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Understanding Parliamentary Procedure

Don Sikkink

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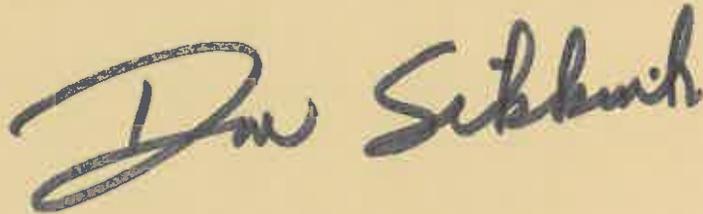
UNDERSTANDING PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

Don Sikkink
St. Cloud, Minnesota
January 1986



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A SUMMARY OF RULES CHART FOR EIGHTEEN MOTIONS

<u>PRECEDENCE ORDER</u>	<u>MOVER MUST BE RECOGNIZED</u>	<u>NEEDS A SECOND</u>	<u>DEBAT-ABLE</u>	<u>AMEND-ABLE</u>	<u>METHOD FOR DECIDING</u>	<u>RENEWABLE AFTER PROCESS</u>
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INCIDENTAL MOTIONS

Appeal	No	Yes	Yes ¹	No	Tie Vote	No
Division	No	No	No	No	Chair	No
Point of Information	No	No	No	No	Chair	No
Point of Order	No	No	No	No	Chair	No
Suspend Rules	Yes	Yes	No	No	2/3ds	No
Withdraw	Yes	Yes	No	No	Majority	Yes

I. PRIVILEGED MOTION

(9)Adjourn	Yes	Yes	No	No	Majority	Yes
(8)Recess	Yes	Yes	No	Yes ²	Majority	Yes

II. SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS

(7)Postpone Temporarily	Yes	Yes	No	No	Majority	Yes
(6)Close Debate	Yes	Yes	No	No	2/3ds	Yes
(5)Limit Debate	Yes	Yes	No	Yes ²	2/3ds	Yes
(4)Postpone Definitely	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ²	Majority ⁴	Yes
(3)Refer to Committee	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes ²	Majority	Yes
(2)Amend	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	No

III. MAIN MOTIONS

(1)Original	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	No
(1)Secondary	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	No
(1)Special Rescind	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	2/3ds ³	No
Resume	Yes	Yes	No	No	Majority	Yes

¹Close Debate or limit debate may be applied even though they are lower in precedence (an exception to the rule of precedence).

²Amend may be applied even though it is lower in precedence (an exception to the rule of precedence).

³A majority vote is allowed if previous notice is given.

⁴If made as a "special order" a 2/3ds vote is required.

Acknowledgements

I want to acknowledge that it was A. R. Christensen's assignment thirty years ago to teach the required course in parliamentary procedure at South Dakota State University that initiated my study of a topic area that has continued to fascinate me. I also wish to note that many of my early ideas in parliamentary practices came from conversations with Wayne Hoogestraat and resulted in a co-authored book called Modern Parliamentary Practices.

And of course the students in my classes and workshops deserve thanks. Their puzzlement, their questions and those "wild" practice sessions of "The Society for the Improvement of Just About Everything" or "The Society to Study Great Issues" did much to clarify my own ideas about this decision making system.

And a very special thanks goes to Ms. Regis Betts, a remarkable secretary, whose special skill with a new word processing system in our office made this text possible. Without her this book would not have happened! Thanks also go to Lynn Bryce and Arlene Sikkink for proofreading help. And as we all must say -- Thanks to everyone for your help but the mistakes are mine!

Don Sikkink
St. Cloud, Minnesota

Preface

The material which follows is designed to make parliamentary procedure understandable. Many of the ideas originally appeared in Modern Parliamentary Practices which was co-authored with Wayne Hoogestraat and was published by Burgess Press in 1963.

This revised material is the result of an additional twenty years of teaching parliamentary procedure at St. Cloud State University and the author's experiences in a large number of organizations; especially his involvement in county, district, state, and national political conventions.

Some of the key questions about the use of parliamentary procedure have not changed in twenty years:

- (1) Must the formality and complexity of parliamentary procedure be a detriment to effective, democratic decision making?
- (2) Must a detailed work like Robert's Rules of Order be used in all decision making groups?
- (3) Must we endure watching individuals with a detailed knowledge of the specific rules of parliamentary procedure manipulate the decisions making process?

This writer hopes that the answer to these questions is a resounding "NO" and that this answer is reinforced by the material which follows.

The Summary of Rules Chart, the list of materials for further study, the various exercises, and the study questions are designed to make this material usable for teaching a class or a workshop in parliamentary procedure. The individual wanting a detailed understanding of the topic should use Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised but that code should be easier to understand after studying this material.

Don Sikkink

HOW TO STUDY PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

Millions of U. S. citizens go to national, state, and local meetings each year. To a considerable extent the success or failure of our democratic experiment rests on the skill with which these organizations manage their affairs. In addition to voluntary groups, our nation operates on a structure of elected representative groups at the local, state, and national levels who do business through the use of parliamentary procedure. Our survival as a nation will, in part, be determined by the skill with which these elected representatives effectively use parliamentary procedure.

The parliamentary practices used in this country trace their roots to the British Parliament, which had cultivated certain elements found in the democratic systems of early Greece and Rome. These rules, brought to America by the early colonists, had their own peculiar development in our evolving democratic structure.

Thomas Jefferson is considered to be America's first great parliamentarian and while presiding in the Senate, he compiled in 1801 a list of rules and principles called the Manual of Parliamentary Practice. In 1845 Luther Cushing wrote his Manual of Parliamentary Practices: Rules of Proceedings and Debate in Deliberative Assemblies. It became a major reference source for parliamentary questions for some thirty years. These two books were adopted by voluntary groups, but a problem plagued those societies in their use of the Jefferson and Cushing rules. It is a problem that is encountered today in the use of Robert's Rules of Order; for while Robert did much to bring diverse bits of information on parliamentary procedure together in his 1876 classic work, his book was based on the complex legislative practices of his day. Voluntary informal groups need to learn and use parliamentary practices in order to conduct their business efficiently, but such procedure should be simple and limited. Unfortunately, many of the rules found in Robert's and other books based on legislative assemblies are difficult for the small informal group to interpret and, as a result, these groups avoid the use of parliamentary practices.

In 1950 Alice Sturgis authored a book which maintained the essentials of Robert's Rules but offered ample illustrations to make Robert's rulings easier to understand. This book, Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure, made a significant contribution to the simplification of complex rules. The 1974 book by Ray Keeseey, Modern Parliamentary Procedure, and a 1980 book by H. W. Farwell, The Majority Rules: A Manual of Procedures for MOST Groups, contributed to this trend of making rules understandable

by rejecting many of the motions in Robert's and by simplifying other rules.

This book continues both of these trends. We have tried to keep in mind the necessity for simplicity of ruling while maintaining the best of Robert's procedures.

Why study parliamentary practices? In part, we have implied one answer: there are so many organizations in the United States that you need to know the basic rules of parliamentary practice in order to participate. A second reason is that an understanding of parliamentary rules will enable the organization to be more effective. Each of us has attended a meeting that took twice as long as it should or a meeting where all of the time was involved in arguing about technicalities of procedure so that no time was left for a meaningful discussion of the major issues. The result was not only disgruntled members but poorly conceived motions that required revisions at a later date. A third reason for studying this discipline is the close relationship between parliamentary practice and democracy. The practices of abiding by majority vote, of protecting the minority, and of affording equal opportunity to discuss are fundamental elements in a democratic society. Parliamentary procedure is concerned with these practices, and it is the way that lofty phrases about democracy become meaningful. A well-run meeting that employs the effective use of parliamentary practice is an excellent example of democracy in action.

While these are the major reasons why you should study parliamentary practices, something also needs to be said about how you should study this subject. First, a word of caution is necessary. Some persons trained in parliamentary procedure become so enamored with all of the specific rules that they seek to enforce a degree of perfection on the group. As a result, they are able to impede business or to have their own way, because they are the only members capable of interpreting each minor violation of form. Such persons misunderstand the function of parliamentary law for the informal group. Always remember that rules exist to facilitate business, and intent is more important than language. We should strive for correctness and clarity in our use of procedure, while being careful that rules do not get in the way of effectively and democratically conducting business. In classes in parliamentary procedure it is appropriate as part of the learning experience to insist on correct wording. In these circumstances we suggest that members say "Point of Information," instead of "May I ask a question?" You would be right in a class situation to correct a member who says, "I think you made a mistake, Julie," by urging her to use the phrasing, "Point of order, Ms. Chairperson." Insisting upon these same corrections in an actual meeting is a mistake, for the intent of the member is clear.

As a second approach to studying parliamentary procedures, we would suggest you read rapidly through this text in order to get a general "feel" for the material. Then study the Summary of Rules Chart. Here you find a table listing much of what you need to know about the major motions used in handling business. The Summary of Rules Chart should rest on the podium or table as you preside. When a motion is made, quickly place your finger on the name of that motion and proceed to trace its requirements. Does it need a second? Can it be discussed? Is an amendment in order? After first learning some basic concepts, rules and principles, you will be able to use that chart to provide additional information you need.

Third, find a way to practice the procedures orally. While a person can learn rules by reading, such rules will be more meaningful if they can be used verbally. Enroll in a course in parliamentary procedure, or join a club where attention to such matters is a regular practice.

SUMMARY

Millions of our citizens participate in groups which make some use of parliamentary procedure. The early books on parliamentary procedure by Jefferson, Cushing and Roberts were based on the practices of legislative bodies and many of these complex interpretations are difficult for non-legislative groups to understand. Recent books have simplified such rules to help us realize that a well run meeting is a demonstration of democracy in action. A person studying parliamentary procedure should emphasize intent over language, learn to use a summary of rules chart and find ways to orally practice newly understood concepts.

EXERCISES TO WRITE OUT

1. Make a list of the organizations in which you participate. Which organization makes the best use and which makes the poorest use of parliamentary procedure? List the specific reasons why you think these situations exist.
2. Read any ten pages of Robert's Rules of Order. What reaction do you have to this book?
3. From your past experience make a list of five items in parliamentary procedure which most confuse you. Put the most confusing first, second most confusing next, etc.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What should be the attitude of a person skilled in parliamentary practices towards those who do not understand the exact usage or effect of the parliamentary rules?

2. Why do you think there are differences between legislative groups and informal organizations in their use of parliamentary practices?

ADDITIONAL READING

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AN INTRODUCTION TO PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

Parliamentary procedure is a formal, rule oriented, systematic, decision making system. There are obviously many other decision making systems; for example, you can be ordered to do something, we could discuss until we reach consensus, or we might draw for high card. Each of these methods, plus numerous other systems for reaching a decision, could be useful or appropriate depending upon the circumstances.

In general, the use of parliamentary procedure as a decision making system is most appropriate where the size of the group is seven or more, where we can expect some sharp conflict in opinions about what to do, where we can expect that a number of decisions will need to be made, and where there is a willingness to accept the majority view as the best solution. The amount of parliamentary procedure used and the degree of formality will be influenced by the size of the group, the scope of the group, the degree of conflict, and the seriousness of the impact of the decisions reached.

We can chart the use and formality of parliamentary procedure in various levels as follows:

Most Use <u>Most Formal</u>	Limited Use <u>Limited Formality</u>
U.S. Congress.....	Township Boards
National Executive Board of the Lion's Clubs.....	Local Lion's Club Meeting
National Political Convention.....	Local Political Meeting
Student Senate Meeting on a University Campus.....	Residence Hall Meeting on a Uni- versity Campus
New York City Council.....	South Haven Village Council

We also need to understand three other introductory concepts. First, we need to remember that each organization can and probably should write a large number of their own rules. We call such rules constitutions (bylaws). This idea of organizations being able to provide their own rules is encouraged in most books on parliamentary procedure through statements to the effect that a deliberate body is a free agent with the power to determine what it wants to do as long as it

protects itself and the rights of its members. Unfortunately, members frequently mix up rules written by an organization with the rules of parliamentary procedure found in a book. This writer was once called late at night with the question of, "On what page of Robert's Rules of Order does it say all officers must stand throughout the meeting?" Robert does not say that, but the chairperson of a new organization insisted it was a "parliamentary rule of Robert." Investigation revealed that it had been the ritualistic rule for officers to stand in the only other organization this new chairperson belonged to, and he carried over the rule from that club, mistaking that organization's rule for a parliamentary procedure rule found in a book on parliamentary procedure.

Second, we need to understand that in the United States we do not have a single set of parliamentary procedure rules. The first major work in this country was that of Thomas Jefferson in 1801. The book of Luther Cushing in 1845 was similar but did contain differences. The same is true of the classic work of Robert in 1876. Most of the books that were written after Robert, accept many, but not all, of Robert's motion descriptions. As a result of these book differences, what seems to be confusion in parliamentary procedure is better understood as the difference in emphasis and interpretation by different authors. We need always to check two key sources in trying to answer questions about the correct use of parliamentary procedure: (1) what rules has this organization written for its own use, and (2) what book has this organization decided to use as a parliamentary reference in situations where they have not written rules?

The third introductory concept is to understand that fundamental principles underly parliamentary rules. Each author of a parliamentary code is likely to have such a list of principles but that number will vary from book to book. The list below is brief but contains the essential principles:

- (1) Parliamentary procedure exists to make decision making more efficient.
- (2) Parliamentary procedure stresses the will of the majority but with protection for the minority.
- (3) Parliamentary procedure provides equal rights, power and access to all members.
- (4) Parliamentary procedure emphasizes full and free discussion.

It is important to remember these fundamental principles because of the "rule bound" nature of parliamentary law. It is possible to become so involved with specific rules that we lose sight of basic principles. If you keep principles in mind, you may in some situations ignore a rule if it would lead us to

violate a principle. Even more important, in numerous situations we will have no rule to apply. In such situations we should propose a solution which is consistent with these principles. Such a solution is likely to be the correct one.

SUMMARY

Parliamentary procedure is a rule oriented decision making system. The use of such a system will depend on the size of the group, the type of group, the issues to be considered and the time available to work out conflicts. Organizations can write their own rules and for matters not covered by their own rules they will consult a parliamentary code ("parliamentary authority") which they select. Since clubs write different rules, and because codes (books) vary in their parliamentary interpretations, it is easy to be confused. To reduce that confusion you look at your constitution and at your parliamentary code. If you cannot find an answer in those two places, remember the fundamental principles of parliamentary procedure and make a decision consistent with those principles.

EXERCISES TO WRITE OUT

1. Do a "word association" experiment. Pick some other words to go along with the word "parliamentary procedure" and read these words to thirty people. Keep a record and tally of the responses to the word "parliamentary procedure".
2. Take a single motion of parliamentary procedure and read its interpretation in three different books on parliamentary procedure. What differences, if any, did you find? Explain.
3. Make a list of disadvantages in using parliamentary procedure. Explain each one.
4. Interview five persons active in organizations and ask them to list the advantages and disadvantages of using parliamentary procedure.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. List one organization that uses parliamentary procedure and one that does not. Can you reflect on what are the differences in these organizations?
2. What one thing about using parliamentary procedure as a decision making system is most difficult for you to accept? Explain.
3. With what "size of group" do you feel it is appropriate to start using parliamentary procedure as a decision making system? Why did you pick that number?

ADDITIONAL READINGS

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CONSTITUTIONS (BYLAWS) AND STANDING RULES

We have noted in our introduction to parliamentary procedure that an organization may write many of its own rules. While an organization may be able to operate without a constitution, its effectiveness will be increased if it draws up at least a minimum document containing the basic rules which govern that society. Writing such a minimum constitution is relatively easy if a few simple guidelines are followed. First, avoid the practice of writing both a constitution and a set of bylaws; instead, write just one document, and call it a "Constitution". Second, start by carefully reading the constitution of an organization that is close to yours in purpose and function. Read to get ideas and avoid directly copying; for the constitution which you formulate must fit your particular organization. Third, make the document brief. It is easier to discover from experience what is lacking and needs to be added than it is to work under the handicap of unnecessary provisions. Fourth, put many of the club rules pertaining to the specifics of parliamentary procedure and to the administration of the club into a special section outside the constitution, called "Standing Rules," for such rules can be changed at any meeting with a majority vote. Changing a constitution, on the other hand, generally requires a two-thirds vote and prior notice for amendment. In Roberts Rules of Order it is suggested that rules pertaining to parliamentary procedure be put in a section apart from the Constitution called "Rules of Order" while rules pertaining to administration of the club go into a special section called "Standing Rules". Our use of the term "Standing Rules" covers both of these categories. Fifth, be sure to include a provision in your constitution on each of the following items:

1. Name of the Organization
2. Purpose and Powers
3. Membership (types, requirements, methods of selection, termination)
4. Officers and Their Election (title of the position, length of term, announcement of date for elections, procedure for nominating officers, type of vote, and duties of each officer)
5. Committees (names of standing committees; their selection, duties, and limitations)
6. Meetings (specifications as to time and place, definition of quorum, method for calling special meetings, order of business, parliamentary code to be followed)

7. Finances (how money can be raised, and how money is to be handled)
8. Method for Amending (and possibly Suspending) the Constitution.

The methods for adopting a constitution vary. However, formal procedure requires that the chairperson of the constitutional committee moves to adopt the proposed constitution and then reads this document to the group as a part of the motion to adopt. After a second to this motion, the constitution is read again to the society by the President, Secretary, or Committee Chairperson. After this reading, the chairperson reads one paragraph at a time and opens each paragraph for amendment. When all paragraphs have been read and opened for amendment, the entire document is opened for amendment. When there are no further amendments, a vote is taken on the original motion to adopt or to adopt as amended. Only a majority vote is required for adoption of the constitution. After adoption, the usual procedure is to recess so that all members desiring to join the society may sign the constitution and pay any required membership fee. The constitution goes into effect immediately unless the motion to adopt provides a specific date and/or time for the entire document or certain sections of the document to become effective.

