

FUTURE BUSINESS LEADERS OF AMERICA

The Basics of Parliamentary Procedure

Your Guide to an Efficient Meeting

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Introduction: Parliamentary Procedure

Define: Parliamentary Procedure

Parliamentary Procedure is the rules of order used by various assemblies and organizations to keep meetings run smoothly and efficiently. Although there are many books that can be used for the rules of Parliamentary Procedure, Robert's Rules of Order – Newly Revised is the official parliamentary authority for FBLA-PBL, Inc.

Benefits of Parliamentary Procedure

Applying Parliamentary Procedure enables assemblies to accomplish the following:

- Maintain orderly meetings of all sizes
- Protect the rights of the absentee, individual, minority, majority, and all of these groups together
- Allow every opinion to be heard and considered
- Enable the mass to rule
- Expedite business

Meeting Agenda

- **Call to Order**
 - The Chair calls the meeting to order after determining that a quorum is present
 - Wording: “This meeting will come to order”
- **Opening Ceremonies**
 - Invocation
 - Pledge of Allegiance or National Anthem
 - FBLA Pledge or FBLA Creed
- **Roll Call**
 - Secretary reads the roll of the membership
- **Reading and Approval of the Minutes***
 - Secretary reads the minutes of the previous meeting
 - Form for Approval
 - Chair: Are there any corrections to the minutes?
(pause) If there are no (further) corrections, the minutes will be approved as read (corrected).
- **Reports of Officers, Boards, and Standing Committees***
 - Chair calls for the reports of the committees in the order that they are listed in the bylaws
 - Reports with no motion are simply placed on file and motions arising from reports are handled immediately just like any other motion, except for the fact that they do not require a second
- **Reports of Special Committees***
 - Chair calls for the reports of the committees in the order of appointment
- **Special Orders***
 - Motions that were made special orders at the last meeting
- **Unfinished Business and General Orders***
 - Comes up in the following order:
 - 1. The question left pending when the previous meeting adjourned
 - 2. Questions set as unfinished business at the last meeting but not reached before adjournment

- 3. General orders set for the last meeting but not reached before adjournment
- 4. Questions set as general orders for the current meeting
- **New Business***
 - Chair asks for new business
- **Good of the Order**
 - General discussion of the organization and how things are proceeding
- **Announcements**
 - Chair asks for announcements
 - The chair can make an announcement at any time during the meeting
- **Benediction**
- **Adjournment**
 - A member can move to adjourn or the chair can declare the meeting adjourned if there is no further new business

The * indicates an item that is part of the Standard Order of Business. All of the other except for Call to Order and Adjournment are optional.

Sample Agenda

CALIFORNIA FBLA

State Officer Agenda

Thursday, June 15, 20__

1. Call to Order – Amanda Nguyen, President
2. Procedural Items
 - Flag salute and FBLA pledge – Kavya Shankar, Parliamentarian
 - Roll call – Luna Dai, Secretary-Treasurer
3. Reading and Approval of Minutes – Luna Dai, Secretary-Treasurer
4. Officer Reports
 - Secretary-Treasurer Report – Luna Dai, Secretary-Treasurer
5. Special Committee Reports
 - Internship Project Committee Report – Kavya Shankar, Parliamentarian
6. Unfinished Business
 - The Californian*
 - Due dates
 - Articles for each issue
 - State Committees
7. New Business
 - Leadership Development Institute Workshops
 - Workshop Topics
 - Informational Handouts
 - New member recruitment – ideas
8. Announcements
9. Adjournment – Amanda Nguyen, President

Classification of Motions

A **motion** is a formal proposal by a member suggesting that the assembly take a certain action. There are five classifications for motions.

