



DO'S AND DON'TS IN RUNNING A MEETING

US Youth Soccer adidas Workshop and Soccer Gala

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I. SOME BASICS

A. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITIES

1. Do you have a parliamentary authority for your organization? If so, what is it?
2. If not, and the chair needs to make a ruling, the chair can cite recognized parliamentary authority as persuasive in making the chair's ruling
3. If not, there are a number of ways to adopt a specific parliamentary authority:
 - (1) One of the recognized parliamentary authorities may be used because of long-standing custom of the organization.
 - (2) Adopt a special order.
 - (3) Amend the organization's bylaws.
4. Primary parliamentary authorities in the United States:
 - (1) *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, 10th Edition*
 - (2) *The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure*, Alice Sturgis
 - (3) *Demeter's Manual of Parliamentary Law and Procedure*, George Demeter
 - (4) *Cannon's Concise Guide to Rules of Order*, Hugh Cannon
5. This session and handout are based on *Robert's*. If adopting *Robert's*, the following is suggested language:

Except as otherwise provided in these bylaws and any special rules of order of [state organization's name], the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* govern all matters to which they are applicable.

B. BASIC PRINCIPLES

In presiding, a presiding officer is to be fair and impartial. To be fair and impartial, the presiding officer must respect the following rights:

- (1) the majority;
- (2) the minority, especially a strong minority (greater than one-third);
- (3) individual members;
- (4) absentees; and
- (5) all of these (1)–(4).

II. TYPES OF MEETINGS

1. There are 3 types of basic meetings: (1) for membership organizations, membership meetings usually called conventions or general meetings (such as our annual general meetings); (2) Board of Director meetings; and (3) committee meetings. While most of the parliamentary rules apply to all 3 types of meetings, there are some differences. Some of those differences are mentioned below in paragraphs 2 and 3.

2. For a Board having 12 or fewer members, there are the following differences: Members may make motions and speak while seated. Motions need not be seconded. There is no limit on the number of times a member can speak, and motions to close or limit debate should generally not be recognized. Informal discussion is permitted when no motion is pending. A vote can be taken without a motion being introduced if adopted by consent. The chair is not required to stand when putting a question to a vote. The chair can speak in discussion without leaving the chair and, unless custom or rule provides to the contrary, the chair can make motions and usually votes on all questions.

3. For committees (unless the committee is very large), the procedural modifications for small boards, discussed in paragraph 2 above, apply. Regardless of the size of the committee, there are the following additional modifications: (1) On motions to reconsider, there is no time limit on making the motion and no limit on the number of times the motion is made; the motion can be made by a member on the prevailing side OR by one who did not vote or was absent; and it requires a two-thirds vote unless all members who voted on the prevailing side are present or have been notified that the motion to reconsider will be made. (2) The chair has the right to make and debate motions, and is usually the most active participant in the committee's deliberations. (3) Motions to close or limit debate are not allowed.

III. MOTIONS

A. PROCEDURE

- (1) A member rises and addresses the Chair.
- (2) The Chair recognizes the member.
- (3) The member makes a motion (saying "I move that. . .").
- (4) Another member seconds the motion (when a second is required).
- (5) The Chair states the motion (making the motion the property of the assembly).
- (6) The Chair ask for discussion (confined to the merits; no personal comments).
- (7) The Chair puts the question to a vote ("Are you ready for the question?" or "Does anyone else wish to speak?" and then the Chair states the motion.)
- (8) The Chair announces the results of the vote and assigns responsibility, if any.

B. CLASSES OF MOTIONS

1. It is a basic principle of parliamentary procedure that only one question can be taken up at a time. That means that only one main motion may be pending at one time. However, there are a number of matters that may have to be considered and determined before deciding on the main motion. As explained below in paragraph 2, there are secondary motions that are, in effect, an exception to the principle that only one question may be pending at one time.

