

# WHAT IS PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE?



*Workshop 1 of Parliamentary Procedure Workshop Series  
By: Roopa Shankar, California State Parliamentarian 2011-2012*



## I. ICEBREAKER

- A. Beach Ball toss
- B. Have workshop listeners assemble into a circle
- C. Throw around the beach ball and have each individual share one idea to answer the question: What can make a meeting run poorly and inefficiently?

## II. INTRODUCTION

- A. Solution: Parliamentary Procedure, a body of rules followed by an assembly
  - 1. Democratic rule, expedite business, flexibility, protection of rights
  - 2. Democratic rule: Parliamentary Procedure enables everyone to be vocal, everyone to have a say in the decision
  - 3. Expedite business: core of Parliamentary Procedure, main purpose
  - 4. Flexibility: rules can be applied to most meeting situations
  - 5. Protection of rights: everyone fairly heard
  - 6. Don't ever forget Parliamentary Procedure
  - 7. D, E, F, P can be thought of as "Def, P" as in "Definitely, Parliamentary Procedure!" or "Def, P" as in "Define: Parliamentary Procedure"
- B. Complex definition: Parliamentary Procedure enables the overall membership of an organization – expressing its general will through the assembly of its members – to both establish and empower an effective leadership as it wishes, and at the same time to retain exactly the degree of direct control over its affairs that it chooses to reserve to itself
- C. Hypothetical situation: describe an unstructured meeting with no clear rules as to debating and how to agree on a proposed action, use ideas from beach ball toss to explain how these issues can be prevented
- D. Overall goal of parliamentary law: allow assemblies of any size, with due regard for every member's opinion, to arrive at the general will on the maximum number of questions of varying complexity in a minimum amount of time and under all kinds of internal climate ranging from complete accord to complete contentions

## III. PURPOSES

- A. Add structure to meetings
- B. Retain a record of your decisions, impending actions
  - 1. Importance of retaining a reservoir of information agreed upon during meetings, past actions, and future actions
- C. Enables effective goal-planning
- D. Efficacious methods of discussion
  - 1. Importance of valid, germane debate
  - 2. Counter productivity of discussion with no methodical rules
  - 3. Does not limit freedom to express opinions
- E. Maximize efficiency
  - 1. Get through the entire agenda in shortest amount of time possible

## IV. ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER NEWLY REVISED

- A. Standard authoritative work on meeting rules
  - 1. A parliamentary authority will usually be specified in the organization's bylaws

- B. Purchase a copy to learn more about Parliamentary Procedure
- C. There are abridged versions for sale

## V. WHY ONE MAY BE UNFAMILIAR WITH PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

- A. Avoid rules because too complex, don't understand, might allow for manipulations of rules
- B. Reality: principles are designed to protect the rights of the minority to be heard, while carrying out the will of the majority
  - 1. Prevent suggestions from being accepted before all relevant information is considered, opinions are expressed, heard, and taken into consideration
- C. Rules are universal so as to structure many meeting situations
  - 1. Basics include drawing up agendas, defining officer duties, election procedures
  - 2. Rules governing discussion and decision-making are most commonly used

## VI. WHEN TO USE AND NOT USE PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

- A. When Parliamentary Procedure is applicable
  - 1. Controversial issue is being discussed
  - 2. The group is diverse
  - 3. The group tends to lose sight of its purpose
- B. When Parliamentary Procedure is not applicable
  - 1. Fair decisions can be made in an informal, but responsible manner
  - 2. It is a social or educational gathering

## VII. CONCLUSION

- A. Spreading awareness about what Parliamentary Procedure: the first step to effective meetings
  - 1. Familiarity is key
- B. Questions?
  - 1. Contact: Roopa Shankar, State Parliamentarian, e-mail

### **Note:**

This presentation will consist of a polished and professional PowerPoint, so viewers can understand the specifics and details of what Parliamentary Procedure is.

