Meetings Gone Wild

Frances Jackson, PhD, RN
Professional Registered Parliamentarian

Technical Difficulties?

• Attempt the alternate audio option provided

• Send us a question through the GoToWebinar control panel

• Contact GoToWebinar Support Center at (888)259-8414
Brief Bio

• Lifelong resident of Detroit, MI
• Received BS Nursing, MA Counseling, PhD Counseling from Wayne State Univ. in Detroit, MI
• MS Nursing from the University of Michigan
• CNS in Hospice & Palliative Care
• Worked as a nurse at various Detroit hospitals

Brief Bio

• Taught nursing at Oakland University (Rochester, MI) for 30 years
• Member Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.
• Professional Registered Parliamentarian credentialed by the NAP
• National Parliamentarian for NPHC
Ground Rules

- No question is stupid. If you don’t know or if something isn’t clear; ask.
- As a retired university professor, I’m very used to answering questions as I go along, so please feel free to ask questions in real time.
- If the questions are numerous and it looks like I may fall behind my time limit, I may ask you to write down your question and wait until the end of the presentation.

Why Parliamentary Procedure?

- The rules stay the same regardless of changes in officers.
- The rules are available and retrievable to all.
- Learning to do things the right way, with small organizations will stand you in good stead once you graduate and perhaps go on to bigger organizations or professional organizations.
- It can help you to have better, more efficient and effective meetings.
Adoption of Agenda
Reading of Minutes
Officer Reports
Committee Reports
Unfinished Business (never use the term “old business”)
New Business
Good and Welfare
Adjournment

This is the simplified version from Roberts In Brief

The Agenda

• Do not put “Call to order” on the agenda.
• Do not put establishment of a quorum on the agenda.
• Once the presiding officer establishes that a quorum exists, simply call the meeting to order.
• Organizations can adopt their own agenda format; they are not required to follow RONR.
Making Motions

Correct

• Wait to be recognized.
• Once recognized, stand up.
• I move to…… or I move that....
• The person who seconds the motion does not wait to be recognized and does not stand up. They shout out “Second!”
• The maker of the motion sits down while the presiding officer re-states the motion.

Incorrect

• I want to make a motion...
• I motion...........

The reason the person who makes the motion sits down is to allow the presiding officer to:

• Make sure that motion is in order at this time; and
• Make sure the presiding officer understands the motion.
• If the motion is in order and if the presiding officer understands the motion, he/she will say: "It is moved and seconded..............
• Notice no names are given in this statement.
• After stating the motion, the presiding officer then looks at the maker of the motion to see if that person wants to speak first.
Making Motions

- The presiding officer then handles debate:
  - Start with the maker of the motion who always has first right to speak in debate.
  - Alternate between those in favor and those opposed.
  - Repeat the motion often: The motion before the assembly is........
  - Once no one else indicates they want to speak, state: Are you ready for the question? OR Is there any further debate?

Putting The Question To A Vote

- Those in favor say “aye.”
- Those opposed say “no” (NOT nay).
- The ayes have it and the motion is adopted, OR
- The noes have it and the motion is lost.
- Do Not Ask For ABSTENTIONS!!! An abstention is a non-vote. People have the right not to vote but counting the number of people who aren’t voting has no effect on the outcome of the vote.
The President

- The President
  - should always have an agenda, which is then subject to approval by the assembly, unless it is in the bylaws.
  - should speak to his/her officers and chairs prior to the meeting to determine who has a report and who does not.
  - One of the most important responsibilities of the President is to make sure people know the motion that is before the assembly. It should be stated several times. The parliamentarian should be prepared to assist with this as well.

President, continued:

- Make sure that all remarks are addressed to the chair.
- Cannot preside and participate in debate.
- If a member is not participating in debate, do not allow members to just complain. Ask them if they are making a motion. If not, advise that their remarks are out of order at this time.
- Sometimes members want to discuss a motion and give rationale for it before they make the motion. Don’t allow that. Interrupt the member and ask him/her to make a motion.
- The president should alternate between those in favor and those opposed. If you don’t know who is in favor and who is opposed, ask, “The first two speakers spoke in favor of the motion. Is there anyone opposed to the motion who would like to speak in debate?”
- If the bylaws or the assembly gives the president the authority to appoint a committee, whoever is named first is automatically the Chair of the committee.
Many routine items of a non-controversial nature can be handled by unanimous consent.

HOWEVER, the President must make the statement, “Is there any objection to.....” then pause so someone can object, then state that the motion is adopted by unanimous consent.

This can be done with approval of the agenda, minutes, it can be done when you are ready to adjourn, it can be done with many routine items as long as the issue is not controversial and the President pauses to give members a chance to object.

Reports of officers
- Officers are called upon in the order they are listed in the bylaws.
- Any officer who does not have a report should let the president know before the meeting.
- Officers cannot move adoption of their own reports.
The Recording Secretary

• The secretary is the recording officer of the assembly and the custodian of its records unless the bylaws assign those duties to other officers.

• When there is more than one secretary, the unqualified title of secretary, used alone, refers to the recording secretary.

Recording Secretary

• Unless the bylaws state otherwise, these are the general duties of the recording secretary:
  • Keep a careful and authentic record of the proceedings of all business meetings of both the organization and the Executive Board. The minutes are the legal records of the Council.
  • Keep a copy of all committee reports on file and available at each meeting.
Recording Secretary

- Keep the official membership roll, and be prepared to call the “roll” upon request (this is done standing).
- Maintain copies of ALL minutes
- Notify officers, committee members, and delegates of their election/appointment.
- Have at each meeting, the roster of all committees, standing and ad hoc.
- Prepare the credentials for delegates to regional/national meetings and furnish those to the duly elected delegates.