A more efficient variation of this procedure is to provide each prospective member a copy of the proposed constitution. At the meeting for adoption of the constitution the chairperson seeks approval to dispense with the two readings of the proposed document and thus move immediately to consideration of amendments by the paragraph method described above. Following this, the usual steps in formal adoption procedure may be taken. The advantage of this procedure is that it saves time, and with printed copies available it is easier for members to follow proposed changes.

Typically, constitutions contain provisions that deal with their amending and suspending. While each organization must select the rules which "fit" its own situation, the following suggestions represent many of the current practices with regard to amending and suspending.

- (1) There is likely to be a requirement for previous notice concerning amendments of the constitution. Usually, notice is given one meeting in advance of the voting. Under such a rule a member would propose an amendment at one meeting with the final vote being postponed until the next meeting. The intent of such a rule is to allow members to think about the proposal and also to allow all interested members to be present when the final vote is taken. Frequently this rule requiring previous notice is coupled with a requirement that all members receive a written copy of the proposed amendment.

- (2) Most societies require at least a two-thirds vote for amending the constitution in order to protect minority rights. Since the constitution contains fundamental rules, it is assumed that changes should be made only when a sizable part of the society is present and voting. Actually, since not all members may be present and/or voting, a two-thirds vote at times might be much the same as a majority vote of the total membership. In fact, some societies use a majority of the membership as the requirement for amending these documents.
- (3) We believe that no section of the constitution should be allowed to be suspended, but if you wish to suspend your constitution a decision must be reached by each society at the time the constitution is adopted or revised. Assuming that such a provision is written into the constitution, you would use the motion to suspend the rules to temporarily set aside some part of the document. Under no circumstances should you allow suspension of rules which provide protection for the basic principles of parliamentary procedure.

STANDING RULES

The material above on amending the constitution makes it clear that changing these documents is not an easy task. This difficulty is intentional to protect the rights of members. Yet this inability to adjust to unusual circumstances frustrates many societies. A way to reduce such frustration is to use "standing rules" liberally. Parliamentary and administrative details placed in standing rules require only a majority vote to be passed, may be abolished by majority vote, and suspended by a 2/3ds vote.

The use of standing rules can provide for those rules not considered permanent enough to be in the constitution. Many constitutions contain items which might more logically be placed in the standing rules. One illustration would be a statement in the constitution of a membership fee. For some organizations this may work, but others, who may have occasion to change membership fees, find that a figure in the constitution involves the complexities of the amendment process. Such a society would find a standing rule on dues to be a more sensible approach.

One article in a typical constitution is called "code" or "parliamentary authority." In this article you list a book (code) which represents the authority which will be used by the organization in deciding questions of parliamentary procedure. If an organization wishes to consistently deviate from some of the procedural rules found in its authority, or if it wishes to use parliamentary rules not found in that authority, it should develop these rules under the heading called "Standing Rules".

An example would be the rule on debate. Robert limits debate to two speeches per member on each debatable motion. If you wished more debate you could adopt a "Standing Rule" saying "three

speeches" or "no limit." Such rules are adopted by a majority vote and once in place can be suspended ("I move to suspend the rule....") by a two-thirds vote or permanently removed by a majority.

The following example of a CONSTITUTION and STANDING RULES is provided to help you understand the type of item that might be found under each of these headings. This document can also be used as a "code" for mock oral practice meetings.

CONSTITUTION: SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF GREAT ISSUES

ARTICLE 1 - NAME, PURPOSE, AND POWERS

Section 1: This organization will be known as the Society for the Study of Great Issues.

Section 2: This organization shall be concerned with issues whose discussion could lead to the improvement of the world. This organization shall not be responsible for carrying out these decisions.

ARTICLE 2 - MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall be automatically given to students of St. Cloud State University currently enrolled in Speech 222. The instructor of Speech 222 is a member of the organization.

ARTICLE 3 - OFFICERS

Section 1: Officers of the organization shall be chairperson, secretary, and treasurer.

Section 2: The term of office of secretary and treasurer shall be for one meeting. The chairperson will serve for periods designated by the Speech 222 instructor.

Section 3: The duties of the chairperson shall be to preside at business meetings. The organization may have several chairpersons during one meeting.

Section 4: The duties of the secretary shall be:

- (1) take notes on and write up proceedings of the meeting at which he/she is given the duty of secretary.
- (2) distribute written copies of these minutes of the previous meeting and correct them as the organization so desires.
- (3) write up a meeting agenda for the next meeting.

Section 5: The duties of the treasurer shall be to invent and give a report of the expenditures, income, and balance on hand.

ARTICLE 4 - MEETINGS

Section 1: The time and place at which regular meetings will be held will be designated by the Speech 222 instructor.

Section 2: There will be no special meetings.

ARTICLE 5 - AMENDING

The constitution can be amended by a three-fourths vote of the membership of Speech 222 and notice must be given the meeting before the proposed amendment is brought up for a vote.

ARTICLE 6 - CODE

All matters not covered by the Constitution and Standing Rules of this organization shall be governed by the rules in Understanding Parliamentary Procedure by Don Sikkink.

STANDING RULES

1. The order of business shall be:
 - a. Call to Order
 - b. Announcements
 - c. Action on Minutes
 - d. Reports of Officers and Committees
 - e. Unfinished Business
 1. Special Orders
 2. General Orders
 3. Business Items Not Acted on at the Last Meeting
 - f. New Business
 - g. Adjournment
2. The maximum recess period is to be three minutes and only one recess per meeting is allowed.
3. The motion to adjourn can only be made within three minutes of the time designated by the instructor of Speech 222 for the meeting to end.
4. The chair of the meeting shall be called by the title "chairperson."
5. The secretary's book and the treasurer's book shall be given to the Speech 222 instructor at the end of each quarter.

SUMMARY

An organization is allowed to write its own rules. An effective constitution contains information on name, purpose, power, membership, officers, committees, meetings, finances and

the method of amending. The approval or revising of a constitution can be more efficiently done if written copies are provided for all members. Frequently changed rules should be placed outside the constitution in a section called "Standing Rules" where such items can be easily suspended or eliminated.

EXERCISES TO WRITE OUT

1. Locate the constitution of an organization. Which of the suggested articles proposed in this chapter did you find, which are absent, which are added?
2. Did the constitution you examined contain any Standing Rules or Rules of Order (Special Rules)? Were there items in the constitution which might have been better listed as Standing Rules?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Which item contained in a constitution would you find most difficult to write? Why?
2. What are the arguments for and against allowing sections of a constitution to be suspended?

ADDITIONAL READING

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OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES (including minutes)

Motions are the basic element of parliamentary procedure but obviously no motions can be made unless individuals have accepted responsibilities as officers in the organization. The first thing new officers should do is to read the society's constitution, the standing rules, the listed parliamentary authority, and old minutes. This will provide new officers much of the necessary background for assuming their duties. In addition they need to be aware of the following responsibilities.

The Chairperson (President) presides at all meetings. This includes calling the meeting to order, stating motions, calling for discussion, making decisions on procedural matters that arise, announcing the method of voting, putting motions to a vote, and announcing the results of the vote. In addition, she appoints many of the committees and performs the duties assigned to her by action of the members or by the constitution.

There are also a number of things that the chairperson should not do. The chair should not enter into debate, make any motion, second any motion, or in any way do or say anything prejudicial to either side of any question before the assembly. If the chairperson is a member of the assembly and wishes to speak as a member, she should relinquish the chair to the Vice-Chairperson (or other appropriate officer), while debating.

These suggested limitations on the rights of the chair create problems. In a sense we have asked the most "powerful", the "best informed", and the "leader of our club" to accept a vow of silence. It is a vow impossible to keep and one that that can be undesirable. The effective leader cannot help commenting or suggesting, but she should do so within the context of the principle mentioned earlier of equal application of rules to every member. This is especially true with controversial issues that come before the club, for in those circumstances the chair needs to be concerned over making any inappropriate comments, and she needs to concentrate on rulings which illustrate impartiality.

One possible way to avoid this conflict between the need to lead and the need to be thought of as impartial, is to experiment with having a person skilled in parliamentary procedure conduct the meetings while the elected chairperson participates as a regular member. Another solution is to allow a trained parliamentarian to preside during controversial meetings.

A related question is the issue of what to call the person we select to lead our organization. The disagreement over the terminology of "chairman" vs "chairperson" has stimulated some interesting debate. The latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised takes the following position.

The standard parliamentary forms for addressing the presiding officer of an assembly remain as stated on page 18 (Chairman). A point to note in this connection is that a regularly elected presiding officer should always be addressed in the assembly only by his or her official title. If the bylaws of the organization refer to him or her as the President, he or she should always be addressed as "Mr. President" or "Madam President". The term "chairman" is properly applicable to any presiding officer who has the official title, and to any person presiding over an assembly on a pro-tem basis or serving as the head of a committee. In this edition, no attempt has been made to address proposals for modifying established parliamentary usage in this regard, as there does not yet appear to be a consensus in this matter. At the request of their publisher, the authors wish to state that this position represents their judgment as authors and does not reflect any publishing policy of Scott, Foresman and Company.

A similar position in opposition to the use of the term chairperson was taken by the National Association of Parliamentarians at their October 1975 convention through the adoption of the following resolution.

RESOLUTION TO DISCOURAGE THE USE OF
THE WORD "CHAIRPERSON"

- Whereas, Parliamentary Law has a language all its own; and
- Whereas, In olden times the one presiding was the only person provided a chair while others sat on benches, hence he was called the chairman; and
- Whereas, Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised provides that the word "Chairman" be used to designate presiding officers who are not Presidents or Vice Presidents; and
- Whereas, Since time immemorial the term "Mister" Chairman or "Madam" Chairman has always been employed to differentiate between sexes; and
- Whereas, Further effort toward sex differentiation is redundant and contrived; now therefore be it
- Resolved, That organizations and parliamentarians of the National Association of Parliamentarians must use the term Chairman and should encourage the use of this term instead of "Chairperson" in all organizations where they have influence; and be it further
- Resolved, That all NAP members should habitually stress the principle that the word "Chairman" belongs to the title of the office the same as the title of president or

secretary.

We reject this position of the Robert's book and the National Association of Parliamentarians. Essentially it represents the faulty logic of "argument from tradition". We have in fact changed a number of rulings and interpretations in parliamentary procedure over the years and we now need to change the term chairman to president or chair or chairperson. The research done on sexist language reflects that terms like man, postman, fireman, chairman imply the exclusion of women whether we intend that or not.

Education, government, publishers and religious groups are working to eliminate sexist language. Parliamentary procedure groups with an emphasis on fairness, impartiality, and protection of minority views should NOT lag behind. Use president, chair or chairperson! Train others to use those terms. The initial awkward sound of such new language will quickly disappear with use.

The Vice-Chairperson (Vice President) has as a primary responsibility the job of assuming either in a temporary or permanent capacity the duties of the Chairperson. He may be assigned additional responsibilities, depending upon the constitution of the organization. One excellent way for the organization to use the ability of the Vice President is to assign him the chairpersonship of an important committee such as resolutions, membership, program, or finance.

The Treasurer collects money and pays the bills. She is responsible for maintaining records which accurately reflect the financial condition of the organization. At each meeting she gives a report on the club's finances. This report usually does not require a motion of approval since it is difficult for club members to know if complex financial records are really accurate. Instead, most organizations will appoint a member, or members, or an outsider to audit the books once per year or at the end of the term of the treasurer. It is this report which is then approved by the club to indicate that their financial records are correct. If the club has a Budget Committee, it is quite common for the treasurer to be the chairperson or a member of that committee.

The Secretary is an important officer in any parliamentary society. The duties of the secretary can be summarized by the statement that he handles the records and correspondence of the society. Specifically, these duties include the following responsibilities:

(1) The secretary must keep an accurate record of the proceedings of the organization. The records referred to as the "minutes" are discussed later in this section.

(2) He is custodian of the records and documents of the society such as a current list of members, the constitution, a complete set of minutes for all past meetings, copies of official

notices, lists of all committee members and committee chairs, copies of all committee reports, and any other documents having relevance to the society.

(3) The secretary must carry out the official correspondence of the society. Sometimes societies have a special officer, called a "Correspondence Secretary", and in this case the correspondence falls to this special officer. However, in most societies only one secretary is chosen; therefore, the regular secretary must carry out the instructions of the society by writing the necessary letters. Such correspondence might include written notice of meetings sent to all members; notice of committee appointments sent to the appointees; any correspondence necessitated by actions of the assembly (i.e. "That the secretary be instructed to write an official letter of thanks to the Elks Club for use of their facilities"), and a variety of other communications.

(4) The secretary must authenticate the official papers of the society: that is, he signs the minutes, notices of committee appointments, letters, etc.

(5) The secretary should work with the president in preparing a detailed outline of business to be considered at each meeting. This is usually called the "Meeting Agenda". When there are items of business to come before the assembly by forms other than a motion from the floor, the secretary should initiate these actions, or, at least, remind the chairperson of these necessary items of business. Such items might be special orders, general orders, unfinished business, etc.

(6) The secretary should bring to each meeting those documents which are likely to be needed for the regulation of the proceedings and for the convenience of the members. Among these documents are minutes of the previous meeting, a current list of members, constitution standing rules, and the official parliamentary manual of the society.

(7) The secretary must serve as chairperson in the proper order of succession: that is, if the president and vice president are both absent, the secretary is to preside. However, wisdom would dictate that in such cases the secretary would call the meeting to order, appoint or handle the election of a temporary chairperson, and return to his duties as secretary.

The secretary also has certain rights which are important.

(1) The secretary has the right to temporarily interrupt proceedings to obtain information for clarification. When motions are not stated understandably, or when the name of the person moving a motion is not known to the secretary, he may interrupt to seek the needed information.

(2) The secretary has the right to demand that motions be submitted in writing. Often it is wise to provide members with index cards or slips of paper so that at the time a lengthy motion is moved, a written copy can be presented to the secretary.

(3) The secretary retains the right to function as any other member. Unlike the chairperson the secretary may make motions, second motions, debate motions, and vote with the members of the society. However, he is often too busy to become deeply involved as a participant in the business meeting.

FORM AND CONTENT OF MINUTES

The minutes are the official record of the proceedings of an organized body. They are a legal record of actions taken by the assembly. It is usually not necessary to include an account of the discussion on motions, comments for clarification, or informal discussion. The effective secretary takes careful notes which he uses to write up the final copy of minutes. If he is in doubt about a point, he may wish to call the president, some other officer, or the person who made the motion. It is not desirable to attempt to write the final minutes while a meeting is in progress.

The principal items to be included in the final copy of the minutes are:

- (1) Name of the society, date, time, location of meeting, type of meeting (regular or special), and name of the person occupying the chair. These items should appear in the opening sentence.
- (2) A record of the disposition of all main motions; both those passed and defeated.
- (3) A record of all subsidiary, incidental, and privileged motions if they seem to have an impact on an accurate record of business of the organization.
- (4) A record of the name of the person making the motion. A notation of the motion being seconded if a second is required. The name of the person seconding the motion does not need to be recorded.
- (5) A record of any other official acts of the society such as appointments of committees, approval of previous minutes, matters handled by unanimous consent, etc., and other items if they seem to have an impact on an accurate record of the business of the organization.

In addition to noting what should be in the minutes, there are also stylistic devices to use. Items such as the following

are important in providing clarity and in making minutes easier to read.

(1) The minutes should be chronological. All items in the minutes should be recorded in the order in which they originally took place. Note, for example, the fourth paragraph of the sample minutes found on page 25. Mr. Radovich moved the motion. It was seconded. Mr. Becker moved to amend. The amendment was seconded. The amendment was carried. The main motion was carried as amended. This paragraph reveals the full chronology of procedures involved from the raising of the main motion through its disposition.

(2) The minutes should be written in paragraph form so that each paragraph deals with a single original action (such as a main motion, a committee report, the reading and approval of minutes, etc.), includes procedures that arose out of the original proposal, and concludes with the final disposition of the original action. For example, observe the fifth paragraph in the minutes found on page 25. The single original proposal is Ms. Simpson's main motion. This is found at the beginning of the paragraph. The motion was seconded. Debate was closed on the main motion. The main motion was carried. When the paragraph system of writing minutes is used, the reader may look at the beginning of the paragraph to see the exact nature of the proposal, and she may look at the end of the paragraph to see the disposition of the proposal. Internally, the paragraph contains the details of the procedures which influenced the final form or disposition of the proposal. The paragraph system of writing minutes provides further clarity for the reader in that only one item is found in any paragraph.

(3) The minutes should contain the exact phrasing of the original action. Though the wording of a motion may not constitute a literary masterpiece, the secretary must record the motions as they are phrased. Secretaryship is not a creative responsibility!

(4) The minutes should be short. The secretary should eliminate from the minutes those items which have no effect on the ultimate actions taken. He should not include discussion, withdrawn motions, many defeated motions, or items which do not have an impact on the business.

We have listed a number of current rules for writing up minutes but it should be noted there are a growing number of acceptable variations. Recently an abbreviated method of recording the motion maker's name and the name of the seconder has gained popularity. It is used as follows, "Sikkink/Betts moved". Another abbreviated style which is in use by organizations not recording the name of the motion maker reads as follows, "MSP that" (In this system MSP stands for Moved, Seconded, Passed). One variation including the name of the person making the motion would look like this--"M"(Sikkink)SP...."