# WHAT CAN PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE DO TO HELP YOU?



Workshop 2 of Parliamentary Procedure Workshop Series  
By: Roopa Shankar, California State Parliamentarian 2011-2012



## I. ICE BREAKER

- A. Hypothetical situation – workshop listeners are part of an officer team that needs to decide on one restaurant for a restaurant fundraiser in 4 minutes
- B. Discuss how the discussion went – did members stray from the overall goal of the meeting? Was a consensus reached?
- C. Discuss how to maximize efficiency – solution is Parliamentary Procedure

## II. RECAP OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

- A. Simple definition: a body of rules followed by an assembly
- B. Solution to the hypothetical situation: Parliamentary Procedure, which allows for democratic rule, flexibility, protection of rights and expedited business

## III. HOW IT CAN HELP MAXIMIZE EFFICIENCY

- A. Add structure to your meeting
  - 1. Do members of a meeting stick to the agenda or does conversation stray from one topic to another and from one member to another without order?
  - 2. Do members individually repeat what has already been stated?
  - 3. Do some members persistently dominate the meeting with their opinions?
  - 4. Do members find themselves always deferring issues for another meeting because of time constraints?
  - 5. This limits efficiency and overall productivity
    - a. How this is achieved: agendas, motions
- B. Retain a record of your decisions, impending actions for goal planning
  - 1. How this is achieved: minutes

## IV. INTRODUCTION TO MOTIONS

- A. Definition: A motion is a formal proposal for consideration and action. In formal meetings, all items of business—whether a proposal to construct a new building or to take a five minute break—are initiated by proposing a motion
- B. Several categories, each with unique purpose
  - 1. Privileged motions
    - a. Regarding the rights or needs of the organization. They outrank all other motions and have rank among themselves.
    - b. Example: Adjourn
  - 2. Subsidiary motions
    - a. Applied to other motions
    - b. Examples: Lay on the table, previous question, limit or extend the limits of debate, postpone definitely, commit or refer, amend, postpone indefinitely
  - 3. Incidental motions
    - a. Incidental to the pending question. Must be disposed of before action is taken on the question from which they arise
    - b. Examples: Parliamentary Inquiry, point of order
  - 4. Bring Back motions
    - a. By their adoption or introduction these motions serve to bring matters back for consideration or action
    - b. Examples: Reconsider, rescind

## V. INTRODUCTION TO AGENDAS

- A. How meetings are structured and streamlined
- B. Acronym: Mrs. Sun
  - 1. M: Reading and Approval of Minutes
  - 2. R: Reports of officers, boards, standing committees,
  - 3. S: Special Committees
    - a. Special committees are committees set up to perform a specific task. They remain in existence for as long as they need to perform the task. After they have given their final report, they cease to exist. Check the bylaws to determine who has the authority to set up special committees and who has the authority to appoint members to the special committees.
  - 4. S: Special Orders
    - a. Special Orders are not used very often in modern day society. The time when you will most likely use them is when the bylaws indicate that a specific thing will occur at a specific meeting. For example, if the bylaws indicate that the election of officers shall take place at the November meeting, then at the November meeting, Election of Officers should be under the heading of Special Orders.
  - 5. U: Unfinished Business and General Orders
  - 6. N: New Business

## VI. CONCLUSION

- A. Applying Parliamentary Procedure is simple and rewarding!
- B. Questions?
  - 1. Contact: Roopa Shankar, State Parliamentarian, e-mail

### **Note:**

This presentation will consist of a polished and professional PowerPoint, so viewers can understand the specifics and details of what Parliamentary Procedure can do to help them.

# WHAT EASY PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE PRACTICES CAN YOU IMPLEMENT?



Workshop 3 of Parliamentary Procedure Workshop Series  
By: Roopa Shankar, California State Parliamentarian 2011-2012



## I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Parliamentary Procedure can have an impact on the efficiency of meetings if simple practices are implemented
- B. Spread awareness about these simple practices
- C. Help to enforce these practices to see their positive ramifications

## II. CHAIRPERSON, MOTIONS, AGENDAS, MINUTES

- A. 4 simple practices: designate a chair, minutes, agendas, motions
- B. Chair: designating someone to preside over the meeting will allow the objective of the meeting to be met
  - 1. Keep members on track, facilitate discussion
- C. Minutes allow for accurate records of meetings, essential for strong goal-planning
  - 1. Important in developing a record of past actions and future actions
- D. Agendas allow for well-organized meetings while minimizing tangents in discussion
  - 1. Structures meeting by having pre-decided categories for discussion
- E. Motions allow for a streamlined method of discussion, easy way to propose suggestions, set aside less urgent matters