2. There are 5 classes of motions: (1) main motions; (2) 7 subsidiary motions having a rank or precedence (motion to amend, for example); (3) 5 privileged motions having rank or precedence and also take precedence over subsidiary motions (motion to adjourn, for example); (4) 11 incidental motions having no rank or precedence but, with a few exceptions, are so related to the pending question that they must be decided immediately (point of order, for example); and (5) assuming they are in order at the time they are made, 4 motions that bring a question again before the assembly (discussed below in part C). Subsidiary, privileged, and incidental motions (classes (2), (3), and (4)) are known by the group name of "secondary motions".

C. MOTIONS THAT BRING A QUESTION AGAIN BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY

The following are motions that bring a question again before the assembly:

- (1) take from the table (at the same session the tabling motion was adopted or the next business session (if meeting at least quarterly).
- (2) rescind (or repeal) or amend something previously adopted (see subpart F, below).
- (3) discharge a committee.
- (4) reconsider (on the same day the motion to be reconsidered was taken made by a member voting on the prevailing side, if a one-day meeting; on the same day the motion to be reconsidered was taken or the next day if a session is meeting more than one day).

D. AMENDMENTS

1. This subpart D is about the subsidiary motion to amend; not about a main motion to amend a motion previously adopted, such as a motion to adopt an amendment to an existing bylaw. This subsidiary motion can be applied to a pending main motion, a primary or first degree amendment to a main motion (discussed in paragraph 4 below), or, to a limited extent, to certain subsidiary and privileged motions that have a variable, such as a motion to limit or extend debate.

2. Three Flavors or Forms

There are 3 forms of amendments:

- (1) to insert or add: (A) to *insert words* or, at the end of a sentence or passage being amended, *add words*, or (B) to *insert a paragraph*, or, if placed at the end, to *add a paragraph*.
- (2) to strike out: (A) to *strike out words* or to (B) *strike out a paragraph*.
- (3) an indivisible combination of (1) and (2): (A) to *strike out and insert words* or (B) when striking out a paragraph (of one or more sentences) or the entire text of a motion or resolution, to *substitute*.

3. Amendments must be germane and, when applied to amendments offered **at a meeting** to a properly noticed amendment to the bylaws, within the scope of the notice. If germane, an amendment can be adopted that is completely contrary to the original motion or amendment to which it is offered.

4. Third Degree Prohibited

Primary and secondary amendments, or amendments in the first and second degrees, are permitted. Amendments in the third degree are prohibited. The following are the different degrees:

- (1) Primary or first degree amendment: amendment to the main motion.
- (2) Secondary or second degree amendment: amendment to a primary or first degree amendment.
- (3) Third degree: amendment to a secondary or second degree amendment to a motion: PROHIBITED.

5. Withdrawing Amendments and “Friendly Amendments”.

E. DEBATE AND CUTTING OFF DEBATE

1. A speaker may speak 2 times on each question on the same day, for up to 10 minutes each time, but speaking the second time only after everyone else who wants to speak has spoken at least once.

2. Motions affecting debate on a matter:

(1) lay on the table: FOR EMERGENCIES ONLY; NOT TO STOP DEBATE ON A MOTION.

(2) postpone indefinitely.

(3) objection to the consideration of the question.

(4) previous question.

F. RESCINDING (OR REPEALING) OR AMENDING SOMETHING PREVIOUSLY ADOPTED

1. Voting requirements (other than for bylaws):

(1) If prior notice given, majority vote.

(2) If prior notice not given, two-thirds vote of those voting or a majority vote of the entire membership.

2. If amendment or repeal of a bylaw, then the bylaw prior notice requirement must be complied with. The voting requirement for adoption is as stated in the bylaws.

IV. VOTING

A. TYPES OF VOTES

1. The following are the types of votes and their meaning, ASSUMING THE BYLAWS DO NOT PROVIDE OTHERWISE:

(1) majority vote: means more than half the votes cast. It does **NOT** mean 50 %+1.