A number of specific rules are listed above for writing minutes, but one guiding principle is of most importance. That principle is to make the minutes a factual, accurate, concise record of the actions taken by the organization. Thus, in some instances a secretary will "violate" a specific rule such as including a withdrawn motion if it would contribute to the overall clarity and accuracy of the documents.

The following example of minutes is an example of the types of information generally included in the minutes.

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The regular meeting of the Society for the Study of Great Issues was called to order by President McDonald, Tuesday, January 8, 1986 at 1:30 p.m. in Administration 201.

The minutes of the previous meeting were distributed and approved by general consent.

The treasurer reported a balance of \$214.37.

Mr. Radovich moved that a two-dollar fee for the late arrival of members be assessed beginning at our next meeting. The motion was seconded. Mr. Becker moved to amend the main motion by striking out the words "at our next meeting." and inserting in their place the words "on January 1, 1987." The amendment was seconded and carried. The main motion was carried as amended.

Ms. Simpson moved that starting on October 1, 1987, each new member be required to pass an examination covering the constitution of the society and that this examination be prepared and corrected by the secretary. The motion was seconded. Ms. Umerski moved to close debate. The motion to close debate was seconded and carried. The main motion carried.

Mr. Rauch moved that the chairperson appoint a committee of three to handle the reception of guests for the club banquet. The motion was seconded and carried. President McDonald appointed the following members to the committee: Mr. Rauch; chairperson; Mr. Becker, and Ms. Simpson.

The meeting was adjourned by general consent at 2:43 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
(Secretary)

APPROVED: _____
(Date)

(Secretary)

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DISPOSITION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting are usually read and approved at the next meeting. Given the wide availability of copying machines it makes sense to run off copies of the minutes and distribute them to each member. In such a system we avoid having to take time to read minutes, we provide copies for people's use, and it is easier to find errors. A society may dispense with the approval of the minutes if a majority of the members approve, but such delayed minutes must then be approved at some subsequent meeting. Since minutes constitute the official, legal record of the proceedings of an organization, it is essential that they ultimately be presented to the members for corrections, additions, and approval.

Approval of the minutes, when no additions or corrections are proposed, is normally done by unanimous consent. A dialogue example of the form for approving minutes by unanimous consent appears below:

(After the reading or distribution of the minutes.)

CHAIR: "Are there any additions or corrections to the minutes?"

(PAUSE) There being none, the minutes stand approved as distributed (read)."

When there are additions or corrections to the minutes, these too can be handled by unanimous consent. However, one objection to unanimous consent is sufficient to force approval by motion procedure. In such a situation the person moving a correction in the minutes needs recognition. The motion requires a second. It is debatable, and amendable. It requires a majority vote for passage.

CHAIR: "The chair recognizes Mr. Frohrip."

MR. FROHRIP: "Mr. Chairman, I move that the minutes be corrected by striking out the word 'adopted' as it appears in the sentence concerning the Membership Committee's report and that inserting in its place be the word 'filed'."

OTHER MEMBER: "I second the motion."

CHAIR: "It has been moved and seconded that the minutes be corrected by striking out the word 'adopted' as it appears in the sentence concerning the Membership Committee's report and inserting in its place be the word 'filed'. Is there any discussion?"

(Members seek recognition and discuss as desired.)

CHAIR: "If there is no further discussion, we will vote on the amendment to strike out the word 'adopted' and insert in its place the word 'filed'. All in favor ..."

If errors are discovered in the minutes after they have been approved, these errors may be corrected by the motion which Robert's labels as "amend something previously adopted" and which he suggests needs an approval vote of a majority of the entire membership, or a 2/3d's vote without notice, or a majority vote with notice. While the motion is labeled "amend", it can only be made with nothing else on the floor, so it is, in fact, a main motion. In this book we suggest that later corrections of minutes be treated as a main motion requiring only a majority vote.

Four other officers are sometimes elected or appointed. The Sergeant-At-Arms is expected to arrange the meeting room, be responsible for special equipment, maintain order, and carry out additional duties assigned by the chairperson. The Parliamentarian should be an expert in matters of parliamentary procedure in order to give accurate and reliable advice to the chairperson so that necessary decisions can be made with reference to complex procedures. The President-elect serves the function of a vice chairperson but with the added responsibility of becoming the next President of the organization. An Executive Secretary is a special officer in a large organization who carries out many of the detailed administrative tasks that a chairperson does not have time to do. This position is most often found in a professional society where the elective officers have other full time jobs.

SUMMARY

The four key officers in most organizations are Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. We strongly urge labeling the person who presides in a non-sexist way such as president, chair or chairperson. Minutes are the legal record of what an organization does and should be correctly written and approved.

EXERCISES TO WRITE OUT

1. Read the following set of minutes. Make a list of the major errors you discover.

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MINUTES

The meeting of the society was called to order by a temporary chairperson on April 27, 1984. the minutes of the last meeting were read and approved. The treasurer's report was given.

The Party Committee reported that they recommended a party for the club on May 30, 1984.

There was no old business. New business was taken on. It was moved and seconded that we hire Dr. Sikkink of SCSU to give us five lectures on Parliamentary Procedure at 50 dollars per

lecture. Cook moved to amend by substituting 5 cents for 50 dollars. Amendment passed.

Moved by Watson, seconded by Ames to establish a hat fund for Dean Potter. Johnson moved to vote immediately, seconded, passed.

Grachek moved, Nunnes seconded, that each member of the society enter one event at the SCSU Rodeo as a means of making money for the club. After a great deal of nasty discussion by Marmas, Weber rose to a Parliamentary Inquiry.

It was moved and seconded that our club go on record as favoring a crackdown on students that cheat. Weber objected to consideration. Weber withdrew his objection to the consideration. Ames moved to temporarily postpone the main motion. It was defeated.

Since all business had been completed, we quit.

Respectfully submitted,
Claire Daggett, secretary

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2. Find a set of minutes. Which rules for writing effective minutes do you find violated? Which stylistic techniques are used? How could those minutes be most improved?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Do you think a chairperson should be allowed to make motions, vote and discuss? Why or why not?
2. What would you find most difficult to do as chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary and treasurer?
3. By what name do you think the person who presides should be called? Why?

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QUORUM, ORDER OF BUSINESS, DEBATE, VOTING AND STEPS IN A MOTION

The basic element in a meeting is the "motion". We reach decisions through the making of a motion, seconding it, discussing it and voting on it. This process is repeated again and again through the use of different motions. However, before this basic element can be used we need a constitution and officers, and a number of other elements must be in place. The purpose of this chapter is to help you understand some of those elements.

QUORUM

No meeting should be held unless a certain minimum number of members are present. This is what is meant by the "presence of a quorum." The quorum requirement will vary according to the needs of the organization, and should be stated in the constitution. The usual rule followed in writing a quorum requirement in the constitution is to pick a number or percentage slightly below the average attendance. Most organizations do not take enough time in establishing the quorum requirement, for that decision determines what proportion of the members will be allowed to reach decisions in the name of all members. In computing a quorum, only members in good standing are counted. If no quorum requirement is provided for in the constitution, a majority of the membership must be present in order to do business. If a quorum is present at the beginning of a meeting but members leave until no quorum is present, business may be legally continued until someone challenges the lack of a quorum. At that point the organization must adjourn. In case of a meeting of a committee the quorum requirement is a majority of the committee members, unless your standing rules allow a different number.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The smooth flow of business will be enhanced if the meeting follows a set order of business. Generally such an order is provided for in the Constitution or in the Standing Rules with a statement such as: "The following order of business shall be used in all meetings of this organization." There is no single uniform order of business, but most orders of business in U.S. organizations are quite similar. A typical order follows:

1. Call to Order
2. Act on the Minutes
3. Reports of Officers
4. Reports of Standing Committees
5. Reports of Special Committees
6. Unfinished Business
 - (a) Motions/Actions postponed as a special order
 - (b) Motions/Actions postponed as a general order
 - (c) Business not completed at the previous meeting
7. New Business
8. Announcements
9. Adjournment

Societies that have an invocation and/or roll call would usually place them after the Call to Order.

DEBATE (Discussion)

Most decisions are reached after debate followed by voting. Every member of the organization has an equal right to participate in this discussion, and the opportunity to debate can be limited only in certain designated ways. Debate which helps the course of a motion and deals with the subject of the motion is germane--that is, it pertains directly to the subject or substance of the proposed motion. Irrelevant debate should be ruled out of order. Members should take care to keep their remarks on the subject of the motion and to abstain from a discussion of personalities in a derogatory manner. Members may not be forced to participate in discussion, for the right to be silent is as important as the right to talk. Members can help make their debate pertain more directly to the motion by indicating, when they begin, whether they support or oppose the motion, or whether they are merely raising a point of clarification on the issue. In this way listeners can more readily identify the discussion, and the chair is helped if she is attempting to alternate recognition between members who oppose and who favor a motion.

VOTING

Much of the work of the chairperson deals with putting motions to a vote and announcing the result of the vote. The chair should always specify the method for voting. The affirmative vote (those in favor of the motion) is always called for first; the negative vote follows. It is desirable to call for the negative vote even if the affirmative has an obvious majority.

The three most typical methods for taking a vote are: voice vote, "show" vote, and secret vote. A voice vote (phrased "All in favor say 'Aye'; all opposed say 'No'") is used for ordinary business which is routine in nature and likely to result in an obvious majority for one side of the question. A show vote is necessary when the outcome is likely to be close or when a two-thirds vote is required for passage. Under these

circumstances the chair needs to ask for a show of hands or a standing vote in order to more accurately assess the result and to count, if necessary, the number in favor of and the number opposed to the motion if that seems necessary. One special form of the show vote is a roll call vote usually employed in recording votes of delegates who represent a larger group. A roll call allows us to know if our delegate voted as he was instructed to do.

A secret ballot also provides an exact count, but it does not show which persons voted for and which against the action. It is most often used in elections and on motions that are controversial in nature. Each member is thus able to reflect their feeling on the issue without fear of embarrassment or reprisal. In a small group the President and Secretary usually count secret ballots in front of the members. If there are a large number of ballots, it is wise to appoint or elect tellers, representing all factions involved in the question, and ask them to count the ballots.

One special method of voting can be especially helpful if appropriately used. It is called "unanimous consent" or "general consent." On routine matters it is employed like the voice vote, but it can operate without the use of a formal motion and second. When the chair has a routine item of business to handle, such as the approval of minutes, she can avoid the necessity of a time-consuming formal motion by saying, "If there is no objection, the minutes will stand as approved." She waits a moment to see if there is an objection; if there is none, she declares, "The minutes are approved." If a member would say, "I object to unanimous consent", the chair would ask for a motion, a second, discussion, and then take a vote on the original matter needing approval.

The method of voting is determined by the chair, but this does not mean that members must accept her decision. If a certain method of voting on a given issue is preferred by a member, one of them should request or move that such a method of voting be used. Such a motion would require a second, would be non-debatable, and would require a majority vote to pass. It would be treated as an incidental motion.

Computing the vote on a motion requiring only a majority vote is generally not difficult; one should, however, remember that the term "majority" can have several meanings. For example, the correct definition of majority is just over half, but do we mean half of the membership, half of the votes cast, or half of the number of persons present? The rule to follow is to consider a majority as just over half of the votes cast unless your constitution gives another definition for the term. To illustrate the difference in these calculations, study the following situation:

Example: In a club with 40 members, 32 members attend a meeting and 28 vote on a motion.

<u>Calculation</u>	<u>Majority</u>	<u>Two-thirds</u>
of membership	21	27
of members attending	17	22
of total votes cast	15	19

Since majority usually means just over 1/2 of the votes cast, 15 votes would be necessary for majority passage in the hypothetical situation above. (We are assuming that all the votes cast are legal.) Any vote which is not legal, such as a non-member voting, is not considered in the calculation.

The immediate calculation of the vote when a two-thirds vote is required can be difficult. A technique for quick calculation is to double the negative vote, and if it exceeds the affirmative vote the motion is defeated; if it is less than the affirmative vote or equals the affirmative vote, the motion is passed. For example, if the affirmative vote on a motion requiring a two-thirds vote is 15 and the negative vote is 8, by doubling the negative vote of 8 we arrive at the total sum of 16. This is greater than the affirmative vote (15) so we know the motion does not have the necessary two-thirds majority.

Plurality election refers to a situation or election in which three or more alternatives exist. If plurality passage is allowed, the alternative with the largest vote wins even if it is less than a majority. For example, if Litterst, Stocker, and Vora were running for the Chair position and received 24, 18, and 12 votes respectively, Litterst, who has the most votes, would be elected if we allowed plurality. In this example, 28 votes would constitute a majority, and if a majority were required for election, it would be necessary to vote again. Either the group could vote again on all three candidates, or, more likely, a motion could be made to eliminate the candidate having the lowest number of votes and thus limit voting to only the top two. This would facilitate getting a majority.

Much confusion exists as to when the chair should vote. If the vote is by ballot, the chair should vote provided that she votes at the same time as all the other members. However, if the vote is not by ballot (in the case of a voice vote, show vote, etc.) the chair should usually vote only if she feels strongly about the matter and then only if her vote will change the outcome. The reason is that the chair needs to maintain an appearance of impartiality and frequent voting will make the chair seem like a partisan. In the case of a tie vote the chair should vote if she is in favor of the motion, since a tie would otherwise defeat the motion; if the chair were opposed to the motion, she should not vote because the motion is defeated as it stands and the chair's negative vote would have no additional effect on the

motion. A second situation occurs when a motion is about to pass by one vote. In this case, if the chair were in favor of the motion she would not vote, but if she were strongly opposed to the motion she should vote because her vote would create a tie, which would defeat the motion.

STEPS IN A MOTION

The typical steps in handling a main motion are:

1. Member seeks recognition
2. Member is recognized and makes motion.
3. The motion is seconded
4. The motion is re-stated by the chair to the group.
At this point the motion stops being the "property" of the person who made it and becomes the property of the group
5. Discussion. In discussion, the chair normally first recognizes the person who made the motion, does not recognize a person twice until everyone trying to give their first speech has done so and, when possible, alternates between sides in the recognition process.
6. Vote on the motion
7. Announcement of the result by the chair. At this point the motion is no longer the property of the group

This same pattern is followed for some subsidiary, privileged and incidental motions although a number of those motions require no second or allow no discussion. There is disagreement in modern parliamentary procedure over the need to require a second for motions. The original intent of requiring a second was to be certain that at least two people are interested in considering the issue. This control feature rarely works since most of us have at least one "friend"! It is also true that in small groups the requirement of a second may be unfair. For example, should 2 persons out of 10 (20%) be required to discuss an issue? Since organizations do have the right to write their own rules, a standing rule for every organization to consider is a rule to eliminate the need for a second.

Once a motion has been defeated it may not be immediately moved again. However, some motions may be renewed after a change in the parliamentary situation. It will be noted in the last column of the Summary of Rules Chart that certain motions, under specified conditions, can be moved again (renewed). A change in the parliamentary situation means that additional action has been taken, additional discussion has occurred, or new motions have been proposed which might have influenced the thinking of some members. Under these circumstances the parliamentary situation is considered to have changed, and thus motions on which renewal is possible can be moved again. The chair is the judge of such changes in the parliamentary situation. Her judgment, however, is subject to appeal. In most cases the chair should rule liberally;

and if there has been any progress in the meeting, she can assume that a change has occurred which would allow a renewable motion to be legally moved again.

SUMMARY

The minimum number of members necessary to hold a meeting is called a quorum, and you do not have a legal meeting unless you have a quorum present. Each club should adopt and use an order of business. Debate is more helpful in decision making if it is germane, and if a member indicates the purpose of her remarks. The three typical methods of voting are voice, show and secret ballot. The appropriate use of unanimous consent can make a meeting run more efficiently. The chair should always vote on a secret ballot but on voice and show vote the chair normally avoids voting in order to appear neutral. There are standard steps to take in consideration of a motion. One of these steps, the second, might be eliminated.

EXERCISES TO WRITE OUT

1. Calculate the majority and two-thirds vote in each of the following situations: A club has 50 members, 41 of whom attend a meeting; and there are 37 votes on an issue. Assume all votes are legal.

Calculate

- a. majority and two-thirds of memberships
 - b. majority and two-thirds of members present
 - c. majority and two-thirds of votes cast
2. What method of voting would you suggest for each of the following situations?
 - a. Your delegate to a national convention is about to vote on a fifty dollar dues increase for local chapters. You instructed your delegate to strongly oppose this increase and want to know if she did so.
 - b. A PTA is to vote on an all-night prom. There has been very bitter debate on the topic. Many neighbors disagree on the issue.
 - c. Approval of minutes
 - d. A vote on the motion to limit debate
 - e. A vote on thanking a speaker
 3. If the vote is not by ballot, under which of the following situations should the chair vote?
 - a. The vote is on a motion requiring only a majority vote. The existing vote is affirmative 20, negative 20. The chair is opposed to the motion.
 - b. The vote is on a motion requiring a two-thirds vote. The existing vote is affirmative 16, negative 5. The

- chair is opposed to the motion.
- c. The vote is on a motion requiring a two-thirds vote. The existing vote is affirmative 20, negative 20. The chair favors the motion.
 - d. The vote is on a motion requiring only a majority vote. The existing vote is affirmative 16, negative 15. The chair is opposed to the motion.
 - e. The vote is on a motion requiring a two-thirds vote. The existing vote is affirmative 12, negative 5. The chair favors the motion.
4. What is the quorum for a club of 99 members under the following situations
 - a. No quorum requirement
 - b. 20%
 - c. 10% and 5 of the members are not considered in good standing.
 - d. Constitution states 36 members are required for a quorum.
 5. Develop an order of business different from the one listed in this chapter. Explain the circumstances that would justify your proposed order of business.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Discuss the consequences of the advice that the chair limit her voting to limited situations in order to seem neutral. What are the disadvantages to such advice? Is there a compromise position?
2. Do you feel the requirement for a second on a motion is desirable? Why or why not?

