

Basic Parliamentary Dynamics

Presented

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2:00 pm – 3:30 pm



Mt. Emanuel Baptist Church

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What Is Parliamentary Procedure?

Parliamentary procedure is a system of conducting business when working in a group. Simply stated parliamentary procedure is an organized system that allows a group of people meeting together to discuss issues openly and make decisions that then become the decisions of the group. {The system is made up of basic principles and rules that determine how the group will proceed through the decision-making process.}

Main Purpose of Parliamentary Procedure

- *to expedite business;*
- *to ensure order;*
- *to protect the rights of the minority.*

Principles of Parliamentary Law

The organization is paramount, and voting members govern the organization.

All members have equal rights.

A quorum is needed for a legal meeting.

Only one main motion is permitted at a time.

A debate can only be limited by a two-thirds vote.

The chair must always call for the negative vote regardless of the unanimity of the affirmative.

A settled question may not be presented again in the same form in the same session.

A majority vote decides a question, except in cases where basic rights of members are threatened.

A proposition or issue is the item under discussion not the person who introduced it.

Some Rights of Members

Members have the right to:

- *attend meetings;*
- *hold office; make motions;*
- *nominate or be nominated;*
- *participate in debate;*
- *ask questions, and serve on committees;*
- *expect the meeting to be carried out in an orderly manner.*

Rules of Debate

A member must be recognized before speaking.

A member can speak no more than twice on the same question on the same day.

No member can speak a second time on an item so long as another is requesting recognition to speak for the first time on the same item.

Each speech must be limited to ten minutes.

The maker of the motion has the right to be the first to speak on it.

The member who makes the motion cannot speak against his/her own motion although he/she can vote against it.

All remarks must be addressed to and through the chair.

During debate, members should not disturb the assembly by whispering, talking, walking across the floor or causing other disturbances.

All items discussed must be germane to the issue {subject} before the assembly.

Personal remarks should be avoided. The item not the person is the subject of debate.

The presiding officer should be referred to as Mr. /Madam President. Members should be seated when another member is assigned the floor and during any interruption by the presiding officer.

Silence gives consent.

The presiding officer must remain impartial. As a member, the presiding officer has a right to debate. He/She relinquishes the chair to the vice president who has not spoken and does not wish to speak.

Key Vocabulary

- Abstain**-refrain from voting
- Agenda**-a completed order of business including details for the session
- Amend**- to change the wording of a motion
- Assembly**-members present at a meeting.
- Aye**-the affirmative (yes) vote.
- Business**-matters brought before the assembly in a meeting or session
- Call to order**-request made by the chair to open the meeting
- Chair**-presiding officer
- Debate**-a discussion by members on the pros and cons of a motion
- Ex officio**-by virtue of the office
- Division of the assembly**-call for a rising vote to visually verify a voice vote
- Floor**- permission to speak
- General rules**-rules found in any standard text on parliamentary law
- Majority vote**- more than half of those votes cast by those legally entitled to vote
- Meeting**-a single official gathering of members in one place
- Minutes**-official record of **action taken** by the group
- Motion**- a formal proposal that certain action be taken
(All business in an assembly is introduced through a motion)
- Order of business**-an outline or established sequence in which business shall be taken up in a session
- Pending question**- a motion stated by the chair and upon which no action has been taken
- Putting the question**- taking the vote on a motion
- Question**-another name for motion
- Quorum**- minimum number of members necessary to transact business legally at a properly-called meeting
- Second**- a member's verbally agreeing that a motion should come before the meeting
- Special rules**-rules written for a specific group such as bylaws
- Stating the question**- formally placing a motion before the assembly
- Two-thirds vote**- two out of three votes cast by those legally entitled to vote
- Unfinished business**-items on the agenda at the last meeting but not completed
- Vote**-a formal expression of the will or opinion of the members in regard to a submitted matter

Kinds of Main Motions

There are two kinds of main motions:

1. Original Main

An original main motion is the motion used to propose that an assembly take certain action or express itself as holding certain views. A main motion can only be made when there is no other question or business before the assembly. It requires a second (unless they originate in a

committee or board), is debatable, amendable and requires a majority vote. It also has the lowest rank of all motions and must yield to all others.

