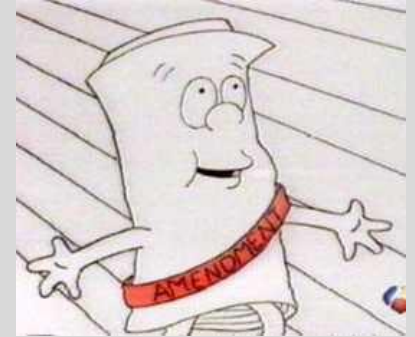
- ▶ **Subsidiary Motions** (assist the assembly in treating or disposing of the main motion)
- ▶ **Privileged Motions** (deal with matters of immediate or overriding importance)
- ▶ **Incidental Motions** (relate to pending business or business otherwise at hand – they come up incidentally)
  
- ▶ Another class of motions (not considered Secondary motions) are the **Motions that bring a question again before the Assembly** (the *Bring Back* motions)





## Ranking Motions

# AMENDMENTS



*AMENDMENTS MAY BE MADE IN THE FOLLOWING THREE WAYS:*

1. I move to amend by **adding** the word(s) . . . (at the end)  
I move to amend by **inserting** the word(s) . . . after the word(s) . . .
2. I move to amend by **striking out** the word(s) . . .
3. I move to amend by **striking out** the word(s) . . . **and inserting** the word (s) . . .  
  
I move to amend by **substituting** for the pending motion . . . the motion . . .

**I move that the club purchase two large pepperoni, onion, mushroom, anchovy pizzas from Pizza Hut ® for our next club meeting.**



## INCIDENTAL MOTIONS

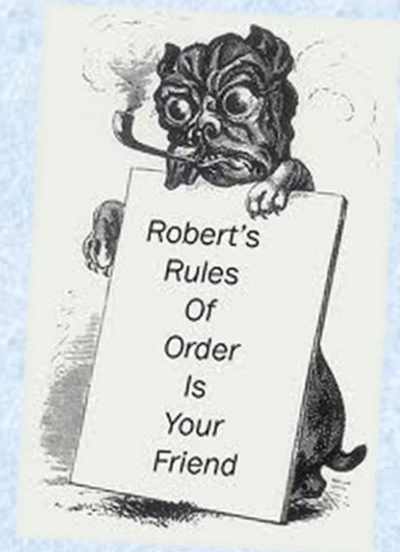
		In order When Another is Speaking	Requires a Second	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Required	Can be Reconsidered
<b>INCIDENTAL MOTIONS</b>	Point of Order	Yes	No	No	No	Decided by Chair	No
	Appeal	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>8</sup>	No	Majority in negative is required to reverse the chair's ruling <sup>9</sup>	Yes
	Suspend the Rules	No	Yes	No	No	2/3's	No
	Object to Consider- ation of a Question	Yes <sup>10</sup>	No	No	No	2/3's <sup>11</sup>	Negative Vote Only
	Division of a Question	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
	Consideration by Paragraph (Seriatim)	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
	Division of the Assembly	Yes	No	No	No	none	No
	Point of Information/ Parliamentary Inquiry	Yes	No	No	No	none	No

**MCHUMOR.com** by T. McCracken



"What luck!"

## **DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**



## *Preventing the Necessity of Disciplinary Measures*

**“The best way to avoid having to resort to using disciplinary procedures is to prevent unruly behavior in the first place.”**

**Dennis Clark, PPP**

# PRESIDING SKILLS FOR THE PREVENTION OF DISORDERLY BEHAVIOR

- ❑ **Preside with confidence. Prepare for the meeting in advance – stay organized and adhere to the agenda. Know the rules.**
- ❑ **Set the tone (for fairness, patience, politeness, tolerance, sense of humor, and open discussion). Be direct but be diplomatic.**
- ❑ **Set expectations at the beginning of the meeting. Adopt special rules at the outset of the meeting as necessary. Enforce the rules fairly, firmly, and consistently. Maintain eye contact with the person speaking. Speak calmly but forcefully when necessary to reprimand a disorderly member.**
- ❑ **Facilitate – *keeping the meeting moving and on track* – assist the members to get to where they wish to go as efficiently as possible – using the device of unanimous consent when appropriate**

## **PRESIDING SKILLS FOR THE PREVENTION OF DISORDERLY BEHAVIOR (2)**

- Reduce confusion (by properly using parliamentary forms)**
- Keep the debate on track and enforce adherence to the rules of debate**
- Share ownership of the organization and its meetings. Be gracious. Avoid phrases such as, “This is my meeting – if you don’t like it you can just leave,” or “if you think you can do better come up here and preside.”**
- Maintain credibility (neutral on the issues while presiding; be up front when asked questions; use good judgment).**



“The question of order is usually raised by the chairman’s calling the speaker to order. How this should be done must be left to the judgment of the chair.

*A nervous, excitable presiding officer is unfit to preside over a turbulent assembly. A presiding officer who is calm, cool, and courteous while every one else is excited, and who is familiar with the duties of the chair and is impartial, can nearly always keep the assembly under control.*

The moment a speaker attacks the motives of another member, or refers to his opponent by name, or uses an offensive epithet, the chair should rap with the gavel . . . And then proceed according to the circumstances of the case.”