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10. Kinsman, Clarence W., "How to Conduct a Safe and Secret Ballot by Mail," Parliamentary Journal, 16, No. 2 (April 1975): 26-27.
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KEEPING MOTIONS IN PROPER ORDER

The single most important concept to understand in parliamentary procedure is precedence. Precedence is another word for rank and it is the method employed to decide when a motion can be made. Two separate levels of precedence exist: precedence between groups of motions, and precedence within each group of motions. Let us consider each of these levels.

The motions and procedures used in parliamentary practice are placed in five groups in Roberts' Rules of Order Newly Revised:

1. Main motions
 - (a) Original
 - (b) Incidental
2. Subsidiary
3. Privileged
4. Incidental
5. Motions that bring a question again before the assembly

Other authors, such as Sturgis, use only the first four groups designated by Robert. She, as we will do in this book, places the group 5 motions (motions that bring a question again before the assembly) under main motions as a special sub-group.

One way to decide whether a motion can be made at a particular time is to determine whether the proposed motion is in a group higher in precedence than the motion that was last proposed. The precedence of groups is as follows:

<u>No Order</u>	<u>Incidental</u>
Highest	Privileged
	Subsidiary
Lowest	Main Motions

For example, when a main motion is under consideration and a member proposes a privileged motion, that motion would be in order, for it is in a group higher in precedence than main motions. However, if while this privileged motion is under consideration someone proposes a subsidiary motion, the subsidiary motion would in most cases be out of order, for its group is lower in precedence than that of the incidental motion pending. By pending we mean motions made but not disposed of, and if we say "immediate pending motion," we are referring to the last motion moved of a group of pending motions. Thus the relationship in rank of these groups helps a chairperson decide if she should accept or reject a proposed motion.

The same rule will apply when considering the second level of precedence--rank within a group of motions. On the Summary of Rules Chart you will notice that each of the Privileged Motions has a number, e.g., Adjourn (9); Recess (8). On this chart the higher the number, the higher the precedence; so the motion to adjourn is not only in the group (Privileged) with the highest precedence, but it is also the highest ranked motion in that group.

You will note then that in listing the groups, there is a clear cut order, from main motions (lowest) to subsidiary (next highest) to privileged (highest). Incidental motions are not included in this precedence system, because a decision on their proper use is determined by appropriateness rather than by precedence. For an example, consider Parliamentary Inquiry, the procedure employed by a member to ask a question about a pending matter. Assume the following motions are pending:

Main Motion
Amendment
Close Debate
Adjourn

In this case the immediate pending question is Adjourn. If a member rose to a parliamentary inquiry about the amendment, it would be ruled out of order because it was not appropriate, but if the inquiry applied to adjourn it would be appropriate and answered. If adjourn and close debate failed, a parliamentary inquiry raised about the amendment would be accepted since it is now appropriate.

The concept of rank within a group occurs within the Subsidiary Group and the Privileged Group, where the numbers on the Summary of Rules Chart reflect the various degrees of precedence within that group. Thus, Postpone Temporarily has the highest precedence of all Subsidiary Motions, while Amend is the motion lowest in precedence within that group.

The lack of separate numbers for each of the motions in the Main Group and the Incidental Group means that these motions do not have a rank in relation to other motions within their own group. They all have the precedence of their group in relation to other groups, but there is no difference in rank for each of the motions within the group. This is primarily because in both groups one motion or procedure would usually be completely finished before it is possible to treat another motion in that group. For example, since only one main motion can be brought before the group at any given time, there is no need for a precedence ranking in the main motion category.

In the case of motions, as in the military service, rank does exist and determines what you can do. Motions are accepted in order of their precedence and are voted on in their reverse order. Thus, we go up the ladder of precedence until no more motions are

made, and then we start back by discussing and voting until we return to the original motion.

Like most rules, the rule of precedence is not absolute.

The two major exceptions in precedence are:

- (1) Amendments to all amendable motions higher in precedence than the motion to amend are possible. (Amendments to Recess, Limit Debate, Postpone Definitely, Refer to Committee, etc.)
- (2) Close or Limit Debate may be applied to all debatable motions higher in precedence than these two motions (Appeal, etc.).

The issue of exceptions also involves two additional questions: "What is the precedence level of the exception?" and "What are the rules pertaining to recognition and discussion which apply to the exception?" Generally, the exception "takes on" the precedence level, recognition, and discussion rules of the motion to which it is applied. For example, consider the motion Amend, which typically has low precedence in the subsidiary group and permits discussion. When an amendment is applied as an exception, to Recess, it "takes on" the precedence level of Recess rather than its original level, and it "takes on" the no discussion rule of Recess. While a few situations might dictate different treatment, we usually allow an exception to "take on" the level and rules of the motion to which it has been applied.

We know from our study of precedence that an almost unlimited number of motions may be pending at the same time. Consequently, the chair must know at all times which motion is currently being debated, which motion is being voted on, and what additional motions could properly be raised. We have suggested that the rule to follow in this matter is that the last proposed motion is the first to be considered. To illustrate this rule again, suppose a main motion were pending and someone proposed an amendment. The amendment would be the first motion considered, and after the amendment had been disposed of, the main motion would be considered.

The above example presents only a simple problem. Consider the following more complex situation: A main motion is pending; someone moves to amend the motion; this is followed by the moving of a secondary amendment to the original amendment. At this point it is moved to refer the main motion to a specified committee. This is promptly followed by a proposed amendment to the motion to Refer (note that this is one of the exceptions to the rule of precedence) and a motion to Close Debate on the amendment to the motion to Refer. Finally, a motion to Adjourn is made.

This example illustrates how necessary it is that the chairperson have some method for keeping the motions in order.

SUMMARY

Precedence describes the rank of motions, either between groups of motions or within a group of motions. Precedence determines when and if a motion can be made. Understanding precedence, like any worthwhile project, takes time. The best way to understand this concept is to study the Summary of Rules Chart. This chart and the method given for diagramming motions are tools needed in understanding precedence.

EXERCISES TO WRITE OUT

1. In each of the following situations assume the unlikely situation that each of these motions or procedures has been made without any action on the previous motion. Assume that any item necessary for a motion to be appropriate (such as a decision for appeal) has occurred. Thus, you can assume that all these motions are legal and appropriate except that no one has yet checked on precedence. What motions would you accept? Which would you rule out of order? Watch for exceptions. In some cases you must make assumptions so list any assumptions you make.

- A- (a) Main Motion
 (b) Refer to Committee
 (c) Amendment to Refer to Committee
 (d) Limit Debate
 (e) Amendment to the Main Motion
 (f) Adjourn
- B- (a) Main Motion
 (b) Limit Debate
 (c) Amendment to Limit Debate
 (d) Appeal
 (e) Limit Debate on Appeal
 (f) Recess
 (g) Amendment to the Motion to Recess
 (h) Adjourn
- C- (a) Main Motion
 (b) Amendment to Main Motion
 (c) Amendment to the Amendment
 (d) Point of Order
 (e) Refer to Committee
 (f) Limit Debate
 (g) Recess
 (h) Adjourn
- D- (a) Main Motion
 (b) Recess
 (c) Appeal
 (d) Refer to Committee
 (e) Amendment to the Main Motion

- (f) Limit Debate
- (g) Adjourn
- (h) Recess

2. Prepare a chairperson's diagram for the following situation. Motions were moved in the order given below.

- (a) Main Motion
- (b) Amendment to the Main Motion
- (c) Refer to Committee
- (d) Amend Refer to Committee
- (e) Close Debate
- (f) Recess
- (g) Amend Recess
- (h) Adjourn

3. Using the Summary of Rules chart in this book determine how many of the eighteen motions could be pending at any particular time?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What are the exceptions to the rule of precedence? Why are there exceptions?
2. How does one determine the precedence of incidental motions among themselves?

ADDITIONAL READING

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2. Hellman, Hugo. "Robert's Precedence is Nonsense," Parliamentary Journal. 12, No. 2 (April 1970): 3-7.

MAIN MOTIONS

Main motions are the most commonly used motions in parliamentary procedure. We shall discuss them under three headings: (1) Original Main Motions; (2) Secondary Main Motions; (3) Special Main Motions.

ORIGINAL MAIN MOTIONS

The original main motion is the basis of all parliamentary deliberations. Its purpose is to bring a proposed substantive action before the society in the form of a motion. If a member of a society moves that each member be assessed a certain amount as membership dues, that is an original main motion. If any member moves that the society hold a party, that is also a main motion. There is no limit to the scope of subjects for main motions except that any proposed illegal action should be ruled out of order, any main motion in conflict with the constitution or standing rules of the organization is also out of order, and any main motion which seems the same or almost the same as an action already taken at this meeting or the same as an action in effect from a previous meeting is out of order.

The main motion has the lowest precedence. It yields to all subsidiary, incidental, and privileged motions and takes precedence of no other motion, not even another main motion. For this reason two main motions may not be pending at the same time. However, when one main motion is disposed of, another main motion is then in order.

Correct phrasing of main motions is important, and the chair should help members to make their motions specific and meaningful. It is much easier to rephrase an imperfect main motion when it is being made than it is to perfect it by amendment. An effective main motion should be short, complete, and subject to only one possible interpretation. Lengthy main motions should be submitted to the Secretary in writing at the time they are raised.

Given below are some ineffectively stated original main motions that have been taken from the actual minutes of an organization. After each example the weakness of the motion is given.

1. "Mary Yoos made the motion that there should be a committee to keep service rooms clean."

This main motion is weak because it fails to indicate the number of persons on the committee and the method for selecting committee members. If this motion is passed, it will take at least one more motion to accomplish what could be done in one

well-worded main motion. Such a motion might be phrased..."Mary Yoos moved that the chair be responsible for appointing three hall residents to serve for one year in keeping all three service rooms in Shoemaker Hall clean."

2. Regis Betts moved that the Residence Hall Council buy bulletin boards for the residence halls.

The primary weakness of this motion lies in its failure to be specific. For example, does the person proposing the motion intend to have one or more bulletin boards in each residence hall or in all residence halls? Does she intend to buy bulletin boards for the men's residence halls? How will the bulletin boards be paid for? These are some of the questions that will be considered and settled by discussion, but such agreements and comments are not included in the minutes. Thus, the official action on such a motion as this could lead to considerable confusion in the future when no memory of the discussion period remains. It would have been better to phrase the motion..."Regis Betts moved that the Residence Hall Council purchase and pay for one bulletin board for each of the six service rooms in Benton Hall."

The mover of an original main motion needs recognition (i.e., she may not interrupt). It requires a second. The motion requires a majority vote for passage. If defeated, it may not be renewed at the same meeting but, of course, it may be reintroduced at any later meeting.

The following is an example of the procedure for handling a main motion.

MEMBER: "Ms. Chairperson."

CHAIRPERSON: "The chair recognizes Mr. DelZoppo."

MR. DELZOPPO: "Ms. Chairperson, I move that the treasurer purchase a gavel for use at our meetings at a cost not to exceed \$15.00."

SECOND MEMBER: (without recognition) "I second the motion."

CHAIRPERSON: "It has been moved and seconded that the treasurer purchase a gavel for use at our meetings at a cost not to exceed \$15.00. Is there a discussion?"

(Members seek recognition and discuss the motion as desired.)

CHAIRPERSON: "If there is no further discussion, we will vote on the motion that the treasurer purchase a gavel for use at our meetings at a cost not to exceed \$15.00. All in favor of the motion say 'Aye'--All those opposed to the motion say 'No' --The motion is carried (or the motion is defeated)."

SECONDARY MAIN MOTIONS

The next category of main motions to be considered are those situations where motions usually classified as incidental, privileged, and subsidiary motions are made with no other motions on the floor. In such a case these incidental, privileged and subsidiary motions should be treated as main motions. For example, a motion made to recess with no other motion on the floor is a secondary main motion and treated by main motion rules rather than the rules which apply to the privileged motion to recess.

Such motions deal with procedural issues rather than with the substantive issues considered in original main motions. The wording of such motions usually corresponds to the terminology found in incidental, privileged or subsidiary motions (recess, limit debate, refer to committee, adopt, ratify, etc.) but are treated as main motions.

SPECIAL MAIN MOTIONS

Included in this main motion group are two motions: rescind, and resume consideration. For both we follow the same rule as for the original main motion--that is, they cannot be proposed unless there is no other business on the floor.

Motion to Rescind

The motion to Rescind applies only to original main motions which have been passed, and there is no time limit on its use. It provides a method for cancelling actions that now prove undesirable. When an original main motion, passed at a previous meeting or the current meeting, proves to be unnecessary or undesirable, a member moves to rescind that motion. If the motion to rescind passes, the original main motion is cancelled. The secretary should then go back through the minutes to find the original main motion and write a note of rescinding in the margin, to indicate the date and page where the motion to rescind can be found.

The mover of the motion to rescind needs recognition. The motion requires a second. It is debatable but not amendable. Generally, a two-thirds vote is required for passage of a motion to rescind. Rescinding may be applied only to an original main motion. The motion to rescind may not be renewed.

An exception to the two-thirds vote required for rescinding occurs whenever the person intending to move the rescinding of a motion gives notice of his intent at least one meeting in advance. If, at a regular business meeting, a member states his intention to rescind, that motion to rescind can be passed at the next regular business meeting by a simple majority vote. Declaration of intention to rescind is illustrated by the following dialogue:

The procedure for handling the motion with notice is given below.

MEMBER: "Mr. Chairperson."

CHAIRPERSON: "The chair recognizes Ms. Vora."

MS. VORA: "Mr. Chairperson, at our next regular business meeting I intend to move to rescind the motion, which was passed at our January meeting, requiring all members to attend the annual convention. I request that the secretary be instructed to record my intention to move to rescind at the next meeting."

CHAIRPERSON: "The secretary is instructed to enter in the minutes this intention to rescind and we will vote on the motion to rescind at our next meeting."

The procedure for handling the motion to rescind without notice is as follows:

MEMBER: "Mr. Chairperson."

CHAIRPERSON: "The chair recognizes Ms. Vora."

MS. VORA: "Mr. Chairperson, I move that the motion requiring all members to attend the annual convention, which was passed at our January meeting, be rescinded."

SECOND MEMBER: "I second the motion."

CHAIRPERSON: "It has been moved and seconded that the motion requiring all members to attend the annual convention be rescinded. Is there any discussion.?"

(Members seek recognition and discuss as desired.)

CHAIRPERSON: "If there is no further discussion, we will now vote on the motion to rescind. All in favor of rescinding the motion raise their right hand. The motion carries, by the necessary 2/3ds vote and the motion to require attendance at the annual convention is rescinded (or, the motion to rescind is defeated, and the main motion on convention attendance stands as it was originally passed)."

Sometimes organizations pass a motion which is in conflict with an earlier motion without rescinding the first motion. In these situations a motion to rescind the first motion could be passed, but if such action is not taken, the last motion is binding on the society. Such a decision is based on the assumption that a motion passed last represents the real wishes of the society, and the first motion has "unofficially been rescinded by implication."

It should be noted that a motion to rescind cannot be applied if such an action is impossible. For example, the motion to rescind a resolution of protest already sent by telegraph earlier in a meeting is useless. It is also impossible to rescind an action that has been taken such as the payment of a bill. In both of these cases, if the telegram had not been sent or the bill not paid, the action to rescind would be appropriate.

We have not included in this section a motion called Reconsider. In our opinion this complex and confusing motion is rarely needed and when used is likely to cause more trouble than it is worth. Reconsider allows a main motion defeated or passed at a meeting to come back up a second time if a person who voted with the prevailing side moves it. Allowing a second vote on each issue can be time consuming and the determination of whether a person did vote on the prevailing side is difficult and controversial. If a main motion passes that you want to eliminate, use rescind to eliminate it, if a main motion fails bring it up again at the next meeting.

Motion to Resume Consideration

The second special main motion is to Resume Consideration. It relates to Postpone Temporarily which will be discussed in detail later. It will suffice here to say that some motions are postponed temporarily (laid on the table). This means they are postponed without a specific indication of when they come back for action. A member who wished to have a temporarily postponed motion brought back to the floor for action should move to resume consideration. If a majority vote is obtained, the motion that was postponed temporarily is immediately restated to the group for consideration.

The mover of the motion to resume consideration needs recognition. The motion requires a second. It is neither debatable or amendable. Only a majority vote is required for passage. The motion to resume consideration may only be applied to motions that have been "postponed temporarily." The motion to resume consideration may be made at the current meeting or at the next meeting. If the motion to resume is not made at the current meeting or the next meeting the motion postponed temporarily is considered dead and would have to be brought back as an original main motion.

The procedure for handling the motion to resume consideration is as follows:

MEMBER: "Ms. Chairperson."

CHAIRPERSON: "The chair recognizes Mr. Marmas."

MR. MARMAS: "Ms. Chairperson, I move that we now resume consideration of the motion concerning the assessment of annual dues which was temporarily postponed (tabled)"

earlier in this meeting."

SECOND MEMBER: "I second the motion."

CHAIRPERSON: "It has been moved and seconded that we resume consideration of the motion concerning the assessment of annual dues. All in favor of resuming consideration of this motion say 'Aye.' All opposed say 'No'--The motion is carried. Is there any further discussion on the main motion to assess each member two dollars as annual dues?" (Or, "The motion to resume consideration is defeated. Is there any other new business?")

