Decision-Making

Motions, Debate, Voting

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Making decisions in a meeting

- Member proposes an idea (Motion)
- Members talk about the idea (Debate)
- Members decide (Voting)

Steps in handling a motion

Step One:
A member makes a motion:

"I move that..." or "I move to..."
Step Two:

Another member seconds the motion.

"Second" or "I second the motion."

Step Three:

The chair states the question.

"It is moved and seconded..."

Step Four:

The members debate the motion.

(Members must first seek recognition and obtain the floor.)
Rules Governing Debate

- Maker of the motion is entitled to speak first.
- Remarks must be confined to the merits of the pending question (germane).
- No member is entitled to speak a second time while any other member wishes to make a first speech.
- Having obtained the floor, a member may speak for ten minutes.
- All remarks must be addressed to or through the chair.

Step Five:
The Chair puts the question (takes the vote).
"The question is on the adoption of the motion ...
Those in favor, say Aye.
Those opposed, say No."

Step Six:
The Chair announces the result of the vote:
- Which side "has" it
- Whether adopted or lost
- Effect of the vote
- Where applicable, announcement of the next item of business.
Handling a motion
- A member makes a motion.
- Another member seconds the motion.
- The chair states the question.
- Members debate the motion.
- The chair puts the question to a vote.
- The chair announces the result of the vote.

Methods of Voting
- Viva voce (by the voice)
- Show of hands
- Rising vote
- Counted vote
- Roll call
- Ballot vote
- Unanimous (general) consent
- Majority vote
- Plurality vote
- Two-thirds vote
- Tie vote

Main Motion
- If you want to introduce a subject, make a:
  1. Main motion
     "I move to (or that)"
     OR
     "Resolved, That..."
Subsidiary Motions

- Assist the assembly in treating or disposing of a main motion
- Always applied to another motion while it is pending
- Can be applied to any main motion
- Fit into an order of precedence

- If you want to reject a main motion or “kill” it for the session, move to:

  2. Postpone Indefinitely

- If you want to change a motion, move to:

  3. Amend by
      - Inserting or adding words or a paragraph
      - Striking out words or a paragraph
      - Striking out and inserting words OR substituting a paragraph
4. Commit or Refer

5. Postpone to a certain time (or definitely)

6. Limit or extend the limits of debate
- If you want to close debate, move to:

7. Previous Question

- If you want to set aside the pending question temporarily, move to:

8. Lay on the table

**Privileged Motions**

- Deal with matters of immediate and overriding importance
- Do not relate to the pending business
- Take precedence over the main motion, all subsidiary motions, and lower ranking privileged motions
Privileged Motions

- To require that the adopted program or agenda be followed:

9. Call for the orders of the day

- To request any privilege (usually having to do with comfort level, or the ability to make an informed decision):

10. Raise a question of privilege

- To take a short break in the meeting, move to:

11. Recess
• To close a meeting, move to:

12. Adjourn

• To set a time to continue the business to another day without adjourning the present meeting, move to:

13. Fix the time to which to adjourn

Incidental Motions

• Relate to the pending business
• Do not have rank
• Must be decided immediately before business can proceed
Incidental Motions

- Point of Order – point out that the rules are being violated
- Appeal – disagree with the Chair’s ruling
- Suspend the rules – ignore a particular rule
- Division of a question – consider separately two distinct parts of a pending motion
- Division of the assembly – question the result of a voice vote

Object to the Consideration of a Question – object to even discussing a motion
- Parliamentary Inquiry – ask a question about proper parliamentary procedure
- Point of information – ask a question about facts
- Request to withdraw a motion – ask for permission to withdraw your motion after it has been stated by the Chair

Motions that Bring a Question Again Before the Assembly (Bring Back Motions)
- Bring business back before the assembly
- Do not have rank
- Enable the assembly to reopen a completed question
Bring Back Motions

- Take from the Table – take up a motion that was laid on the table earlier in the same meeting or during the previous meeting

- Rescind – repeal an action previously taken

- Amend Something Previously Adopted – change a motion that was approved in the past but not yet carried out

Reconsider – consider a question again that was already decided at the same meeting

- Member must have voted on the prevailing side
  (Yes or Aye if it was adopted; No if it failed)
- After debate, a vote is first taken on whether to reconsider the motion
- If adopted, the question is debated and then voted on again