

RULES OF ORDER FOR A MEETING

The heart of an association is its members. Attending meetings, taking part, voicing your opinion, voting on important decisions, and taking part in the election of officers who lead your church organization, club or board, is your responsibility.

Every club or organization should want to hold democratic meetings. But wanting this doesn't always bring it about. Through years of experience, legislators have worked out a set of rules for conducting meetings democratically. Because these rules were originally based on the experiences of the *English Parliament*, they are known as **Parliamentary Law** or **Parliamentary Procedure**. It helps us to accomplish business efficiently and speedily. At the same time, it protects the rights of all members to have their say.

Officers and Their Duties:

The Chairman of church meetings is usually the Pastor or Board President. If the President is absent, the Vice-President presides. If he or she is absent, then the Second Vice-President or next ranking officer presides.

The Chairman's duties are as follows:

1. Calls the meeting to order on time. **"The regular meeting of...will now come to order."**
2. Ask for **roll call of officers** and the **reading of previous minutes**. (Secretary then read both of these.)
3. Announce each item of **new business** as soon as the preceding one is finished to keep things moving steadily.
4. Calls on members who want to speak.
5. all motions before putting them to a vote. Announces the result of the voting.
6. Maintain order and conduct discussion democratically by recognizing speakers on both sides of a question.
7. The Chairman casts the deciding vote when there is a tie vote. The Chairman should know basic *Parliamentary Procedure* to keep the meeting running smoothly, starts and tries to end on time. Important matters should get attention, less important ones do not need to take up much time.

Reports of Committees and Officers should be prepared ahead of time so they are well presented and lead to action by the membership. Keep the meeting short as possible.

The Secretary

The Recording Secretary's job is to keep the minutes. There may also be a Corresponding Secretary. If not, the Recording Secretary reads the roll call of officers and minutes of the previous meeting. The membership must approve or correct this official record of its actions. And when necessary Secretary reads communications.

Minutes Include:

1. The kind of meeting (***Regular, Special, or Executive Board***).
2. Name of your organization.
3. Date, Time, Place of meeting.
4. Name of Chairman and Secretary.
5. Approval and correction, if any, of previous meeting.
6. Summary of Executive Board action, reports of Committees, including recommendations made and action taken on them.
7. The test of all motions made and seconded. The name of the maker, the action taken on motion and also the results.

The Treasurer

Keeper of the funds. Records when received and records when expended and itemizes each. Prepares monthly reports or as requested or needed. Although the other officers are just as important, we shall not attempt to define specific duties as their functions are generally known.

The Agenda we find is an important item.

The Agenda or Order of Business is a listing of what comes first and what comes after that. A meeting must be kept moving. To avoid any long dead spots where you and the members wait and wonder what comes next, have your Agenda prepared before the meeting.

Every meeting need not have business under each item, but the following may be the usual order.

1. Call meeting to order.
2. Roll call of officers.
3. Reading of previous minutes. Approve or correct them.
4. Communications, Bills, and etc.
5. Reports from Committees.
6. Unfinished or Old Business.
7. New Business.
8. Good and Welfare or Organization, programs, entertainment, recreation, etc.
9. If no further discussion, a motion to adjourn.

Nominations and Elections

The nomination of officers is a special order of business. Let all the members know when the meeting to nominate and to elect officers are to be held. **The law requires that all members be given reasonable notice of the time and place of nominations.** An announcement should be made at a Regular meeting and it also requires that a written notice be mailed to each member before the elections are held.

At the proper time in a meeting, the *Acting Chairman* calls for nominations. They should be given enough time for everyone who wants to nominate to have a chance to do so. The Chairman may rule out of order a motion to close nominations too soon. The motion to close nominations when it comes **requires a second**, and when a majority votes, it is not debatable.

Candidates, must of course, qualify for the office they seek according to the **By-laws** of the parent body. A person not present at the meetings may be nominated by their consent unless the *By-laws* provide to the contrary. **The law requires each candidate must receive a majority vote.**

HOW TO BEGIN AN ACTUAL MEETING

A typical meeting begins by someone of the organization assuming the office of Acting Chairman. He or she first attracts attention, if necessary, by striking the table and should say, **“The meeting will come to order.”** The member who called the meeting to order says, **“I nominate Mr./Ms. _____ for Chairman.”** “Mr./Ms. _____ is nominated for **Chairman** of this meeting. As many as are in favor of Mr./Ms. _____ for **Chairman** say **Aye** (*pronounced eye*). After the ‘Ayes’ have responded he or she continues, **“Those opposed say NO.”**

If the Ayes are in the majority, he or she continues to announce or declare the vote, **The Ayes have it.** Mr./Ms. _____ is elected **Chairman**, and will he or she take the chair.

Mr./Ms. _____ proceed to the platform and says, “The election of **Secretary** is the next business in order. Will someone please nominate a *Secretary*?” The Secretary is elected in the same manner as the Chairman.

The meeting organized, the Chairman says, **“The meeting is now open for business.** A member who wishes the assembly to take certain actions rises and addresses *‘the Chair’* should always be addressed by the official title preceded by **Mr.** and **Madam**, Thus: *Mr. President, Mr. Moderate, Madam Chairman, Madam President, etc.*

A motion is made by saying, **“I move to postpone the question to,”** etc.

In the case of resolutions, the following forms are used, **“I move to adopt the following resolution, Resolved, That, etc.**

When the main motion has been made, the maker of it hands the written resolution or motion to the *Chairman* and resumes his or her seat. Any member in the assembly without rising says, **“I second the motion.”** If there is no second, the motion is lost.

("How To Begin An Actual Meeting" continued)

When the motion is seconded, the *Chair* states the question to the assembly, thus: **"It is moved and seconded to.** The *Chair* then asks, **"Are you ready for the question?"** This means is the assembly ready to have the question put before the assembly? The question is now open to debate, the *Chair* must wait until it has ceased before putting the question.

The *Chairman* then repeats the *Motion* or *Resolution* and says, **"As many as are in favor of... say 'Aye'.** Those opposed say **'NO'.** The **Ayes** have it and the *Motion* or *Resolution* is carried or adopted.

If the negative is in the majority, the *Chair* announces the vote thus: **The NO's have it and the Motion or Resolution is lost.**

If it is a tie vote, the Chairman's vote breaks the tie.

Please consult **"Robert's Rule of Order"** for **"Order of Privileged", "Subsidiary", "Incidental"** and certain other **Motions.**

Robert's Rule of Order is a set of guidelines for conducting meetings. It's used by many organizations in the United States.

What it covers:

- **Meetings procedures:** *How to call a meeting to order, take roll, and adjourn*
- **Agenda Items:** *How to prioritize items on the agenda, including committee reports, new business, and unfinished business*
- **Voting:** *How to vote on motions, including when a two-thirds majority is required*
- **Speaking:** *How to recognize speakers, and when personal remarks are out of order*
- **Decision making:** *How to appeal a Chair's decision, and when the Chair's decision is upheld*

Why it's important.

Robert's Rule of Order helps ensure that everyone has a chance to participate and share ideas in an orderly way.