- **Main Motions**
 - A motion that introduces a substantive question as a new subject
 - Made while no other business is pending
- **Subsidiary Motions**
 - Assist the assembly in treating or disposing of a main motion
- **Privileged Motions**
 - Deal with special matters not related to the pending business requiring immediate attention
 - Interrupt business and are considered without debate
- **Incidental Motions**
 - Relate in different ways to the pending business or the business otherwise at hand
 - Most are undebatable and some may even interrupt a person who is actually speaking
- **Bring Back Motions**
 - Brings back business by introduction or adoption
 - Made while no other business is pending

Precedence of Motions

The **precedence** of motions is the order of rank or priority. If a motion has precedence over another motion, it can be made while the one of lower rank is pending.

There are 13 motions that fit into the order of precedence, and they are listed below from highest rank to lowest rank:

Fix the Time to Which to Adjourn
Adjourn
Recess
Raise a Question of Privilege
Call for the Orders of the Day
Lay on the Table
Previous Question
Limit or Extend Limits of Debate
Postpone Definitely
Commit or Refer
Amend
Postpone Indefinitely
Main Motion

Basic Rules

1. If a main motion and a higher ranking motion are both pending, a lower ranking motion cannot be applied to the main motion.
2. However, if applicable, a lower ranking motion can be applied to the higher-ranking secondary motion.
3. Incidental motions do not have any order of precedence and can be considered while ranking motions are pending. See Robert's Rules of Order – Newly Revised for more details
4. If a motion that disposes of the main motion (Lay on the Table, Postpone Definitely, Commit, or Postpone Indefinitely) is adopted, the other motions that adhered to the main motion will either be disposed of as well or follow the main motion. See Robert's Rules of Order – Newly Revised for more details.

Steps to Making a Motion

Eight basic steps can be followed to making and adopting a **main motion**, a motion that introduces a substantive question as a new subject .

STEP ONE: Member rises and addresses the presiding officer
Member (rises): Madam President!

STEP TWO: The presiding officer recognizes the member. After the chair recognizes the member, the member is said to “have the floor” and is the only member who may present or discuss a motion.
Chair: The chair recognizes Miss Shankar.

STEP THREE: The member makes a motion.
Member: I move that *California FBLA hold a workshop on Parliamentary Procedure at the Leadership Development Institute.*

STEP FOUR: Another member seconds the motion. The member does not need recognition from the chair. The second does not imply that the member is necessarily for the motion, but rather that the person that seconded agrees that the motion should come before the assembly.
Member (without recognition): Second!

STEP FIVE: The presiding officer states the motion to the assembly, which is repeating the motion to the assembly. This formally makes the motion “the question.”
Chair: It has been moved and seconded that *California FBLA hold a workshop on Parliamentary Procedure at the Leadership Development Institute.*

STEP SIX: Members debate the motion. Any speaker must be recognized by the chair. Several members may rise simultaneously and the chair should use the following guidelines when deciding which member should be recognized:

1. Preference should always be given to the member who moved the motion
2. No member may speak more than twice for ten minutes on the same question on the same day
3. The chair should try his or her best to alternate between affirmative and negative speakers
4. A member who has not yet spoken should be given preference over a member who has already debated once

STEP SEVEN: The chair puts the question to a vote after debate has been ended or the Previous Question has been moved. The chair repeats the question and then calls for the vote, first the affirmative and then the negative. The chair does not call for those that abstain.

Chair: Are you ready for the question? (pause) The question is on the adoption of the following main motion: That *California FBLA hold a workshop on Parliamentary Procedure at the Leadership Development Institute*. Those in favor, please say aye. Those opposed, say no.

STEP EIGHT: The chair announces the result of the motion before moving on to a new item of business.

Chair: The ayes have it, and the motion is adopted. *California FBLA will hold a workshop on Parliamentary Procedure at the Leadership Development Institute*.