(2) two-thirds vote: means at least 2/3's of the votes cast. Determine by doubling the number of "No" votes. If the "Yes" votes equal at least twice the number of "No" votes, then you have a 2/3's vote.

(3) plurality vote: means the largest number of votes cast when there are 3 or more choices. Decision by plurality vote is only possible when the bylaws so provide.

(4) preferential voting: a complicated voting method using a single ballot and the voter lists preferences for nominees or proposals. Decision by preferential voting must be specifically provided in the bylaws.

2. Unless otherwise provided, the presiding officer, if a member of the body, (1) always has the right to vote when the vote is by ballot, and (2) if the vote is not by ballot, **MAY** vote to affect the outcome of the vote.

3. Unless otherwise specified in the bylaws, the vote requirement is always based on those present and voting, ASSUMING A QUORUM IS PRESENT.

B. DETERMINING THE RESULTS OF A VOTE

1. If your bylaws require a "majority vote", a "two-thirds vote", or some other minimum voting requirement, and states nothing else, it means the vote of those present and voting. Therefore, a member present but not voting or abstaining is not counted in determining whether the minimum voting requirement is met. If your bylaws require a certain minimum vote **by those**

present, then a member who is present but not voting IS counted in determining whether the minimum voting requirement is met. In determining whether the minimum is met, you always round up unless you have fractional voting or your bylaws state otherwise.

2. Unless otherwise stated in the following examples, assume the organization has 50 members; a quorum is 26 members; *Robert's* applies; and the soccer organization's bylaws do not provide otherwise.

- (1) 30 members present: On the pending motion, 4 vote yes; 1 votes no; 25 do not vote. Does the motion pass?
- (2) 40 members present. The following election results were announced:
Larry Monaco, 18 votes
David Messersmith, 15 votes
The Lone Ranger, 5 votes
Was anyone elected? If so, who?
- (3) 25 members present: On the pending motion, 25 vote yes; 0 vote no. Motion pass?
- (4) 35 members present: On the pending motion, 15 vote yes; 14 vote no. May the President vote?
- (5) 35 members present: On the pending motion, 15 vote yes; 15 vote no. May the President vote?
- (6) 40 members present. The bylaws require a majority vote of the entire membership to endorse a political candidate. The vote is 25 yes; 12 vote no. Does the motion to endorse pass?
- (7) 27 members present: The bylaws require a majority vote of those present. On the pending motion, 13 vote yes; 7 vote no; 7 do not vote. Does the motion pass?
- (8) The bylaws provide that the President makes appointments to committees with the approval of the Board of Directors. The President announces the appointment of Larry Monaco, Evelyn Gill, and Mike McDaniel to serve on the US Youth Soccer is the Best Committee. The President does not ask for a vote of approval, and no member of the Board objects. Are the members appointed to the committee?
- (9) 32 members are present. The bylaws may only be amended by a 2/3's vote. On a proposed bylaw amendment, 9 vote yes; 3 vote no; 20 do not vote. Is the bylaw amendment adopted?
- (10) 43 members are present. A motion is made to amend an agenda previously adopted at the meeting. 26 vote yes; 15 vote no. Is the motion to amend the agenda adopted?
- (11) 47 members are present. The bylaws of the Monaco Soccer Club provide for election by plurality. The following election results were announced for the office of President:
Monaco Soccer Club member Jim Cosgrove, 16 votes
Monaco Soccer Club member David Messersmith, 13 votes
Queen Elizabeth II (not a Monaco Soccer Club member), 18 votes
Was anyone elected? If so, who?
- (12) The Monaco Soccer Club has a Board of Directors of 9 members. Its bylaws provide that, for the Board to fill a vacancy, it requires "an 80 percent vote of the members of the Board". There are 2 vacancies on the Board. Six vote to elect Larry Monaco to fill the first vacancy. Is Larry elected? What if Larry is elected, and Tony Buiniskis is nominated to fill the second vacancy. Tony gets 6 votes. Is Tony elected?