Recording Secretary

- To maintain and have on hand at every meeting, record books which contain the most recent version of the bylaws, any special rules of order adopted by the Council, Standing Rules and minutes.
- If there is no corresponding secretary, send members notices of the meetings and take care of the general correspondence of the Council.
- In the absence of the president and vice-president, to call the meeting to order and immediately conduct the election of a president pro tem.
The Minutes

- The opinions of the secretary are never included in the minutes.
- Minutes should include mainly what was done, not what was said.
- Minutes are not a court transcript.
- Minutes are not a novel or a story.
- They are a legal document that can be subpoenaed.
- Each motion made, with its disposition (adopted or lost), should be in a separate paragraph for the sake of easy reference.

Minutes

- Mandatory Content – The First Paragraph
  - The kind of meeting, regular, special, adjourned.
  - The name of the organization
  - The date and time of the meeting, and if it is different, the place or site of the meeting.
  - A notation of the presence of the regular presiding officer and the secretary, or the name of their substitutes.
The Minutes

• Action taken on the minutes of the previous meeting(s) and whether the minutes were approved as read or as corrected, the date of that meeting if it was not a regular business meeting.
  • The name of the maker of important motions.
  • The name of the seconder does not go in the minutes.
  • Announcements

The Minutes

• The secretary does not summarize written reports but must indicate the report is attached.
• The final, approved copy of the minutes must include all appended reports.
• The name and subject of a guest speaker is included in the minutes, but not a summary of their remarks.

• No mention of what did not occur in the meeting should be recorded in the minutes.
  • For example, the secretary would not record that there was no unfinished business, that a committee had no report or that there were no announcements.

The Minutes

The recording secretary may distribute the minutes ahead of the meeting, and if everyone has received them, can dispense with the reading of the minutes.

However, the minutes must have the words DRAFT at the top to indicate that these are not the approved minutes.

Once the minutes are approved, the word “approve” with the secretary’s initials and the date are added and the word draft is removed.
Corresponding Secretary

• Duties
  • Issues notices of the meetings to the membership.
  • Conducts the general correspondence of the council.
  • Reads all correspondence that requires action.
  • If there is “official” correspondence, that is read by the recording secretary.
  • Duties may include retrieving mail from a centrally located mailbox or post office box.

Financial Secretary

• Sends a bill to members for their dues and receive payment of dues from the members.
• Receives all funds from all sources.
• Maintain a ledger of each member’s account.
• Give to the treasurer all monies received and obtain a receipt from the treasurer.
• Must be bonded for a sum sufficient to protect the council from loss.
• Prepares all financial records for the auditor.
• The Auditing Committee would not include any officers who are involved with writing or signing checks, vouchers, or receipts.
Treasurer

• The treasurer
  • Is the custodian of the funds
  • Collects (if there’s no financial secretary), deposits and disbursers the funds of the organization
  • Maintains records of all transactions
  • Issues a receipt (keeping a duplicate copy) for any cash or checks received
  • Track spending of each budget line item so you can warn officers when they are nearing the limit of their budget

Treasurer

• Reconcile all bank statements
• Prepare a written treasurer’s report for each meeting with copies for the president and secretary, at a minimum.
• Prepare periodic written comparative statements to reflect actual expenditures versus budgeted items
• File tax forms
• Prepare all financial records for audit
• The treasurer’s reports should be signed
Treasurer

- Treasurer’s reports are never adopted.
- After the treasurer reports, the President asks if there are any questions, and once the questions have been asked, states, “the report will be filed for audit.”
- This is done without a motion.
- The only action that can be taken with a financial reports is to file them for audit.

Reports

- Sometimes committees or even officers will make a report and there are no recommendations or actions that can be taken.
- Do NOT make the motion to receive the report. The report was received when it was heard.
- If there are no recommendations, simply thank the officer/member and indicate she/he can be seated. The exception is a history report. A motion to accept the historian’s report is appropriate.
Committee Reports

- Standing committees are called upon in the order in which they are listed in the bylaws.
- The president should know before the meeting which Chair has a report. Only call upon those who have reports.
- A committee bringing a motion does not require a second as long as it is a committee comprised of more than one person. The format for a committee to make a motion is:
  - By direction of the X committee I move......; OR
  - On behalf of the X committee I move......

Reports

- If officers or committees have recommendations as part of their report, those recommendations are taken up when the officer or committee makes their report.
- It does not wait for new business.
- Do not make a motion to accept a report with recommendations unless you want to adopt the recommendations!!
Unfinished Business

- Unfinished Business
  - The president should know which business is unfinished. Never ask if there is unfinished business.
  - If the meetings are not separated by more than a quarterly interval, any questions still pending from the previous meeting are taken up here.

Effective Meetings

- The Chair asks, “Is there any new business?”
- Members can introduce new items of business or can move to take from the table any matter that is on the table.
- After new business has been disposed of, the Chair can call for Good and Welfare. Members can bring up issues of concern regarding the organization, not personal issues.
Effective Meetings

- Announcements
- Program. Although the program is usually placed at the end of the order of business, it can, by special rule or practice be received before the minutes are read.
- The president can then state, “Is there any objection to adjourning?” then pause – if no one objects, the president states, “By unanimous consent, we are adjourned.”

Electronic Meetings

Your bylaws must authorize electronic meetings, or you can’t meet via this platform. Particularly needed for Exec. Boards and Committees.

At a minimum, simultaneous aural (hearing) communication must be available in order for the meeting to be legitimate.

Therefore, meetings that take place via fax, chat room, any method that does not provide for simultaneously aural communication is not approved by RONR.

Committee meetings (standing and ad hoc) must also be authorized to hold electronic/web meetings, either by the bylaws or the standing rules.
Questions & Answers