

"QUICK GUIDE" TO PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES

MAKING A MOTION (after obtaining recognition by the Chair):

"Madam Chair, I move that ..." Requires a second; is then open for discussion; is put to a vote (simple majority); the result is announced by the Chair.

Note: Debate normally takes place until the Chair restates the motion and calls for a vote.

AMENDING A MOTION (after obtaining recognition by the Chair):

"Madam Chair, I move to amend the motion by a) adding the words; b) striking out the words; c) substituting the following language for specified language in the main motion..." Requires a second; is then open for debate; is put to a vote (simple majority) and the result announced by the Chair.

Note: An amendment may be considered a "friendly amendment" and debate shortened if the mover and seconder of the main motion indicate that they are in sympathy with it and "accept the amendment."

REFERRING TO COMMITTEE (after obtaining recognition by the Chair):

"Madam Chair, I move to refer the motion to a (or, to a specific) committee." Requires a second; is debatable as to the wisdom of referring to committee, but the merits of the main motion may not be debated; a simple majority is needed; the result is announced by the Chair.

POSTPONING CONSIDERATION (after obtaining recognition by the Chair):

"Madam Chair, I move to postpone the motion : a) until later in this meeting; b) until a specified time in this meeting (e.g., 4:30); c) until a future meeting (e.g., December 4); or d) indefinitely." Requires a second; the wisdom of postponing to a definite time may be debated but the merits of the main motion may not be debated; if postponing indefinitely (a way of dropping consideration without commitment on an issue), the merits of the main motion may be debated ; a simple majority is needed to carry, and the result is announced by the Chair.

Note: "Tabling a motion" should not be used to achieve definite or indefinite postponement.

CLOSING DEBATE (after obtaining recognition by the Chair):

"Madam Chair, I move (or, call) the previous question." Requires a second; may not be debated; requires a two-thirds majority; the result is announced by the Chair. If the motion carries, all debate on the pending question (main motion or amendment) ceases and the pending question is put to vote immediately. If the motion to move/call the question fails, debate continues.

POINT OF ORDER

A member may rise at any time if s/he believes a rule of the assembly has been violated and address the Chair, "Madam Chair, I rise on a point of order." The Chair responds by asking, "What is your point of order?" after which the member may proceed to state the point.

MOVING TO ADJOURN (after obtaining recognition by the Chair):

"Madam Chair, I move we adjourn." Requires a second; may not be debated; a simple majority carries.

VOTING PROCEDURES

Each member present is obliged to vote "aye," "nay," or to abstain. A quorum is needed in order for the board to take action. Voting is by voice vote or if needed by show of hands; also (rarely used) by roll call or secret written ballot.