In many parliamentary procedure books the motion to postpone temporarily is labeled "lay on the table" and the motion to resume consideration is labeled "take from the table." These names came from the practice in the British Parliament of taking a proposed bill and placing it on the table in front of the presiding officer.

SUMMARY

Main motions are the most commonly used motions. Original main motions bring substantive issues before the members while secondary main motions describe privileged, incidental and subsidiary motions made when no motion is pending. Rescind and Resume Consideration are the two special main motions. The motion to reconsider is not recommended for use because of its complexity.

EXERCISES

1. Look at the recent minutes of a club. Identify and list five original main motions. Evaluate the clarity of those motions.
2. Evaluate the following main motions. For each, indicate whether you think it is a well phrased motion or a poorly phrased motion. If you say it is a poorly phrased motion, rewrite it to make it a well phrased motion.
 - a. I move we do something about having a picnic.
 - b. I move we send this to the city council.
 - c. I move we have a committee study this.
 - d. I move we have our annual picnic on Monday instead of Friday.
 - e. I move to raise our dues by ten dollars per month, from \$20 to \$30, effective September 1, 1986.
 - f. I move that Mr. Jones be in charge of this matter.
3. Which of the following motions would you rule in order and which would you rule out of order if you were chairperson? Assume they all have seconds. For the ones you rule out of order, give your reasons. Make any assumptions explicit.

- a. I move to rescind the main motion passed at the beginning of this meeting which raised the dues of this organization.
- b. I move to resume consideration of the motion that was postponed indefinitely.
- c. I move to rescind the appeal that was passed at our last meeting.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. If an organization did allow the motion to reconsider how would you determine if a mover had voted with the prevailing side?
2. Explain when you would use the motion to resume consideration. What is another name for this motion? Why does it have this other name?

ADDITIONAL READING

1. Hoogestraat, Wayne E., "The Logic of Robert's Restricted Eligibility for Moving Reconsideration." Parliamentary Journal, 15 (1974), 25-26.
2. Lowry, Bullett, "The Motion to Rescind": "Firing an Executive Director," Parliamentary Journal, 18, No. 3 (July 1977): 12-14.
3. Patnode, Darwin, "Reconsider Reconsideration." Parliamentary Journal, 20 (1979), 43-44.

SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS (except for Refer to Committee)

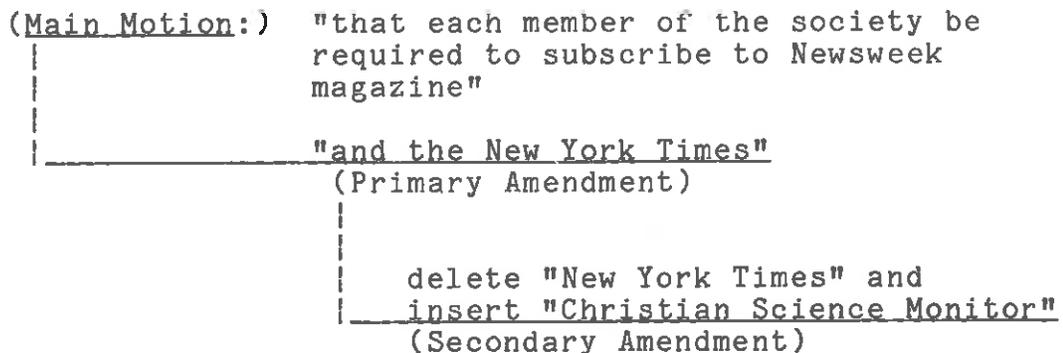
Subsidiary motions provide alternate ways of disposing of or modifying other motions besides the typical means of approval or disapproval. The major subsidiary motions of Amend, Refer to Committee, Postpone Definitely, Limit Debate, Close Debate, and Postpone Temporarily are used most often in connection with main motions.

AMEND

When a member of a parliamentary assembly moves to change the wording of a motion, she is making an amendment. Most amendments apply to main motions, but motions such as Recess, Limit Debate, Postpone Definitely, Refer to Committee, and an amendment itself, are amendable. As a general rule, motions that can be changed by altering the wording are amendable, and motions that have no occasion to be changed by rewording are not amendable. For example, a main motion can be changed by rewording and is amendable, but the motion to adjourn can only be phrased for the one intent and it is therefore not amendable.

There are two types of amendments: primary and secondary. A primary amendment is one that makes some change in the pending motion. A secondary amendment is one that changes the wording of the primary amendment. If the main motion were pending--"...that each member of the society be required to subscribe to Newsweek magazine"--an amendment which would add to the motion the words "and the New York Times" would be a primary amendment because it makes a change in the main motion to which it applies. However, if a further amendment were raised to strike out the words "New York Times" as it appears in the primary amendment and insert in its place the words "Christian Science Monitor", this would be a secondary amendment because it applies to the primary amendment.

In diagram form the above example would appear as follows:



This secondary amendment may not be further amended, but once the secondary amendment is disposed of, another secondary amendment may be proposed to the original (primary) amendment. The same rule is true of primary amendments. Keep in mind that only one

primary amendment and only one secondary amendment may be pending at any one time with reference to a single amendable motion. A good case can be made for the idea that two levels of amendments confuse people and are difficult for chairpersons to handle. In many organizations a sensible "Standing Rule" to adopt would be to limit the amendment process to one amendment at a time. As soon as one amendment is passed or defeated, another amendment could be made and handled. This rule would allow just as many total amendments but they would be handled one at a time and without the confusion of primary and secondary levels.

Most amendments are of the primary type, and the rules listed here are for primary amendments. The only difference in the rules when applied to a secondary amendment is that a secondary amendment is not subject to further amendment. An amendment takes precedence of main motions. If the amendment is proposed as a change in some other amendable motion (not a main motion) such as a primary amendment on a motion to refer, postpone definitely, limit debate, close nominations, or recess, it takes on the precedence of the motion to which it applies. Thus, in considering a proposed amendment to the motion to recess, the amendment is considered as having the precedence of the motion to recess and rules pertaining to recess apply to the amendment.

Amendments should be germane (that is, apply to the same subject as the motion being amended) and should not be hostile to, or different in intent from, the original motion. For example, if the main motion pending were "that each member of the society be assessed fifty cents," an amendment to strike out "assessed" and insert in its place the word "refunded" should be ruled out of order as being hostile to the original motion. The interpretation in Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised does allow such hostile amendments to be made.

There are three possible methods of amending a motion: by adding, by striking out, and by striking out and adding. The mover of an amendment should specify the method of amendment, for the effect of each of these on the wording of the motion differs. If the main motion previously mentioned were pending, "...that each member of the society be assessed fifty cents," it might be amended by adding the words, "as membership dues."

MAIN MOTION

"Ms. Chairperson, I move that each member of the society be assessed fifty cents."

AMENDMENT

"Ms. Chairperson, I move that we amend the main motion by adding the words 'as membership dues.'"

The same motion could be amended by striking out the words "of the society," if they were thought to be unnecessary.

MAIN MOTION

"Ms. Chairperson, I move that each member of the society be assessed fifty cents."

AMENDMENT

"Ms. Chairperson, I move that we amend the main motion by striking out the words 'of the society.'"

The same motion could be amended by striking out and inserting.

MAIN MOTION

"Ms. Chairperson, I move that each member of the society be assessed fifty cents."

AMENDMENT

"Ms. Chairperson, I move that we amend the main motion by striking out the word 'fifty' and inserting in its place the word 'thirty.'"

The mover of an amendment needs recognition. The amendment requires a second, and it is not debatable. Primary amendments are amendable, but secondary amendments are not. An amendment requires only a majority vote to pass. Amendments may be applied to any amendable motion. They may not be renewed.

If an amendment is proposed to a main motion and is acceptable to the mover of the main motion, he should seek the chair's recognition and indicate his willingness to accept it. The chair will then ask if there are any objections, and if there are none the amendment can be quickly adopted by general consent without further procedure. This method is sometimes called the "friendly amendment" process.

The regular procedure for handling amendments is as follows:
Main Motion pending: "...that each member of the society be assessed fifty cents." (While the main motion is open for discussion.)

MEMBER: "Ms. Chairperson."

CHAIR: "The chair recognizes Mr. Wolfer."

MR. WOLFER: "Ms. Chairperson, I move that we amend the main motion by inserting the word regular after the word each and before the word member."

SECOND MEMBER: "I second the motion."

CHAIR: "It has been moved and seconded that we amend the main motion by inserting the word regular after the word each and before the word member."

(Members seek recognition and discuss as desired.)

CHAIR: "If there is no further discussion we will now vote on the motion 'that the main motion be amended by inserting the word regular after the word each and before the word member.' If this amendment is passed, the main motion will read, 'that each regular member of the society be assessed fifty cents.' All in favor of the amendment raise their hands--All opposed to the amendment raise their hands. The amendment is passed (or the amendment is defeated)."

Complete substitution of one main motion for another is also possible. For example, if the motion on the floor was

"...that each member of the FAEC secure the permission of one member of their unit to serve as an election candidate for the Dean Selection Committee"

some member might wish to amend this motion. If the proposed change did not easily fit into the existing motion a primary amendment by substituting a completely different motion would be useful. For example, the substitute motion could read:

"...that each unit in the FAEC elect by department one person to serve on the Dean Selection Committee."

If this substitution were passed, it would take the place of the pending main motion and become the main motion for discussion and voting. The procedure for handling a substitute motion differs from that of amendments in that an amendment is a modification in a motion, while the substitute motion replaces the original main motion in toto. The motion to substitute has the same precedence as a primary amendment to a main motion.

The person moving a substitute motion must be recognized. The motion must have a second. It is debatable. Amendments may be applied to a substitute motion, but because of the special handling of this motion, these amendments are secondary amendments and may not be further amended. Substituting one motion for another requires a majority vote for passage. Substitution can be applied only to main motions, and the motion to substitute may not be renewed at the session in which it was originally proposed.

When a member moves to substitute one main motion for another, the chair first opens the original main motion to debate and amendment (i.e., the substitute is temporarily set aside). After the original main motion has been amended to the satisfaction of the members (i.e., no further amendments are forthcoming), the substitute motion is opened for debate and

amendment. When no further amendments are offered to the substitute, the chair puts the question to a vote--the question being whether to substitute the second motion for the pending main motion. If the motion to substitute carries, the second motion (substitute) becomes the pending main motion, and the first main motion disappears. If the motion to substitute fails, the pending motion continues as the immediate pending motion. In either case, the main motion (original or substitute) is again opened to debate and amendment and ultimately requires a majority vote for passage.

Another special form of amending is called "filling blanks." It works best in those situations where a group would like the opportunity to quickly consider several options. In a situation such as "What should we offer the proposed guest speaker", a member could "Move that we pay Professor Nunn _____ dollars for his lecture on Japan." Other members suggest ways to fill the blank and once there are no more suggestions, those made are voted on in the order proposed until one proposed amount gets a majority.

POSTPONE DEFINITELY

Next in order of precedence (above the motion to refer and below the motion to limit debate) is the motion to Postpone Definitely. The purpose of this motion is to delay consideration of the main motion until a future time. It differs from a temporary postponement in that the definite postponement does provide a time when the motion will again be considered since a motion may not be postponed beyond the next regular meeting. If it is postponed to a special meeting, the specific time for that meeting must be set and it must be before the next regular meeting. A main motion may also be postponed to a later time in the present meeting.

A motion postponed to a definite time becomes a general order for the next meeting (see the Order of Business on page 31) unless detail is added to the motion. If one moves a definite postponement but wishes to have the postponed main motion considered at some exact time, he may add to his motion for postponement the phrase, "and that it be made a special order." As a special order it will be brought up at that place in the order of business established for special orders. If the member wishes the matter postponed to an exact time she will need to provide detail in the motion so it would be stated as follows: "I move to postpone this main motion definitely and to make it a special order for 7:30 p.m." This assures the society that the postponed motion will be considered as a special order and that it will interrupt all business and be considered at exactly that time. The passage of a definite postponement as a special order of either form requires a two-thirds vote, while the passage of a definite postponement as a general order requires only a majority vote.

The member moving a definite postponement needs recognition. The motion requires a second. It is debatable only on the desirability of postponement and amendable only as to time. The motion to postpone to a definite time requires only a majority vote to pass unless it is made as a special order, in which case a two-thirds majority is required. A definite postponement applies only to a main motion, and it may be renewed only after a change in the parliamentary situation.

The procedure for a definite postponement is as follows:

(While a main motion is pending.)

MEMBER: "Ms. Chairperson."

CHAIR: "The chair recognizes Ms. Betts."

MS. BETTS: "Ms. Chairperson, I move that the pending main motion be postponed until our next regular meeting."

NOTE: (In this form the motion postponed would become a general order. If the words "and that it be made a special order at that time" were added to the above motion, it would then be as a special order.)

SECOND MEMBER: "I second the motion."

CHAIR: "It has been moved and seconded that the pending main motion be postponed to our next regular meeting. Is there any discussion?"

(Members seek recognition and debate as desired.)

CHAIR: "The vote is on the motion to postpone the pending main motion as a general order. All in favor of the postponement say 'Aye'--opposed 'No.' The postponement is carried (or the postponement is defeated)."

LIMIT DEBATE

The motion to Limit Debate may be applied to any debatable motion. It takes precedence over the main motion and all subsidiary motions except the motions to close debate and to postpone temporarily and may be applied, as an exception to the rule of precedence, to any debatable motion higher in precedence. The purpose of the motion to limit debate is to bring the pending question to a vote after some specified period of discussion. The motion to limit debate must be phrased by the mover to specify some limit on debate. Limitations on debate can be based on the number of speakers ("two speakers"), the length of speeches ("not more than five minutes per speaker"), the total length of the period of debate ("not more than one hour"), number of speakers supporting and opposing the question ("three speakers on each side of the question"), total time allotted to each side

of the question ("one hour for each side"), or any of a wide variety of other possibilities including various combinations of the above. It is also possible to limit debate on all pending motions, or on any specified number of pending motions, by inserting a phrase to that effect. If no such statement is in the motion, the limit applies only to the immediately pending question.

The person moving to limit debate needs recognition. The motion requires a second. It is not debatable, but it may be amended. The motion to limit debate requires a two-thirds vote for passage. It may be applied to any debatable motion. The motion to limit debate may be renewed after a change in the parliamentary situation.

The motion to limit debate is illustrated as follows:

MEMBER: "Ms. Chairperson."

CHAIR: "The chair recognizes Mr. Rylander."

MR. RYLANDER: "Ms. Chairperson, I move that we limit debate on the pending main motion to a total of ten minutes and that no speaker be allowed more than two minutes to discuss the motion."

SECOND MEMBER: "I second the motion."

CHAIR: "It has been moved and seconded that debate on the pending main motion be limited to a total of ten minutes and that no speaker be allowed more than two minutes to discuss the motion. All in favor of this limitation say 'Aye,' opposed 'No.' The motion is carried. Will the Secretary please act as timekeeper for the current discussion. The main motion is now open for debate (or the motion is defeated)."

CLOSE DEBATE

The motion to Close Debate takes precedence of the main motion and all subsidiary motions except the motion to postpone temporarily. It can be applied to any debatable motion higher including those higher in precedence. The purpose of the motion is to stop all debate and amendments and to bring the pending question (or questions) to an immediate vote.

The motion to close debate may also be phrased as "I move to vote immediately" or "I move the previous question." This latter phrasing is frequently misused when a member calls "Question, Question." An uninformed chairperson sometimes cuts off debate as a result of this call. To do so is to engage in a serious form of minority rule, for it expresses the wish of only one member. The chairperson should always submit the motion to a vote to see if two-thirds of the members wish to close debate. The motion to

close debate, if passed, does exactly that: it closes debate and prevents amendment and must be followed by another vote on the motion that was being debated.

The person moving to close debate needs recognition. The motion requires a second. It is neither debatable nor amendable. The motion to close debate requires a two-thirds vote for passage. It may be applied to any debatable motion. The motion to close debate may be renewed after a change in the parliamentary situation.

The motion to close debate is handled as follows:

(While a debatable motion is open for discussion.)

MEMBER: "Ms. Chairperson."

CHAIR: "The chair recognizes Mr. Haniff."

MR. HANIFF: "Ms. Chairperson, I move to close debate."

SECOND MEMBER: "I second the motion."

CHAIR: "It has been moved and seconded that we close debate on the pending motion. All in favor of the motion to close debate raise their right hands--All opposed raise their right hands. The motion is carried. We will now vote on the motion which was ...(This might be a main motion, an amendment, or any other discussable motion.)"

The effect of the motions to limit or close debate are exhausted by adjournment. This means that if the motions are not implemented during the current session, those motions on which debate was closed, but which have not yet been voted on, are not subject to the effect of the motion to close or limit debate at the next meeting. Rather, they are again opened for debate. However, the motion to close or limit debate may again be moved so that the same purpose could be accomplished even though the earlier motions had been cancelled by adjournment.

With both Limit Debate and Close Debate the application is to the pending question. For example, if a Main motion, Amendment and Refer to Committee are pending, a passed motion to limit or close debate applies only to Refer to Committee. If you want more application you must specify that in your motion and the application must start with the pending motion and other motions of application must be in consecutive order.

POSTPONE TEMPORARILY

The motion to Postpone Temporarily (or Lay on the Table) takes precedence of all main and subsidiary motions. This motion is used to set aside a main motion so that an emergency question of urgency may be considered first. After that urgent item of

business is disposed of, the usual practice is for someone to move to resume consideration of (take from the table) the original motion. However, an entire meeting may elapse between the time when a motion is temporarily postponed and the time when it is moved to resume consideration on the motion. If the motion temporarily postponed is not taken up at the next meeting, it is dead but may be brought up again as an original main motion.

