Parliamentary Procedure Made Simple for School Board Meetings

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December 2016
Overview

- Why use Robert’s Rules?
- Types of Motions
- Complicating Factors
- Presenting Main Motions
- Items to Remember
- Scenarios
Henry Martyn Robert

- West Point Graduate
- Brigadier General (U.S. Army)
- Fought in the Civil War
- Buried at Arlington National Cemetery
- First Published “Robert’s Rules” in 1876
Why Robert’s Rules?

• Allows groups to conduct meetings in an orderly fashion.
• Allows members of the group to be heard and make decisions without confusion.
• Supposed to make things easier, not more difficult.
Motions

• Four basic types of motions
  • (1) Main or Principal Motions
  • (2) Subsidiary Motions
  • (3) Privileged Motions
  • (4) Incidental Motions
**Main Motions**

- Purpose is to introduce items to the membership for consideration.
- Cannot be made when any other motion is on the floor.
- Yield to other types of motions.
Examples of Main Motions

• “I move that we approve the budget . . .”
• “I move that we accept the committee’s report . . .”
• Can also be used to bring back previously considered items.
Subsidiary Motions

• These motions change or affect how a main motion is handled or disposed of.
• These motions are voted on before main motions.
Examples of Subsidiary Motions

• “I move that we **table** the motion.”
• “I move to **amend** the motion as follows . . .”
• “I move the previous question.”
Privileged Motions

• These motions bring up urgent or important matters unrelated to pending business.
• They often concern the comfort and safety of the members.
Examples of Privileged Motions

• Questions of privilege or point of personal privilege ("I can’t hear the speaker, etc.)
• “I call for the orders of the day.”
• “I move that we recess.”
• “I move that we adjourn.”
Incidental Motions

• These motions provide a means of questioning procedure.
• They are resolved as they arise.
Examples of Incidental Motions

• “Point of order . . .”
• “Point of parliamentary inquiry . . .”
• “Point of information . . .”
Complicating Factors

• Which motions take precedence?
• Does the motion require a second?
• Is the motion debatable?
• Can the motion be amended?
• Can the motion interrupt a speaker?
• What is the required vote on the motion?
Presenting Main Motions

- Member obtains the floor and is recognized by the chair.
- Member makes the motion.
- Motion is seconded or it dies.
- If seconded, the motion is debated.
- After discussion, the vote is taken.
Items to Remember

• Comments and debate should be directed to the president/chair. No arguing among members.
• Make sure members speak clearly and concisely.
• Members should maintain courtesy and decorum.
Scenarios
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