2. Incidental Main

An incidental main motion relates to the business of the assembly or its past or future action. It requires a second and a majority vote depending on type (adjourn, adopt committee report, fix time to adjourn, recess, etc.). Those requiring for adoption a vote of two-thirds (limit debate); majority with notice, or two-thirds, or a majority of the entire membership include: amend something previously adopted, postpone, rescind or bylaws amendment.

Example of the Use of an Incidental Motion

(Chair has recognized member.)

Member 1: "I move that during debate on all motions in today's meeting, debate be limited to three minutes per speaker."

Member 2: I second.

Chair: It is moved and seconded that during debate on all motions in today's meeting, debate be limited to three minutes per speaker. Is there any discussion? The question is that during debate on all motions in today's meeting, debate be limited to three minutes per speaker. Those in favor will rise. Be seated. Those opposed will rise. Be seated. There are two-thirds in the affirmative, the motion is adopted. Debate on all motions in today's meeting will be limited to three minutes per speaker.

Steps Used to Obtain Action on a Motion

Step 1: Addressing the Chair

A member rises and addresses the chair:

"Mr. /Madam President"

Step 2: Assigning the Floor

The chair assigns floor by recognizing member by name/title or by nodding (in small assemblies).

Step 3: Proposing or Making the Motion

Member: (Standing) "I move that our church have a picnic in the city park next Saturday from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m."

(Member resumes seat.)

{Note: Main motions bring business before the assembly. They should be stated in the affirmative and begin with the words, "I move that..." Avoid statements such as "I so move."}

Step 4: Seconding the Motion

Seated and without being recognized, another member seconds the motion: "I second the motion."

{Note: It is also proper to say "I second it," or just, "Second!"}

Step 5: Stating the Question (Motion)

Chair states the question: "It is moved and seconded that the church have a picnic in the city park next Saturday from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Is there any discussion?"

{Note: Chair may also say, "Are you ready for the question?"}

Step 6: Debating the Question

Members stand and face the chair and say, "Mr./Madam President;" wait to be recognized by chair, stand while debating, and sit when finished.

Note: debate must be related to the pending main motion.

Step 7: Putting the Question

{Chair: "Is there further discussion? The question is on the adoption of the motion that our church have a picnic in the city park next Saturday from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Those in favor, say *aye*. (Pause for response.) "Those opposed say *no*."

Step 8: Announcing the Result of the Vote

Chair announces the result of the vote on the main motion and the effect of the action: "The *ayes* have it and the motion is adopted," or "The *no*'s have it and the motion is lost." If the motion is adopted, Chair says, "Our church will have a picnic in the city park next Saturday from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m." (If motion is lost, the opposite will be stated.)

Uses of Several Specific Motions

Amendments

Amending a main motion means changing the wording. This motion is debatable, amendable requires a second and a majority vote. There are two types of amendments: **primary or first degree** and **secondary or second degree**. The primary amendment must be germane to the main motion. The secondary amendment must be germane to the primary amendment. The secondary amendment is debatable **but not amendable**. It requires a second and a majority vote. There are three principal processes of amending which make it possible to modify the wording and, within certain limits, the meaning of a pending motion before final action is taken on it.

1. Inserting words in a sentence or passage or adding words at the end. (Inserting or adding a paragraph.)
2. Striking out and inserting (accomplishing both processes through the same motion).
 - a. **Words** may be **struck** out of one part of a sentence or passage and inserted in another part.
 - b. **Words** may be **struck out** of a sentence or passage and different words inserted in their place.
 - c. A **paragraph or the entire text** of a resolution or main motion may be struck out and another inserted in its place. This process is called amending by **substitution, a term used only in respect to an entire paragraph, main motion, or resolution.**

Example of Primary Amendment

(Chair recognizes member.)

Member 1: "I move that the church purchase a new copier."