The motion to resume consideration, which is used to bring back for consideration a temporarily postponed motion, is raised when no other business is pending. It has the precedence of a main motion (see Resume Consideration on page 48 for details.).

The member moving to postpone temporarily needs recognition. The motion requires a second. It is neither debatable nor amendable. An item of urgency should exist to justify postpone temporarily, otherwise the chair should rule the proposed motion out of order. A majority vote is required for passage of a temporary postponement. The motion applies only to main motions and it may be renewed after a change in the parliamentary situation. If subsidiary motions are pending, these motions are also postponed by the temporary postponement of the main motion, and they are again pending when the main motion is brought under consideration as a result of the motion to resume consideration.

The procedure for the motion to postpone temporarily is as follows:

(While the main motion is pending.)

MEMBER: "Ms. Chairperson."

CHAIR: "The chair recognizes Mr. Risberg."

MR. RISBERG: "Ms. Chairperson, I move that the motion be temporarily postponed in order to open the floor for an urgent motion to raise the dues."

SECOND MEMBER: "I second the motion."

CHAIR: "It has been moved and seconded that the pending motion be temporarily postponed. All in favor of postponing the motion say 'Aye'--All opposed to postponing the motion say 'No.' The motion is temporarily postponed (or the motion to postpone is defeated)."

SUMMARY

Amend, Postpone Definitely, Refer to Committee, Limit Debate, Close Debate and Postpone Temporarily are subsidiary motions. They are used to provide alternate ways of treating motions besides approval or disapproval. Their wise use can make a meeting run more efficiently.

EXERCISES

1. Which subsidiary motion would be most appropriate for each of the following situations?
 - a. A controversial main motion is being discussed. For some reason all the persons being recognized appear to be on one side of the question. You know there are other members like you who hold an opposite view, but they are too slow in getting recognition from the chairperson. You should move to

 - b. A main motion has been under consideration for 30 minutes. Of the 20 members present, all of the discussion for the last 15 minutes has been among 2 members who do not appear to be changing the minds of other members as a result of the discussion. You should move to

 - c. A main motion has been under consideration for some time but no vote has been taken. The treasurer arrives and reports he must have immediate authorization to pay a bill so a discount can be received. You should move to

 - d. A main motion which you feel is very important to the club has been moved. You are bothered because there are so few members present at this meeting because of a conflict with a church supper. You know there will be a large number of members present at the next regular meeting. You should move to

 - e. A main motion to have a picnic was just made. No mention of time, place, or date was made in the motion, even though all members think the arrangements will be the same as those of the preceding year. You should move to

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Assuming that the following main motion was pending, give an example of each of the three methods of amending this motion.
Main Motion:
"Ms. Chairperson, I move that the society have a dinner party on July 2 of this year."
2. Could the motion to postpone temporarily be misused if the "urgency requirement" was not part of the motion?

ADDITIONAL READING

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3. Banks, Margaret. "The Previous Question, Closure, and the Modern Motion to Close Debate or Vote Immediately." Parliamentary Journal, 19 (1978), 32-36.
4. Callaghan, J. Calvin. "A Form for Amendments," Parliamentary Journal, 13, No. 1 (January 1972): 19-24.
5. Hoogestradt, Wayne E., "Secondary Amendments to a Main Motion," Parliamentary Journal, 21, No. 3 (July 1980): 32-33.
6. Janaro, Joan M., Claire La Rue, Martha Haun. "The Substitute Motion: A Symposium." Parliamentary Journal, 22 (1981), 103-110.
7. Mazza, Joseph M. "The Substitute Motion." Parliamentary Journal, 21 (1980), 28-30.
8. Patnode, Darwin. "Criteria for Germaneness of Amendments," Parliamentary Journal, 13, No. 2 (April 1972): 14-18.
9. Pearson, Judy C. "Misuse of the Friendly Amendment." Parliamentary Journal, 21, No. 3 (July 1980): 30-31.
10. Phifer, Gregg. "Amendment Issues." Parliamentary Journal, 2, No. 4 (October 1983): 132-136.
11. Phifer, Greg. "A Dialogue: The Statement Table the Motion," and Edwin C. Bliss. "Another View," Parliamentary Journal, 25, No. 4 (October 1984): 124-132.
12. Sampson, Whitney G. "The Previous Question." Parliamentary Journal, 13 (1972), 19-24.

THE SUBSIDIARY MOTION TO REFER TO COMMITTEE
(with ideas on Committees)

The motion Refer to a Committee (or commit) is a subsidiary motion which takes precedence of main motions and amendments; it yields to all other motions. The motion is applied only to main motions. It is a proposal that the main motion be referred to a committee for further study or investigation. Another reason for referring is to allow more informal discussion since Roberts restricts debate in a formal meeting to two speeches per person not to exceed a total of ten minutes. These rules do NOT apply in a committee, but if that is the only reason for referral, such relaxed discussion can better be accomplished by a motion to discuss informally.

When referring a motion to a committee, the mover should name the specific committee, and if no suitable committee exists, the motion should state a method for selecting the committee. It is also often desirable to include in the motion to refer, some stipulation concerning the time when the committee is to report back to the assembly.

The member moving to refer needs recognition. The motion to refer requires a second. It is debatable as to the desirability of a committee and amendable as to motion detail. A majority vote is required for passage. The motion to refer applies only to main motions. A motion to refer may be renewed after a change in the parliamentary situation.

The motion to refer to a committee proceeds as follows:

(While the main motion is pending.)

MEMBER: "Ms. Chairperson."

CHAIR: "The chair recognizes Mr. Yoos."

MR. YOOS: "Ms. Chairperson, I move that the main motion on purchasing a membership in the Rhetoric Society be referred to a committee of three to be appointed by the chairperson with instructions to report at our next meeting."

SECOND MEMBER: "I second the motion."

CHAIR: "It has been moved and seconded that the main motion on purchasing a membership in the Rhetoric Society be referred to a committee of three to be appointed by the chair with instructions to report at our next meeting. Is there any discussion?"

(Members seek recognition and discuss as desired.)

CHAIR: "The vote is on the motion to refer the main motion to a committee of three to be appointed by the chair. All in favor of the motion say 'Aye'--opposed 'No'--The motion is passed (or the motion is defeated)."

If a motion is sent to a Standing committee, the chairperson of the organization should see that the already selected chair of that committee will be responsible for seeing that the referred motion comes before the committee. If the motion to refer calls for a special committee appointed by the chair, the first person she names will be considered the committee chair. If the special committee is elected by the group, they may also elect a chair--if they fail to do so, the committee may elect their own chair.

The motion to refer to committee leads us into a discussion of the use of committees. A committee is a group of persons assigned a specific responsibility by a larger organization or society. As treated here, the term committee applies properly only to groups of members assigned responsibilities by the membership of an official club, society, organization, governing body, or groups of such nature. A committee is never independent; it is always responsible to a "parent organization" both for its existence and with respect to the completion of its assignments.

Committees are created because they can complete an assignment more efficiently, more thoroughly, or more economically than could the total membership of an organized body. Perhaps more information is needed before the assembly can vote intelligently on a motion; a committee of several members can collect the needed information with more efficiency than the assembly working as a combined group. Perhaps a study needs to be made concerning a proposed plan of action. The study will likely be a more thorough research project if assigned to a carefully selected committee than if left to the total membership. Perhaps a "work assignment" is needed, and the specific piece of work requires only three persons; obviously a committee of three is the desirable working force rather than the entire parent body. Committees exist or are created because they are needed by the parent body which they represent.

A committee has all powers delegated to it by the constitution of the society, by the parliamentary manual specified as the procedural guide for the society, and by specific resolutions (motions) of the society. Conversely, the committee has no power beyond that specifically delegated to it by the society to which it owes its existence. That is, a committee cannot spend money unless the society has given it authority to spend money. A committee cannot alter a motion referred to it; it can only recommend changes (amendments) in the motion. A committee cannot create rules which are to be binding on the membership of the society. In short, the committee has no original power--it has only delegated responsibilities. The chairperson of the committee should exercise extreme care that his committee does not take action which is beyond the scope of its

delegated authority. Committees are basically of three types--standing committees, special committees, and committees of the whole (the entire membership of the organization). Each of these committee types has different limitations and purposes.

Standing committees are permanent committees. They are usually specified in the constitution of the society. While the membership of standing committees changes from year to year, the purposes and responsibilities of the committee remain the same. Depending upon the particular society, members of standing committees may be either elected or appointed. If elected, they are generally nominated and elected along with officers at annual elections. If appointed, the basis of such appointment is specified in the constitution or standing rules of the society.

Standing committees generally have a specific province of authority (the Finance Committee is an advisory group concerned with the finances of the society, etc.). However, other types of motions can be referred to standing committees; that is, it is legal to refer a motion concerning the place of a special meeting to the finance committee if no more suitable committee exists or if it would be illogical to create a special committee for that specific purpose. Hence, a standing committee has a general area of responsibility, but it is not strictly limited to the study of matters within that area if other matters are referred to it by specific motion to that effect.

Chairpersonship of a standing committee is considered to be a more responsible and powerful position than chairpersonship of a special committee. Not only do the chairpersons of standing committees have positions of relatively long duration but they are often members of an advisory committee or executive committee. Advisory and executive committees function as policy-making bodies between the regular meetings of the society, limited of course in the same manner as other committees with respect to delegated authority.

When needs arise for a committee of a temporary nature, such a special committee can be created by a motion. Whenever no suitable committee exists for the referral, this action is usually included in the motion to Refer (Example: "I move that this motion be referred to a committee of three to be appointed by the president."). Special committees perform only the function for which they were created. Once their report is submitted to the society, or the task which they were assigned is completed, the special committee is disbanded. As later need arises, new special committees may be created, but a special committee does not "carry over" from one project to the next.

Special committees are generally expected to meet shortly after their appointment. They are to complete their assignment as quickly as possible, so the chair of the committee must be particularly diligent about her duties as the convener and coordinator of the committee. The work of a special committee can

be as important as the work of a standing committee, but the special committee is of shorter duration.

A committee of the whole is a committee composed of the entire assembly. This type of committee is variously described (with only minor differences) as "committee of the whole," "quasi committee of the whole," and "as if in committees of the whole." The procedure of forming such a committee is used when the entire organization decides that a particular question can best be discussed with the more liberal committee rules rather than formal session procedures. The members, therefore, move "to consider the question in committee of the whole," or "to operate as if in committee of the whole," etc. When the committee decides on a recommendation regarding the question under discussion, someone moves to "rise and report." After this motion is passed (in the committee), the committee ceases to exist, and the organization is back in regular session with the first item of business being its report to itself of the committee of the whole. Minutes are not kept during the committee session but the action on the committee report is entered in the minutes. The use of this type of committee is rare in non-legislative bodies, but it is nevertheless legal in all parliamentary bodies and may be used on occasion in any society.

A simpler method for producing informal discussion is to "discuss informally". The rule that no issue should be discussed unless a motion has been made puzzles many groups. Two solutions are possible: (1) adopt a standing rule that allows discussion without a motion or (2) in certain situations move to discuss a subject/topic/problem informally which is the legal way to give yourself permission to consider a matter without a motion. The motion to discuss informally would be classified as an incidental motion, requires a second, is not discussable and requires a majority vote for passage.

Proper committee procedure varies rather widely from the regular session business meeting using parliamentary procedure. Some of the differences result from the smaller, more informal group generally composing the committee, but most of the variations result from different purposes and different responsibilities in the committee situation.

The principal points on which committee procedure deviates from regular session procedure are listed below:

(1) The chairperson is not an impartial moderator; rather, she functions just as any other committee member. She can make motions; she can debate motions; she can vote. In fact, the chair is likely to be one of the most active members of the committee. She is usually chosen for her assignment on the basis of her genuine interest and concern with the question referred to the committee.

(2) Motions do not require seconds. The chair can never declare that a motion "fails for lack of a second."

(3) Discussion is allowed without having a motion before the committee. Since most committees are deliberative research groups, considerable discussion may be necessary before anyone in the committee is prepared to propose a motion as a course of action to be recommended to the parent assembly.

(4) The minutes of the committee meeting may include a rather accurate summary of the deliberations, including discussion. Formal minutes for an organization include only actions taken and do not include a record of discussion. Committees may need such a comprehensive record of their deliberations as well as their actions in order to prepare thorough committee reports. The committee minutes are kept by the chair in small committees or by an appointed recorder in larger committees.

(5) The motions to close and limit debate are never in order in committee. The presumption here is that since a committee is a deliberative group, it must have all available evidence and observations in order to make intelligent decisions. Therefore, if any member has information or observations to report, he should never be prevented from doing so.

(6) Committee procedure is less formal than standard parliamentary procedure. Members do not rise to seek recognition, though they may need to seek recognition in some less formal manner. Also, many decisions are made by "unanimous consent" rather than a formal vote (i.e., "If there is no objection, we will...").

(7) The minutes of the committee may be secret if the committee wishes it to be so. The committee is not required to show minutes to noncommittee members. Committee reports are, of course, open to inspection by all members of the larger society.

(8) Committee meetings may be closed to non-committee members even though they are members of the parent organization. However, all members of the society have a right to be heard by the committee on the matter under consideration, but only at times designated by the committee.

(9) Committee decisions are never final. They are not binding on the parent society. They are only recommendations, which can be adopted or rejected by the parent society through formal motions.

The outcomes of a committee's deliberation are summarized in a committee report. Such reports should be prepared in written form and presented at the appropriate time in the general business meeting. Committee reports are basically of two types--reports on referred motions and summary reports of a committee's activities over a period of time.

Committee assignments for specific study and recommendation to the society are made by the motion to refer to committee. When a proposal has been referred to a committee, they are to give it the proper consideration and, then, formalize their findings and recommendations into a report to be presented at the next regular business meeting or at some other designated time.

A committee report on a referred motion should be organized around the following headings:

- (1) Name of the committee
- (2) Specific statement of the motion referred to the committee and the date of the referral
- (3) The committee's procedure
- (4) The committee's findings
- (5) The committee's recommendations
- (6) The signature of the chairperson, indicating what member he is signing for, or the signatures of a majority of the committee members with the chairperson signing first if he is included in the majority group.

One example of a committee report on a referred motion is reproduced below:

REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO ESTABLISH
CURRICULAR VALIDITY FOR THE FINAL EXAMINATION

The committee to which this motion was referred: "that the society attempt to insure that the final examination in Parliamentary Procedure, Speech 222, be representative of curricular validity," submits the following report:

At its meeting on Tuesday, January 5, 1985, the committee agreed that the basis of judgment for curricular validity should be:

- (1) Class time spent on material, and
- (2) The extent to which material has been subject to an earlier examination in this course.

Within these limitations the committee felt that leeway should be allowed regarding the particular areas to be emphasized in order that the instructor might exercise his discretion; at the same time the committee wished to suggest maximum limitations in deviation from the established recommendations.

The committee, therefore, recommends that the referred motion be passed and that it be implemented in the following manner:

- (1) Not less than 50% and not more than 70% of the final examination should deal with main, subsidiary,

incidental, and privileged motions and their respective procedures.

- (2) Not less than 20% and not more than 30% of the final examination should cover the essentials of a meeting with the exception of the material on the secretary and the minutes, committees and committee reports, and the treasurer's report.
- (3) Not less than 10% and not more than 20% of said examination should cover the above exceptions, which concern the secretary and the minutes, committees and committee reports, and the treasurer's report.

Submitted by:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

(February 26, 1985)

It is the responsibility of the committee chairperson to see that her committee submits adequate reports. These reports are drawn up from the committee minutes. Frequently the chair writes the committee report, though any other person, or combinations of persons, may do the actual writing. The final wording of the report must be accepted by a majority of the members of the committee. This is done by a formal motion (in committee) to that effect..."that this report be submitted to the society."

Members of the committee who are not in agreement with the committee report may prepare a minority report. The minority report may not, however, be presented as a "committee report." Hence, minority reports cannot be acted on by the parent society unless the minority report is moved as a substitution for the majority report. If this substitution carries, the minority report can then be treated as the committee's report and can be accepted, rejected, filed, or disposed of in any customary manner.

The chairperson of the committee usually presents the report when it is called for by the chair of the assembly and in presenting the report, the chair of the committee should give one copy to the secretary. He then reads the report in its entirety although, as is the case with minutes, it may be desirable to prepare a written copy of the report for every person present and not take time to read the report aloud.

If the report is a summary report, the chairperson will, at the conclusion of the report, move that the report be filed, though the report should be filed by the secretary even if no such motion is made.

If the committee report is one that makes recommendations (reports on referred motions), the committee chair should move that the recommendations be adopted and that the rest of the report be filed. If the society passes the recommendations of the committee they are then in effect just as any other main motion that is passed, and the rest of the report is placed on file with the secretary.

SUMMARY

A motion or proposal is referred to a standing or special committee because it is assumed that is a more appropriate way to handle the motion. Committees have only the powers delegated by motion. Committees operate more informally than the parent organization and conclude their work by making a report which may include recommendations for action.

EXERCISES

1. Seek permission to attend the meeting of some committee in your area. Prepare a report on how the committee operated.
2. Find a copy of a committee report submitted by an organization. Evaluate the report in terms of headings and standards presented in this chapter.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How do committee minutes differ from a set of minutes?
2. How (in what ways) does committee procedure differ from regular session parliamentary procedure.
3. What are the major advantages and disadvantages of a committee?
4. What are the traits you respond best to in a committee chair?