Motions Chart

PRIVILEGED MOTIONS	SECOND REQUIRED	DEBATABLE	AMENDABLE	VOTE REQUIRED	CAN BE RECONSIDERED	CAN INTERRUPT
Fix the Time to Which to Adjourn	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	Yes	No
Adjourn	Yes	No	No	Majority	No	No
Recess	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No	No
SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS						
Lay on the Table	Yes	No	No	Majority	Negative Only	No
Previous Question	Yes	No	No	Two-Thirds	Yes	No
Limit or Extend Limits of Debate	Yes	No	Yes	Two-Thirds	Yes	No
Postpone Definitely	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes	No
Commit or Refer	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes	No
Amend	Yes	*	Yes	Majority	Yes	No
Postpone Indefinitely	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	Positive Only	No
INCIDENTAL MOTIONS						
Parliamentary Inquiry	No	No	No	Chair Responds	No	Yes
Point of Information	No	No	No	Chair Responds	No	Yes
Point of Order	No	No	No	Chair Rules	No	Yes
Appeal	Yes	Yes	No	Majority (Negative)	Yes	Yes
Suspend Rules (Order)	Yes	No	No	Two-Thirds	No	No
Suspend Rules (Standing)	Yes	No	No	Majority	No	No
Division of the Assembly	No	No	No	Request	No	Yes
Divide a Question	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No	No
BRING BACK MOTIONS						
Amend Something Previously Adopted	Yes	Yes	Yes	#	Negative Only	No
Reconsider	Yes	*	No	Majority	No	Yes
Rescind	Yes	Yes	Yes	#	Negative Only	No
Take from the Table	Yes	No	No	Majority	No	No

either two-thirds, majority with notice, or majority of the membership

* debatable if motion that is applied to is debatable

Parliamentary Procedure

Terminology

Motions

Privileged Motions

Fix the Time to Which to Adjourn	Used to set up another meeting to continue the same business, typically if there is too much business to finish in a single meeting
Adjourn	Used to end a meeting
Recess	Used for a short intermission in the meeting, but it doesn't terminate the meeting

Subsidiary Motions

Lay on the Table	Used to temporary set aside a pending main motion in order to bring up something of dire importance
Previous Question	Used to close debate and move to an immediate vote
Limit or Extend Limits of Debate	Used to limit or extend the number of times a member may speak or the length for which they may speak
Postpone Definitely	Used to postpone a motion to another definite time, such as after another item of business or to next week's meeting
Commit or Refer	Used to refer a pending question to a committee for further research or study
Amend	Used to modify the main motion by adding, striking out and inserting, or striking out.
Postpone Indefinitely	Used to kill a motion without taking a direct vote on it

Incidental Motions

Parliamentary Inquiry	A question directed to the presiding officer to obtain information on parliamentary law or the rules of the organization bearing on the business at hand
Point of Information	A question directed to the presiding officer to obtain information about facts
Point of Order	Points out a breach of the rules to the presiding officer

Appeal	To determine the assembly's attitude toward a ruling made by the chair.
Suspend Rules (Order)	Used to take action otherwise prohibited by rules pertaining to parliamentary procedure and the way the organization functions
Suspend Rules (Standing)	Used to take action otherwise prohibited by rules pertaining to the ordinary functions of the organization
Division of the Assembly	Used when it is unclear which side prevails during a voice vote and requires a rising vote
Divide a Question	Used to split a pending question into two separate questions that can each be adopted separately

Bring Back Motions

Amend Something Previously Adopted	Used to amend a previously adopted main motion by striking out, inserting, or adding
Reconsider	Used to reconsider the vote taken on a particular motion
Rescind	Used to make a previously adopted motion null and void
Take from the Table	Used to resume consideration of a question that has been laid on the table previously

Other Terms

Meetings

Adjourned Meeting	A meeting in continuation of the session of the immediately preceding regular or special meeting
Caucus	A meeting to plan strategy
Executive Session	A meeting where proceedings are secret
Mass Meeting	Meeting of an unorganized group

Voting

Abstain	Refrain from doing something; mainly used in reference to voting
Aye	Affirmative voice vote
Majority Vote	More than half of the votes cast
Unanimous Consent	Method of voting used when there is no minority to protect; there is no objection from the assembly
Viva Voce	Most commonly used method of voting which is voice vote