Member 2: I second the motion.

Chair: It is moved and seconded that the church purchase a new copier. Is there any discussion (or Are you ready for the question?)

Member 3: *I move to amend by striking out the word "new."*

Member 4: I second the motion.

Chair: It is moved and seconded to amend by striking out the word "new." If this amendment is approved, the pending motion will then read, "that the church purchase a copier." Is there discussion of the proposed amendment? (**Debate ensues.**)

Chair: As many as are in favor of amending the motion by striking out the word "new," say aye. Those opposed say no. The ayes have it, the amendment is adopted. The question is on the motion as amended, that the church purchase a copier. Is there discussion?

Point of Order

If the presiding officer fails to enforce the rules or does not notice a violation, members share the responsibility of seeing that the violation is halted and the rules are enforced. A member can do this by raising a *Point of Order* which is an incidental motion. This motion must be made promptly at the time the breach occurs. It requires no second and is neither debatable nor amendable and no vote is taken unless the Chair decides to ask the assembly to decide the point. A point of order can be applied to a breach of any of an assembly's rules, bylaws, rules of order, special rules of order, or standing rules. No other members may debate the point unless the Chair asks for information from the parliamentarian or other knowledgeable member.

Two Examples on the use of Point of Order:

1. {**Member A** has been recognized to speak on an issue before the assembly.}

Member B (interrupting): Point of Order, Mr. Chairman!

Chair:((turning toward **Member B**)): The member will state his point.

Member B: **Member A** has already spoken twice on this motion. He is not entitled to speak again.

Chair: The point is not well taken. It is true that Mr. A was recognized twice to speak. However the first time he debated the issue, and the second time he merely asked a question. Asking a question is not the same as debating.(Turning toward Mr. A) Mr. A may continue.

2. Nominations have been closed and the election of officers is about to take place. There is only one nominee for each office. A member moves that the secretary be directed to cast the ballot for the assembly. The motion is seconded and the chair begins to state it.

Chair: It is moved and seconded that...

Member C(interrupting) I rise to a point of order, Madam Chairman.

Chair: The member will please state her point.

Member C: The motion is not in order since our bylaws require elections to be by ballot.

Chair: (after a brief consultation with the parliamentarian) The point is well taken. The bylaws do require elections to be by ballot and directing the secretary to cast a ballot for the assembly is not the equivalent of allowing each member to cast his own ballot. The chair appoints the following to serve as tellers.

Note: No other members may debate the point unless the Chair asks for information from the parliamentarian or another knowledgeable member. If the member and a seconder believe that the point is not well-taken, they may appeal from the decision of the chair.

Appeal Decision of Chair

Ruling on a point of order is a duty of the presiding officer but any member who feels uncertain of the chair's judgment has the right to question the ruling of the chair. This is done through the use of the motion to *Appeal*. This motion requires a second, cannot be amended, and whether it is debatable depends mainly upon whether it is concerned with a ruling related to a debatable matter. A majority or a tie vote sustains the decision of the chair

To appeal is an incidental motion which is in order only after the chair has made a ruling. It must be made at the time of the ruling.

Example on the Use of the Motion to Appeal

A member has introduced a motion to purchase a computer for the association's office. During debate, a member moves to amend by adding and next year move the office to a city on the East coast. The Chair has ruled that the amendment is not in order. The member feels that it is in order.

Member A: (without waiting for recognition): Mr. Chairman, I appeal from the decision of the chair.

Member B: I second it.

Chair: The question before the assembly is that a computer be purchased for the office. The amendment is to add "and next year move the office to a city on the East coast." The Chair feels that these are two separate subjects and rules that the amendment is not germane and therefore is not in order. The question is *Shall the decision of the Chair be sustained*. Is there any discussion (or Are you ready for the question? (Note: If he addresses the Chair, Mr. A as the member who made the appeal will be recognized as the first speaker. Then other members can obtain the floor to speak for or against the Chair's decision. **No member has the right to speak more than once in debate on an appeal except the Chair who is entitled to speak a second time at the close of the debate.**

Chair: The question is, *Shall the decision of the Chair be sustained*? Those in favor of sustaining the Chair's decision say *aye*. Those opposed to sustaining this decision, say *no*.