ADDITIONAL READING

1. English, Robert W. "Committees: Importance and Purpose," Today's Speech, 1962.
2. Martin, Susie. "Leadership by Committee Chairman," Parliamentary Journal, 14, No. 2, (April 1973): 17-18.

PRIVILEGED MOTIONS

The motions with the highest precedence are in the group called privileged motions. These motions are so named because of high precedence and because of their importance. They cannot be debated and can have few motions or procedures applied to them.

RECESS

The motion to Recess is used when the society wishes to interrupt the meeting temporarily for some necessary reason such as to eat lunch, to rest, or to caucus. Unlike an adjournment, the motion to recess gives a time at which the meeting is to reconvene. For example, we might have a motion at 1:45 p.m. to recess until 2:00 p.m. This would mean that the meeting would start again at that time. Thus, it is proper to move a recess for a short break or interruption, while one would move adjournment if the meeting were to be terminated. The mover of the motion to recess should be careful to state the length of time to be spent in recess; i.e., he should say, "Ms. Chairperson, I move that we recess for one hour," or "I move that we recess until 2:45 p.m." In most instances greater clarity is achieved by stating the motion in such a way that you indicate the exact time the meeting will be called back to order.

The person moving to recess must be recognized. The motion requires a second. It is not debatable; however, it may be amended. (It might be desirable to lengthen or shorten the proposed recess.) The motion to recess requires only a majority vote to pass and may be renewed after a change in the parliamentary situation.

The motion to recess is illustrated below:

MEMBER: "Ms. Chairperson."

CHAIR: "The chair recognizes Ms. Halberg."

MS. HALBERG: "Ms. Chairperson, I move that we recess until 2:00 p.m."

MEMBER: "I second the motion."

CHAIR: "It has been moved and seconded that we recess until 2:00 p.m. Are there any amendments? There being none we will vote. All in favor of the motion say 'Aye.' All opposed say 'No.' The motion carries; we are recessed until 2:00 p.m. (Or, The motion is defeated. Is there any further business?)"

The motion to recess should be treated under the rules of a secondary main motion if it is raised when there is no other business on the floor.

ADJOURN

The purpose of the motion to Adjourn is to bring the meeting to a close. It has the highest precedence of all motions on our chart.

The person moving to adjourn must be recognized. A motion to adjourn requires a second. It can be neither debated nor amended. It requires a majority vote to pass. The vote on a motion to adjourn may be renewed after a change in the parliamentary situation.

A dialogue illustration of this procedure follows:

MEMBER: "Ms. Chairperson."

CHAIR: "The chair recognizes Mr. Torborg."

MR. TORBORG: "Ms. Chairperson, I move we adjourn."

MEMBER: "I second the motion."

CHAIR: "It has been moved and seconded that we adjourn. All in favor of adjournment say 'Aye.' All opposed say 'No.' We are adjourned." (Or, "The motion to adjourn is defeated.")

The motion to adjourn is privileged only when some other motion is pending (i.e., a main motion is pending at the time the adjournment is raised). If no motion is pending at the time the adjournment is moved, it is considered under the rules of a secondary main motion rather than the rules of a privileged motion. A second exception is that a motion to adjourn at some future time is always considered a main motion. For example, if at three o'clock a member moves to adjourn at four o'clock, the motion is considered a main motion. A third exception is when the motion to adjourn is made with no provision made for the next meeting. In this situation, too, the motion to adjourn is treated as a main motion.

The chair should proceed cautiously when the motion to adjourn is made as a privileged motion. If the chair knows of important announcements or business items that she feels must be considered, she should ask unanimous consent of the group to delay the stating of the motion to adjourn so that these items may be handled. However, if there is an objection, the chairperson must state the motion to adjourn to the group and must put it to a vote. Generally there will be no objection to a unanimous consent to delay stating the motion, in which case the important matters may be considered before the adjournment is put to a vote. Even without agreement to delay stating the motion to adjourn, the

following actions may be taken after the privileged motion to adjourn has been made or after it has been voted but before the chair has announced the result of the vote.

1. You can set a time for an adjourned meeting.
2. You can give "previous notice."
3. You may make important announcements.

SUMMARY

The privileged motions to recess and adjourn provide ways to terminate a meeting. Motions to recess provide for short breaks while adjournment closes a meeting. In many instances these motions are made with no other business on the floor, and in those cases motions to recess and to adjourn are handled as main motions.

EXERCISES

1. In each of the following situations assume you are chairperson. What would you do or say? Explain your actions.
 - a. You call for new business. A member moves to adjourn. You know of an item of real importance that must be considered by the society.
 - b. A secret ballot was just taken. Further business probably depends on the outcome of this vote. It will take the tellers about ten minutes to count the ballots.
 - c. A motion has been made and seconded to adjourn. You immediately put it to a vote. At that moment a member rises to a point of order that the motion should be discussed.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why do you think the motion to adjourn ranks where it does in the order of precedence?
2. Suggest four different situations where the motion to recess could be appropriate?
3. Why do you think the motion to recess and the motion to adjourn are treated as main motions when no other motions are on the floor?

ADDITIONAL READING

Compare the rules on the motions to recess and to adjourn in the following books.

1. Farwell, H.W. The Majority Rules: A Manual of Procedure for MOST Groups, Pueblo, Colorado: High Publishing.
2. Keesey, Ray E. Modern Parliamentary Procedure, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974.
3. Robert, Henry M. Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, Glenview, Illinois: Scott Foresman, 1981.
4. Sturgis, Alice F. Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966.

INCIDENTAL MOTIONS AND PROCEDURES

Incidental motions and procedures arise from some aspect of a pending question. Since they must be decided before the motion from which they arose can be further considered they are usually taken up immediately. Incidental motions have no precedence as a group or among themselves: they are considered when raised if they are appropriate to the item which is immediately pending. They are procedural questions rather than substantive matters.

POINT OF ORDER

Whenever the chair or a member violates a parliamentary rule, the members of the assembly must have some method for correcting the error. The appropriate method used to call such errors to the attention of the chair is to Rise to a Point of Order. Any member may rise to a point of order and should do so if the error is of some consequence; however, it is poor judgment to raise points of order for no other purpose than to exhibit one's knowledge of minor rules of parliamentary practices. A point of order to be valid must be raised at the time the error occurs unless the point of order is made later to correct the minutes or to correct an illegal act.

To raise to a point of order the member rises or calls out without recognition and says, "Ms. Chairperson, I rise to a point of order." The chair then replies with, "Please state your point." The member then states the supposed error, and the chair replies with, "Your point is well taken" (in the case of an error) or "Your point is not well taken" (if no actual parliamentary rule has been violated). If the point is not well taken, the business proceeds as it was before the interruption.

The member raising a point of order does not need recognition and no second is required. A point of order is neither debatable nor amendable, although the chair may allow the person raising the point an opportunity to explain her point of order. No vote is required; the chair makes the decision, though in rare cases the chair might submit the point of order to the assembly for a vote. Such a vote is primarily for reassurance, for the chair must still make the ruling on the point of order. Points of order may be used to correct any error in procedure. The point of order may not be renewed for the same purpose. The chair's decision may be challenged and put to a majority vote decision of the assembly by using the motion to appeal.

A dialogue example of the use of a point of order follows:

(The chair has just refused to allow a member to move an amendment to the motion to limit debate.)

MR. WEBER: (Interrupting) "Ms. Chairperson, I rise to a point of order."

CHAIR: "Mr. Weber, state your point."

MR. WEBER: "The motion to limit debate is an amendable motion, and the member who desired to move the amendment should have been allowed to do so."

CHAIR: "Mr. Weber, your point is well taken. I stand corrected. Will the member who desired to amend the motion to limit debate state his amendment at this time?"

No second point of order may be raised while one point of order is pending. The chair should rule such an attempt out of order and ask the member to raise his point after the original question of order has been decided.

POINT OF INFORMATION

A Point of Information is a question raised by a member concerning an item of business. It differs from the point of order in that with a point of information the member is asking if the procedure is correct, is requesting information, or is asking a question, rather than calling an error to the attention of the chair.

To raise such an inquiry, the member rises or calls out without recognition saying, "Ms. Chairperson, I rise to a point of information." The chair replies with, "State your point." The member states her inquiry, and the chair supplies information regarding the question, or allows an appropriate member to answer.

The member raising a point of information does not need recognition. He interrupts and a second is not required. The point of information is neither debatable nor amendable. The chair decides the disposition of the inquiry; therefore no vote is necessary. Point of information may be raised whenever issues need clarification, information is needed, or a member wishes to ask a question. A point of information may not be renewed and the answer provided by the chair may be appealed if a decision was involved. Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised does NOT allow an appeal of a point of information under any circumstances.

A dialogue example follows:

(The motion to limit debate has just been moved and seconded. It is not debatable; hence, no discussion was called for by the chair.)

MS. KORTE: (Interrupting) "Ms. Chairperson, I rise to a point of information."

CHAIR: "Ms. Korte, state your point."

MS. KORTE: "Is the pending motion to limit debate amendable?"

CHAIR: "Yes, Ms. Korte, the motion to limit debate is amendable. If you wish to propose an amendment, you may do so at this time."

Another use of point of information is for seeking information from a member other than the chair. Most often the member from whom information is sought is the person who has the floor and is engaged in debating the pending motion. Through the use of a point of information, a member who does not have the floor may interrupt the speaker for the purpose of asking him a question. The chair then asks the speaker if he is willing to be interrupted temporarily for the purpose of answering a question. If the speaker consents, the question is asked, and the speaker answers it. If the speaker does not consent to the interruption, he continues his discussion of the pending motion. Alternative phrasing for interrupting to ask a question is: "Ms. Chairperson, I should like to ask the speaker a question." or "Ms. Chairperson, I rise to a parliamentary inquiry." or in legislative assemblies members often interrupt with the phrase "Will the speaker yield the floor?"

The following is an example of how the point of information may be used to ask a question of the speaker:

(A main motion is pending and open for debate.)

MR. GOODRICH: (Interrupting) "Point of Information, I should like to ask the speaker a question."

CHAIR: "Will the speaker accept a question?"

SPEAKER: "I will."

MR. GOODRICH: "In your discussion it is not clear to me whether you are opposing only the amendment or both the amendment and the main motion. Would you please clarify your position?"

SPEAKER: "I am opposed to the amendment. I favor the passage of the main motion but without amendments."

(The speaker then continues his discussion as before the interruption.)

Robert's treatment is essentially the same except he uses the term Parliamentary Inquiry for questions about procedure and the term Point of Information is used to describe questions asked of other members of the assembly. We use the one term Point of Information to cover both situations.

APPEAL

In some cases it may be necessary to challenge a decision of the chair. Such decisions could be on points of order, point of information answers that involve decisions, or on other decisions by the chair. The method used to challenge a chair's decision is to Appeal from the Decision of the Chair. In effect this means that a member feels that the chair has erred in her decision or answer, and therefore, the matter should be decided by a vote of the assembly. To be in order, an appeal must be raised immediately after the supposed error, before any new items of business have been stated.

To raise an appeal the member rises or calls out without pausing for recognition by saying, "I appeal the decision of the chair." If there is a second to the appeal, the chair asks for discussion and then puts the appeal to a vote by saying, "There has been an appeal of the decision of the chair. All in favor of the chair's decision say 'Aye'--All opposed 'No.'--The decision of the chair is upheld (or the decision of the chair is reversed)." Notice that the vote is not on the appeal as such but rather on whether to uphold or to overrule the decision of the chair.

The member who raises an appeal does not need recognition. He interrupts. A second is required. An appeal is debatable but not amendable. The debate on appeal should be limited to an initial speech by the chair, one speech by any member who wishes to discuss, and a final speech by the chair. At least a tie vote is required to uphold the decision of the chair (i.e., on a tie vote the chair is sustained). An appeal may be applied to any decision made by the chair. It may not be renewed.

The following example shows how an appeal might be used to challenge a questionable decision on a point of order:

MS. HOLMGREN: (Interrupting) "Ms. Chairperson, I rise to a point of order."

CHAIR: "Ms. Holmgren, state your point."

MS. HOLMGREN: "The motion to limit debate is an amendable motion; the member who desires to move the amendment should be recognized for that purpose."

CHAIR: "Ms. Holmgren, your point is not well taken. Amendments to this motion will not be allowed."

MS. HOLMGREN: (Interrupting) "I appeal the decision of the chair."

SECOND MEMBER: "I second the appeal."

CHAIR: "Ms. Holmgren has appealed the decision of the chair."

The appeal has been seconded. The chair feels such amendments would take too long. Is there any discussion (pause)? All in favor of sustaining the chair raise their right hands. All in favor of overruling the decision of the chair raise their right hands. The decision of the chair has been reversed, so the chair must now accept Mr. Calley's amendment to the motion to limit debate."

Points of order, point of information, and appeals should be used sparingly. If they are frequently in evidence, it indicates that the chair, or some members, either do not know the rules of parliamentary procedure or are attempting to use these rules as a weapon rather than for the purpose for which they were intended.

SUSPEND RULES

Occasionally it may be advantageous for a parliamentary assembly to temporarily set aside some rule in the parliamentary authority or the standing rules so that a matter of urgency may be immediately considered. When this situation arises, the proper motion for making an exception to the rules is the motion To Suspend the Rules. This suspension of the rules applies only so long as the business provided for by the suspension is pending. A section of the constitution cannot be suspended unless the constitution has a provision allowing suspension. Rules protecting basic rights of members may never be suspended even with a unanimous vote.

The member moving a suspension of the rules needs recognition. The motion requires a second. It is neither debatable nor amendable; although, in making the motion, the mover needs to be allowed to indicate why the suspension is required. A two-thirds vote is required for passage of a suspension of the rules. The motion may be applied to any rule that may be legally suspended. The motion to suspend the rules may not be renewed.

The procedure for handling the motion to suspend the rules is as follows:

MEMBER: "Ms. Chairperson."

CHAIR: "The chair recognizes Mr. Ernst."

MR. ERNST: "Ms. Chairperson, I move that we suspend the standing rule on the order of business which interferes with the immediate consideration of the report by the membership committee."

SECOND MEMBER: "Ms. Chairperson, I second the motion."

CHAIR: "It has been moved and seconded that we suspend the standing rule which interferes with immediate consideration of the report of the membership committee. All in favor of this suspension of the rules raise their right hands. All

opposed raise their right hands. The motion is carried. The next order of business will be the report by the membership committee. (Or, the motion is defeated.)"

DIVISION

A Division of the Assembly is a very simple procedure to use. The purpose of this procedure is to require a second vote by some method that allows a more accurate reflection of the votes. It is used after a voice vote, a hasty show of hands, or some other vote when it is apparent that the count of votes either was not exact or may be in doubt. Any member may call for a division of the assembly; however, she must call for this division before the next motion is stated to the assembly.

The chair may refuse a division if there has been an exact tabulation of the votes which has been announced or which the chair is in a position to announce. To do otherwise would allow an obstreperous member to delay the proceedings needlessly. However, the chair's decision to deny the division is subject to an appeal.

To call for a division of the assembly, a member interrupts by saying "Ms. Chairperson, I call for a division of the assembly," or merely calls out "Division." The chair then states, "There has been a call for a division of the assembly," and proceeds to put the question to another vote, specifying the method for voting and making some provision for accuracy in the tabulation of the votes.

A member calling for a division of the assembly does not need recognition. A call for a division of the assembly does not require a second; it cannot be debated or amended, and it requires no vote. The vote following a call for a division is on the question that was last voted on. A call for a division may not be renewed.

The procedure for a division of the assembly is illustrated below:

(The chair has just declared a motion passed after a voice vote.)

MS. BARRETTE: (Interrupting) "Ms. Chairperson, I call for a division of the assembly."

CHAIR: "There has been a call for a division of the assembly. We will vote this time by a show of hands. Will the Secretary please assist the chair in counting the votes. All in favor of the motion raise their right hands. All opposed to the motion will please raise their right hands. The vote is 21 affirmative and 19 negative, and the motion is carried."

WITHDRAW

The mover of a motion may request that his motion be withdrawn at any time prior to the vote on that motion. To withdraw a motion is to remove it from consideration. No one but the original mover of the motion may request or move to have it withdrawn. Any motion--main, incidental, subsidiary or privileged--may be withdrawn.

Three different procedures apply in requests to withdraw a motion. The first of these arises when the request is raised before the motion has been stated to the society. In this case it is automatically withdrawn without the need to secure permission of the members since the motion is still the "property" of the maker. For such a statement of withdrawal the member interrupts and states his intent, and the chairman declares the motion withdrawn. This procedure is illustrated below:

MEMBER: "Ms. Chairperson."

CHAIR: "The chair recognizes Mr. Arnett."

MR. ARNETT: "Ms. Chairperson, I move that we adjourn."

SECOND MEMBER: "I second the motion."

MR. ARNETT: (Interrupting) "Ms. Chairperson, I withdraw my motion."

CHAIR: "The motion is withdrawn."

A second situation arises when the motion has been stated to the society. In this case the member requests that he be allowed to withdraw his motion. The chair handles the request by general consent. The request may be renewed after a change in the parliamentary situation. This procedure is illustrated below:

MR. ARNETT: "Ms. Chairperson."

CHAIR: "The chair recognizes Mr. Arnett."

MR. ARNETT: "Ms. Chairperson, I wish to withdraw my motion."

CHAIR: "Mr. Arnett has requested leave to withdraw his motion. If there is no objection, the motion will be withdrawn. (Pause) The motion is withdrawn."