# SIX STEPS TO EFFECTIVE PRESIDING

## *Rules of Order in Brief*

- ❑ Memorize Constantly Used Procedures
- ❑ Make Sure All Know What's Being Debated and Voted On
  - See that Motions are Clearly Worded
  - Repeat Wording of Motions Frequently
  - Make the Effects of Amendments Clear
- ❑ Learn How to Conduct Voting
- ❑ Know the Steps in a Meeting
  - You should stand when:
    - when calling a meeting to order or declaring it adjourned
    - putting a question to a vote
    - ruling on a point of order or speaking during debate on an appeal
- ❑ Learn to Handle Points of Order and Appeals
- ❑ Know More About Parliamentary Procedure Than Other Members

## SAMPLE MEETING RULES

- Members must be recognized by the Chair before speaking.
- All debate must be directed through the Chair.
- Members may be allowed to speak \_\_\_\_ time(s) per each motion and for \_\_\_\_ minutes each time they speak.
- (If they are allowed more than one speech then . . .)*
- Members may not speak their second time unless all others who wish to speak have spoken at least once.
- Debate will alternate between those in favor and those opposed to the motion.
- Discussion of personalities will not be tolerated.

## Helpful phrases for the Presiding Officer:

- Is there any objection to . . . . ?
- For what purpose does the member seek recognition?
- Does the member wish to offer a motion to . . . . ? (such as an amendment or other secondary motion)
- The Chair is in doubt (after taking a vote which appears to be close).
- The Chair is in doubt about . . . . . [state the issue] and will allow the assembly (or members) to decide the issue . . . [then put the issue to a vote in the normal fashion]
- The member will be in order – or – the assembly will be in order.
- The meeting (or assembly) will stand at ease.

# Dealing with Offenses in a Meeting (non-members)

*Nonmembers* can be excluded from all or part of a meeting by:

- ▶ A ruling from the chair
- ▶ Adoption of a rule on the subject
- ▶ An appropriate motion as the need should arise
- ▶ A motion to exclude nonmembers (going into Executive Session)



## **Offenses which might require disciplinary procedures:**

- Members being verbally abusive to others or the Chair or using offensive language. Insist that members speak civilly. This type of behavior must be dealt with quickly, firmly, and consistently.
- Not confining remarks to the merits of the pending question (not personalities)
- Attacking a member's motives
- Failure to address all remarks through the Chair
- Disturbing the assembly (talking or whispering while someone has the floor)
- Making dilatory motions
- Excessive use of points of order

“Parliamentary law should be the servant, not the master, of the assembly. 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. It is a nuisance have the time of the assembly wasted by a member’s raising points of order on technical points when no harm is done by the irregularity.”

*Parliamentary Law*

Henry M. Robert

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# Dealing with Offenses in a Meeting (Members)

- ▶ Calling a Member to Order



- ▶ Naming an Offender (recording in minutes)



- ▶ Consequences if the Offender does not apologize:

1. Be required to make an apology



2. Be censured



3. Be made to leave the meeting hall for the remainder of the meeting





# Discipline of Members

Punishments that can be imposed by a society (cont.):

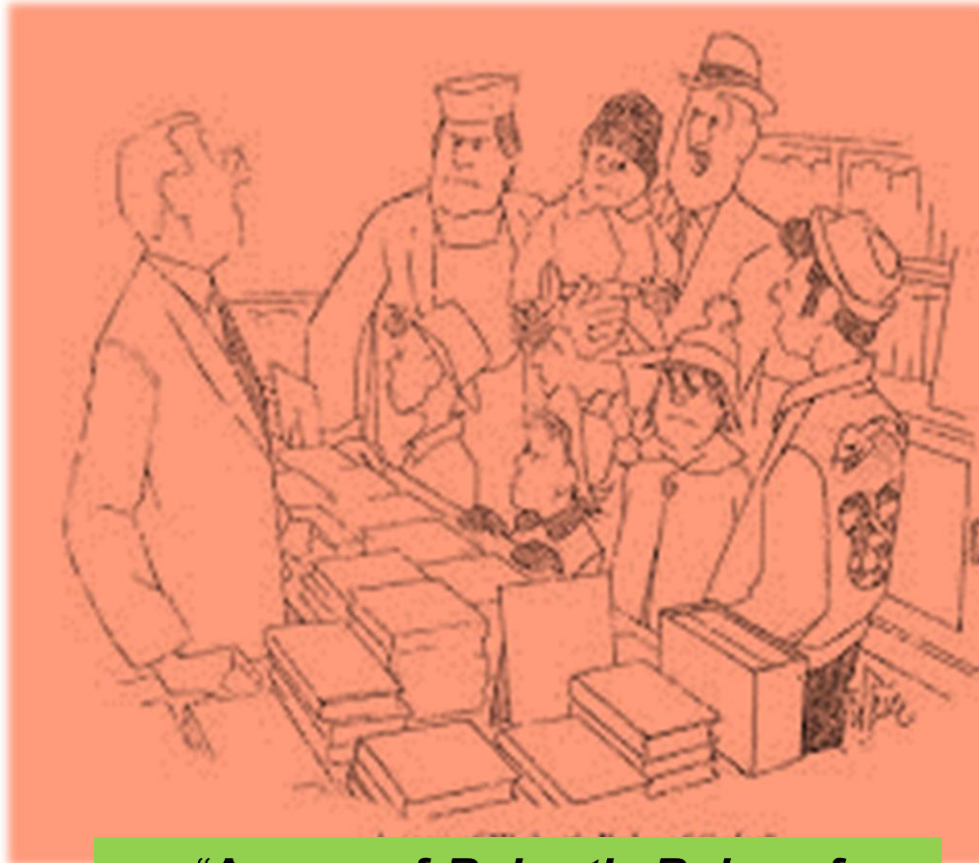
4. Fine (if authorized in the bylaws)



5. Suspension

6. Expulsion (2/3's vote)





***“A copy of Robert’s Rules of Order”***