Chair: The *ayes* have it and the decision of the Chair is sustained. The question is on the adoption of the motion to purchase a computer for the office.

Division of the Assembly

Questioning the announced result of a vote is not subject to an appeal. A member who doubts the result of a vote taken by voice or by a show of hands should call for a *Division of the Assembly*. This can be done from the member's seat while or immediately after the chair announces the result. Unless the motion is dilatory or frivolous, the Chair must retake the vote by a rising vote. This motion does not require a second, is not debatable, is not amendable, and no vote is taken because a division is a demand.

Example on the Use of the Division of the Assembly Motion.

Chair: The *ayes* have it, and the motion is...

Member D: (interrupting) *Division!*

Chair(immediately) A division is called. The vote will be retaken by rising. Those in favor...

Note: A member who doubts the announced result of a rising vote may rise, address the chair, and upon being recognized move that the vote be counted. The motion requires a second, can be amended, cannot be debated, and requires a majority vote. If the motion is adopted, the chair again takes the vote by rising and has both the affirmative and the negative vote taken.

Previous Question

This motion is designed to close debate and amendment and vote now.. It may be applied to any immediately pending debatable or amendable motion or to a series of such motions beginning with the immediately pending question. It requires a second, is not debatable, cannot be amended, and requires a two-thirds vote.

Example on the Use of Previous Question

Chair recognizes member.

Member: "I move the previous question."

Chair: "The previous question is moved on the pending motion that the church buy the acre of land across the street." Those in favor of ordering the previous question will rise. Be seated.

PREVIOUS QUESTION – ROLE PLAY

- Member 1 Stand, say "Madame President, Member 1."
- President "The chair recognizes Member 1."
- Member 1 "I move that SCAP provide a stipend in the amount of \$300 for the President to attend the NAP National Convention." (be seated)
- Member 2 "I second the motion."
- President "A motion has been made and seconded that SCAP provide a stipend in the amount of \$300 for the President to attend the NAP National Convention. Are you ready for the question?"
- Member 1 Stand, say "Madame President, Member 1."
- President "The chair recognizes Member 1."
- Member 1 "I speak in favor of the motion. Since SCAP has enough money in the treasury at this time to provide a stipend, it would certainly help with the expenses for the trip to NAP." (be seated)
- Member 3 Stand, say "Madame President, Member 3"
- President "The chair recognizes Member 3."
- Member 3 "I speak against the motion. It would be more feasible to spend the money on educational materials to try to increase membership." (be seated)
- Member 4 Stand, say "Madame President, Member 4."
- President "The chair recognizes Member 4."
- Member 4 "I move the previous question." (be seated)
- Member 3 "I second the motion."
- President "The previous question is moved. As many as are in favor of ordering the previous question, please rise – be seated – Those opposed, rise – be seated. There are 2/3 in the affirmative and the previous question is ordered. The question is now on the motion that SCAP provide a stipend in the amount of \$300 for the President to attend the NAP National Convention. As many as are in favor, say "aye." Those opposed say "No." The ayes have it and SCAP will provide a stipend in the amount of \$300 for the President to attend the NAP National Convention."

What Is Correct?

1. I so move.
2. I move nominations cease.
3. Are there corrections or additions to the minutes?
4. I make a motion that we approve the treasurer's report.
5. Is there any old business?
6. Suspend the bylaws.
7. The president serves on all committees, including the nominating committee.
8. I second the nomination.
9. At this time, I will turn the meeting over to ...
10. Introduce the head table.
11. The president can't preside over elections if he is a candidate for office.
12. If there are two nominees for an office, they must leave the room when voting takes place.
13. Majority means half the number of votes cast.
14. A member can't be a candidate for two offices.
15. Division of the house means that there is a disagreement among members.
16. Members of a nominating committee may not be nominated for office.
17. The presiding officer should never vote.