The third procedure for withdrawing a motion arises out of situations where some member objects to the motion's being withdrawn by general consent. In this case the person wishing to withdraw her motion formally moves that she be allowed to withdraw her motion, or the chair on her own can put the motion to a vote.

This procedure requires that the mover be recognized. It requires a second. It is neither debatable nor amendable. The motion to withdraw requires a majority vote for passage. It may be applied to any motion but may be made only by the mover of the motion to be withdrawn. The motion to withdraw may be renewed after a change in the parliamentary situation.

This procedure is illustrated below:

MEMBER: "Ms. Chairperson, I wish to withdraw my motion."

CHAIR: "Mr. Arnett has requested leave to withdraw his motion.
If there is no objection, the motion will be withdrawn."

SECOND MEMBER: "Ms. Chairperson, I object."

MR. ARNETT: "Ms. Chairperson."

CHAIR: "The chair recognizes Mr. Arnett."

MR. ARNETT: "Ms. Chairperson, I move that I be allowed to
withdraw my motion."

OTHER MEMBER: "I second the motion."

CHAIR: "It has been moved and seconded that Mr. Arnett be
allowed to withdraw his motion. All in favor... ."

SUMMARY

Point of Order, Point of Information, Appeal, Suspend the Rules, Division, and Withdraw are procedural practices. They handle situations which arise out of the process of handling motions. In most instances the procedural issues must be handled immediately.

EXERCISES

1. Which incidental motion would be most appropriate for each of these situations?
 - a. You have just made a motion to investigate the mayor's action in refusing to support a mosquito spraying program for your city, when the mayor arrives to visit the meeting. The motion was seconded but not yet stated to the group.
 - b. The chairperson is calling for a vote on an amendment to the main motion without giving an opportunity for discussion.

- c. Discussion on a controversial motion is going on. You would like to know in advance what method of voting the chair intends to use.
- d. A member has just challenged by a point of order the legality of an amendment on the grounds that it was hostile to the main motion. The chair decides the amendment is not hostile, and you disagree.
- e. Your standing rules require written notice before any increase in dues can be voted on. It is apparent that you need to increase the dues tonight.
- f. The chair asked for a show of hands in voting and seemed to count them, but you think he missed some affirmative votes in the far corner. He said the motion was defeated.
- g. Discussion on your motion to have a picnic on July 4 reveals that over half of the members will be involved in a band concert at a neighboring town.
- h. The chair states a main motion to the group without asking for a second.
- i. You think that a proposed motion is contrary to the constitution, but you have no copy of the constitution with you so that you can check.
- j. The chair called for a voice vote on a motion, and only a few persons voted. The chair declared the motion defeated. You did not understand the motion, and you doubt that other members did.
- k. Your rules require an order of business where announcements come last, just before adjournment. You have an important announcement to make, but you must leave in 15 minutes for another meeting. This meeting has just started.
- l. A motion to limit debate requires an equal amount of time for each side. The chair is about to take the vote, and as yet no one has spoken in favor of the motion.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1. How is the precedence of an incidental motion determined?
- 2. Name three situations in which it would be appropriate to raise a point of order?
- 3. Does calling for a division of the assembly require that the second vote be counted exactly?

4. In what circumstances might you wish to withdraw a motion?

ADDITIONAL READING

English, Robert. "Incidental Motions," Parliamentary Journal,
11, No. 1 (January 1970): 9-10.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CONTINUING YOUR STUDY OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

The material which you have read up until this point was designed to give you a basic understanding of parliamentary procedure. That basic understanding will be sufficient for many individuals and for most organizations. The ideas which follow are suggestions for individuals who would like to go beyond a basic level of knowledge.

JOIN A NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL GROUP

Persons interested in national groups that devote themselves to the study and promotion of the use of parliamentary procedure have at least three choices:

1. American Institute of Parliamentarians (AIP)
P.O. Box 12452
Fort Wayne, IN 46863

This organization of 1300 members, founded in 1958, publishes the Parliamentary Journal which provides useful reading for persons interested in parliamentary procedure topics (including "parliamentary opinions" by the opinions committee) provides materials and tests for individuals wishing to be certified, and holds a yearly national convention. An Opinions Book with 327 questions and answers was published in 1982. In my judgment it is the most experimental of the current organizations.

2. Commission on American Parliamentary Practice (CAPP)
Department of Speech Communication
University of Tucson
Tucson, AZ 85721

This group is affiliated with the national Speech Communication Association (SCA) and its membership is primarily made up of college, university and high school speech communication teachers. It holds an annual meeting as part of the yearly S.C.A. convention and publishes the CAPP News which contains brief and useful items about many aspects of parliamentary procedure.

3. National Association of Parliamentarians, Inc. (NAP)
3706 Broadway
Kansas City, MO 64111

This organization founded in 1930, has 5,000 members, publishes the National Parliamentarian, tests and registers parliamentarians, holds biennial conventions on odd numbered years and supports a number of other educational efforts. The membership was largely female but is growing in the number of male members and appears to be the most traditional in its use of procedure.

DO ADDITIONAL READING

At the conclusion of each chapter in this book we have listed possibilities for additional reading. These readings will provide detail or different points of view for you to consider.

The bibliography of books which follows this chapter will give you a large number of books to consider. Among these choices we would urge you to start with the following.

1. Robert, Henry M. Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised. Chicago: Scott Foresman, 1981.

This is the latest edition of the major and dominant work in the field of parliamentary procedure. It is detailed, complex, and "old fashioned", but must be studied by any person wishing to go beyond a basic understanding of the subject.

2. Sturgis Alice. Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure. 2nd Ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966.

This book, probably better than any other, has retained the essence of the Robert approach but cast that approach in more understandable language.

3. Farwell, H.W. The Majority Rules: A Manual of Procedure for MOST Groups, Pueblo, Colorado: High Publishers, 1980.
4. Keesey, Ray E. Modern Parliamentary Procedure, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974.
5. Welty, Joel David. Welty's Book of Procedures for Meetings, Boards, Committees and Officers. Aurora, IL: Caroline House Publishers, 1982.

The books by Farwell, Keesey and Welty will give you an excellent sample of recent books which are innovative and offer alternate approaches to the decision making process called parliamentary procedure.

STUDY ADDITIONAL MOTIONS.

In the preceding chapters we have provided details on eighteen motions:

Main

Original Main
Secondary Main
Resume Consideration
Rescind

Privileged

Recess
Adjourn

Subsidiary

Amend
Refer to Committee
Postpone Definitely
Limit Debate
Close Debate
Postpone Temporarily

Incidental

Appeal
Point of Order
Point of Information
Division
Suspend the Rules
Withdraw

These eighteen motions were selected for detailed discussion because we believe they are the motions most often used in conducting a meeting using parliamentary procedure. However, the tinted section of the latest edition of Robert's provides a table of rules covering 83 motions! What follows is an attempt to provide a brief outline explanation for some of those other 65 motions along with a page reference to their treatment in Robert's.

Adopt a Report--(accept or agree to) is a main motion (secondary or original) usually made by a member of a committee who is giving their committee report. It requires a second, is debatable, can be amended and requires a majority vote. (Pages 83, 84, 103, 421-423)

Amend Something Previously Adopted--is a main motion (secondary type) to do exactly what it says. It requires a second, is debatable, is amendable, and requires either a majority vote with notice, or a two-thirds vote or majority of the membership without notice. (Pages 256-260)

Ballot Vote--is an incidental motion made to provide for a secret ballot vote on a pending motion. It requires a second, is not debatable, is amendable and requires a majority vote. (Pages 239-241, 347-348)

Consider Informally--is a subsidiary motion that allows a matter to be discussed even if no motion on that issue is pending. It

requires a second, may be debated on its merit, is not amendable, and requires a majority vote. In one sense this motion is a variation of committee of the whole. (Pages 442-452)

Extend Limits of Debate--is a subsidiary motion which allows a limit placed on debate to be extended. The same rules which apply to Limit Debate apply here. It requires a second, is not debatable, is amendable, and requires a two-thirds vote.

Division of a Question--is an incidental motion which proposes that an original main motion that seems to consist of two or more parts be divided into those parts for discussion and voting. (Pages 230-233)

Minutes, to Dispense with Reading--is an incidental motion made when it is necessary for some reason to pass over the reading and approval of the minutes. Since such an action usually occurs in an emergency situation it probably could be handled by unanimous consent. If a motion is required it takes a second, is not debatable or amendable, and requires a majority vote. (Page 293)

Nominations, Close--is an incidental motion to close off any further nominations for an office. This motion usually is not required, for the chair will simply move to a vote when there are no more nominations by saying "Nominations are closed." If nominations are closed, they may be opened by a motion to "open nominations" and a majority vote. If a motion to close nominations is made it requires a second, is not debatable, is amendable, and requires a two-thirds vote. (Pages 242-243)

Object to Consideration--is an incidental motion which allows a group to avoid an original main motion. It must be raised prior to any discussion on the motion it suppresses. It requires no second; it is not debatable; it cannot be amended, and requires a two-thirds negative vote with the wording as follows: "There has been an objection to considering the pending original main motion. Those who wish the main motion considered, please raise your hands. Those opposed to considering the main motion... ." (Pages 227-229)

Postpone Indefinitely--is a subsidiary motion that does not postpone but kills the main motion to which it applies. Its major use is to avoid an embarrassing motion or to be a strategy for testing voting strength without risking a vote on the main motion. ("Withdraw" or "Object to Consideration" could work better.) It does little to further the fundamental democratic principles underlying parliamentary procedure. It requires a second, is debatable on its merits, and also opens the main motion to debate. It requires a majority vote. (Pages 105-108)

Question of Privilege--is a privileged procedure whereby a member brings up a request or main motion relating to the rights of the assembly or of a member. The chair decides, in some instances promising immediate "relief" and in other instances promising that after the pending issue, she will act. We are usually dealing with questions of light, heat, noise, etc. Your author feels that points of order and points of information can work to solve most such issues. A question of privilege takes no second, is neither debatable nor amendable, and is decided by the chair subject to a non-debatable appeal. (Pages 191-196)

Ratify--is a secondary main motion in which an emergency action taken by the organization at a meeting with no quorum present, is confirmed or ratified. It requires a second, is debatable, is amendable, and requires a majority vote unless the bylaws require more. (Pages 83-85)

CREATE YOUR OWN PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE SYSTEM

One of the points emphasized in this material has been the right of an organization to create its own rules. This is not only a right but highly desirable, since organizations vary so much in how they wish to operate.

This right to create one's own parliamentary rules via a constitution and standing rules can be extended to creating a "complete" parliamentary system. One such simple system is illustrated below. "Sikkink's Seven Motion System" originally appeared in the Parliamentary Journal in April of 1983 and is reprinted here with the permission of the American Institute of Parliamentarians.

SIKKINK'S SEVEN MOTION SYSTEM

Introduction

The argument over the need to simplify parliamentary procedure and thus question the appropriateness of using Robert's Rules of Order in all types of clubs is neither a unique argument nor a new argument. In the second volume of this journal at least three articles spoke forcefully to this issue. The most forceful of these statements was probably that of Wooster who argued that "We owe some reverence to General Robert, but not enough to sanctify his work and place him on an everlasting pedestal." He suggested that change has not occurred because an "expert" parliamentarian is a master who enjoys the status that this specialized knowledge conveys.

There are at least seven additional articles which touch on this same theme in the intervening years. Among these articles are those by Robert English, the founding force of this organization. While these articles by English do not attack Robert they clearly reflect an individual who is searching for simplicity and clarity in parliamentary rules. This is best

reflected in the titles selected for his articles: "Let's Modernize the Precedence of Motions," "Motions Which Should Be Abolished," and "Let's Modernize Parliamentary Terminology."

Unfortunately, at least from this writer's viewpoint, these calls for a modernized and simplified system of parliamentary decision making have not attracted a wide support group. The work of Keesey appears to be the one exception but it appears that this attempt to reduce the dependence on Robert has not had serious impact.

It is for this reason that this writer, like a number of college teachers of parliamentary procedure, finds himself using Robert's Rules as a textbook. This is true, not because that book makes a good textbook or seems suitable for informal decision-making situations, but rather because the book so commands the field that to teach about parliamentary law without Robert would be like teaching about Christianity without using the Bible.

Still, this writer finds himself uncomfortable in this implication to students that "all the answers to all parliamentary situations have to be found in Robert." As a result of that discomfort, a teaching unit evolved in my four-credit course over the past five years that seems worth sharing with the readers of this journal.

Teaching Unit

Toward the end of the course students are asked to make a list of motions which appear to be "essential." This listing can be done in many different ways; let me illustrate two approaches: (1) students can list the ten motions which they perceived to be most frequently used in oral practices in the class and/or (2) students can be asked to read the last six sets of minutes of some organization to which they belong and to make a tally sheet of what motions were used. Whatever method is employed, the usual result is a fascinating discussion of needed procedures, things we could do without, and possible combinations.

Once the discussion has reached a point of diminishing return, students receive a copy of my own analysis which has evolved from past discussions and my own experiences. That analysis is found below:

General Rules for a Simplified System of Parliamentary Procedure

1. The purpose of this decision-making system is to allow efficient decision making that represents a majority position. Any motion, request, discussion or proposal which seems to have as its purpose unreasonable delay, manipulation, or the goal of serving individual ends rather than group ends can be ruled out of order by the

chair. Such a ruling by the chair will be subject to the motion called appeal.

2. Free and open discussions are valued in this decision-making system. For that reason most motions are discussible and the motion to restrict discussion requires a 2/3 vote in order to pass. In recognizing persons for discussion, the chair first recognizes the person who made the motion, next recognizes other persons and always recognizes a person who has not spoken, over a person who has already participated in the discussion. As far as possible the chair should try to alternately recognize persons representing different viewpoints.
3. In examining the chart on the following pages, you will note that five of the seven motions are amendable. However, only one amendment at a time may be considered. As soon as that amendment is passed or defeated, another amendment may be proposed.
4. The number in front of the motion listed indicates the rank of each motion. Thus, #1 - General motions are lowest in rank and #7 - Restrict Debate motions are highest in rank. Two rules apply: (1) You usually cannot consider two motions of the same rank at the same time, and (2) If a motion of one rank is being considered, a motion of the same rank or lower rank is usually out of order but a motion of higher rank is in order. While these rules generally apply, the chair may allow some flexibility in certain circumstances. These situations almost always occur with motions #5, 6, and 7. For example, if #7 - "Restrict Discussion" is being discussed and a member wants a secret ballot vote on the matter, Request, while lower in rank, could be used to accomplish this purpose. The chair is allowed to make all decisions on exceptions but all such decisions are subject to appeal.

<u>Motion</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Applies To What Situations</u>	<u>Needs Recognition</u>	<u>Needs Second</u>	<u>Can be Discussed</u>	<u>Amendable</u>	<u>Vote Required</u>
7) Restrict Discussion	To stop or limit discussion	All discussable motions	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3
6) Appeal	To let the group vote on a chair's decision	To decision of the chairperson	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
5) Request	Not a motion but a way to question, challenge, or seek help	Any appropriate situation	No	No	No	No	Chair decides subject to appeal
4) Postpone	To delay action on any general motion to a future time	General motions	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
3) Refer	To have a general motion studied by a committee	General motions	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
2) Meeting Termination	To recess during a meeting or to end a meeting	Made to recess or adjourn	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
(1) General	To bring up business for majority decisions by the group	For doing business	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

Following the explanation of these motions, one or two sessions of oral practice using this method are completed. Since the method seems most appropriate for less formal groups, we also change the meeting environment for these practices by placing the group in a circle with the chair remaining seated. The students are then asked if any of them are presently in an organization which does not use parliamentary practices for decision-making. If such a situation exists, those students then attempt to teach this seven-motion system to that group. Usually, one such experiment is possible during an academic quarter. It is in this teaching that the alliteration of "seven," "system," and "Sikkink" came into use which results in the immodesty of the title of this article. This teaching experience with a new group produces the raw material for a final discussion by the students on needed/appropriate procedures for informal groups. It also results in suggestions for changes in the "Seven-Motion System" but those changes have only involved minor wording adjustments the last two times it has been used.

Conclusion

This teaching unit seems effective in making students aware of the weaknesses in using Robert's in all situations. This system appears to offer a model for students in developing alternate approaches that fit their organization. This writer would not argue that his "seven procedures" is the only solution for informal groups anymore than he would argue that Robert has universal application. The solution to the complexity of Robert is, in my opinion, found in the 1962 article by Wooster where he concluded:

Why should not the American Institute of Parliamentarians do something about this?... If the Institute would streamline Parliamentary Law, use modern newspaper English, direct methods and reasonable expectations, they could provide a standard authority which would be read and studied... The American Institute of Parliamentarians has a needed task ahead of it, a challenge, a demand that it bring antiquated motions up to date and make them practical and popular.

SUMMARY

This text was written to provide you a basic understanding of parliamentary procedure. If you wish to go beyond a basic level you should consider one or all of the following: (1) Join a professional organization, (2) Do additional reading, (3) Study additional motions, (4) Write your own parliamentary procedure system.

EXERCISES TO WRITE OUT

1. Take three different motions and compare their treatment in Robert, Sturgis, Farwell, Keesey and Welty.
2. Find by checking through other books two motions not discussed in this book or listed in the "Exploring Some Other Motions" section of this chapter. How are these motions used? Did you find "expunge"?
3. Use the OPEC Form (Organizational Procedure Evaluation Checklist (in the Appendix) and analyze an organization.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How could one become a certified or registered parliamentarian? Would it be worthwhile?
2. Which motion(s) do you think could be combined or eliminated?
3. What changes, if any, do you project for parliamentary procedure in the next fifty years?

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