## III. CHAIRPERSONS

- A. Simple definition: One who presides over business meetings, one who is thoroughly familiar with all the business to be dealt with at the meeting, including business held over from previous meetings
- B. Prepares agenda
- C. Must be sensitive to the physical, informational, and social needs of the members
- D. Must be impartial and must adhere to the agenda
- E. Must be familiar with basic rules of Parliamentary Procedure
- F. Essentially has control over the meeting
  - 1. No one can speak without being recognized by the chairperson
    - a. Helps to minimize interruptions, discussion without purpose

## IV. MOTIONS

- A. Simple definition: proposal to bring business before the meeting
- B. "I move that we hold a Fresh Choice fundraiser on May 15<sup>th</sup>."
- C. Motions should be short, precise, and unambiguous
- D. Steps
  - 1. Member is recognized by the chairperson to speak
    - a. Helps call attention to person who wants to speak
  - 2. Member makes a motion: "I move that..."
  - 3. Another member seconds the motion by calling out "second"
    - a. Means someone agrees that the assembly should discuss motion, not necessarily that they agree with the motion
  - 4. Chairperson repeats the motion exactly as stated
  - 5. Chairperson opens the floor for discussion
    - a. Person making the motion should be given priority in speaking first
  - 6. Conduct vote after discussion has terminated



- a. "All in favor of the motion say 'aye'"
- b. "All opposed, say 'no'"
- 7. Announce result of vote and proceed to next item on agenda
- 8. Allow workshop attendees to practice seeking recognition and making motions, seconding, debating

## V. ORDERS OF BUSINESS AND AGENDAS

- A. Simple definition: the items of business to be discussed
- B. Chair is responsible in devising the agenda and distributing to all participants of the meeting well in advance
  - 1. Members have responsibility of announcing items to be discussed to the chair well before meeting
- C. Call to Order
  - 1. The chairperson begins the meeting at the published time
  - 2. "The meeting will now come to order."
  - 3. 1 rap of the gavel
- D. Roll Call
  - 1. Minutes should list the names of those present and absent
  - 2. Secretary should conduct role call
- E. Adoption of the Agenda
  - 1. Send members a copy of the tentative agenda in advance of the meeting to prepare, or hand tentative agenda to members when they arrive at the meeting
  - 2. Chairperson should ask if anyone has items to place on the agenda
  - 3. After added, chair should call for motion to adopt the agenda
- F. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting
  - 1. Minutes should be sent out (with the agenda) for members to read prior to the meeting
  - 2. Unless there is a disagreement regarding the minutes, not necessary for motion or a vote to accept the minutes
  - 3. Chair declares them approved
    - a. "Are there any additions or corrections to the minutes?"
- G. Reports of Officers, Boards, Standing Committees
- H. Special Committees
- I. Special Orders
- J. Unfinished Business and General Orders
  - 1. Items pending from previous meetings
  - 2. Chairperson may want to provide a brief recap of the item
- K. New Business
  - 1. Items under "new business" will be discussed in the order they appear on the agenda
  - 2. Here is where members may make main motions
- L. Announcements
- M. Adjournment

## VI. MINUTES

- A. Simple definition: Record of meeting proceedings
- B. Brief as possible
- C. All motions should be reported in the order in which they were presented

- D. Record action taken by the meeting participants
  - 1. The name of the member who moved the motion
  - 2. The wording of motions as stated by the chair
  - 3. The action taken on the motions
- E. Send to all members of the team after the meeting
  - 1. Refresh memory of what occurred during meeting, remind of any impending tasks or deadlines
- F. Components
  - 1. Name of organization, date, and place
  - 2. Start the minutes with the recording of the main motions or the first motions presented
  - 3. Use a separate paragraph for each subject covered. Refer to members by name
  - 4. All motions should be recorded. Record the name of the person who moved the motion. Minutes should be recorded using the wording in which each motion was adopted, defeated, or otherwise disposed of
  - 5. Hour of adjournment
  - 6. Signature of secretary and chairperson

## VII. CONCLUSION

- A. Applying simple practices is the first step to productive meetings!
- B. Questions?
  - 1. Contact: Roopa Shankar, FBLA State Parliamentarian, e-mail

### **Note:**

This presentation will consist of a polished and professional PowerPoint, so viewers can understand the specifics and details of the easy Parliamentary Procedure practices their chapters can implement.