

Order of Business

The 'Order of Business' at our union meetings is conducted using 'Roberts Rules of Order' as follows:

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call of Officers & Reps
3. Reading of Minutes of Previous Meeting
4. Communications
5. Reports of Officers
6. Unfinished Business
7. New Business and Welfare of the Local
8. Nominations and Election of Officers
9. Installation of Officers
10. Financial Report
11. Adjournment

What is a 'Motion'?

A 'Motion' is a proposal which is officially put before a meeting. It should be carefully worded and recorded in the minutes. The person who suggests the proposal moves the motion. A person who supports the motion seconds the motion. Meeting participants then discuss the motion in relation to why it should or should not be supported. The motion is then voted on and either accepted or defeated.

What is an 'Amendment to a Motion'?

This is a suggested change to the original motion, and must be moved, seconded, discussed and voted upon, before the original motion is considered.

How do I make a 'Motion'?

The member making the motion says, "I move that...."

Does a 'Motion' have to be seconded?

Yes. After a motion has been made, another member, without rising and obtaining the floor, seconds the motion by saying: "I second the motion," or "I second it," or, "Second."

What happens next?

After a motion has been made and seconded, the chair should ask the recording secretary to read it to the body. This way, you ensure that it will be correctly stated in the minutes and that the group gets to hear it again from somebody other than the President.

Longer motions should be submitted in writing to the recording secretary.

Once the motion has been read to the body the President asks: "Is there any discussion on the motion as read?"

Several things can happen at this point:

- a. There is no discussion. In this case the President can simply say, "Are you ready to vote on the motion as read?"
- b. There is discussion. The President simply recognizes those who wish to speak on the motion until somebody calls the question.
- c. Somebody offers an amendment and the amendment is seconded.
- d. Somebody offers a privileged motion.
- e. Somebody offers a subsidiary motion.

Once the vote takes place it is tallied and the President then announces the result of the vote.

What is a 'Privileged Motion'?

A privileged motion is a motion that does not relate to a motion on the floor, but is deemed so important that a member can interrupt discussion or consideration of any motion on the floor, without any debate. The numbers for each are important, as they establish the order of precedent; those with a lower number take precedence over those with a higher number. Here are three of the most common.

1. Adjourn:

Terminates the meeting. "I move that we adjourn."

2. Recess:

Permits a short intermission in a meeting. "I move that we recess for 10 minutes" or "... until 2:00" or "... until called to order by the chair."

3. Raise a question of privilege:

Permits a request relating to the rights and privileges of the assembly or any of its members to be brought up for immediate consideration because of its urgency. "I rise to a question of privilege affecting the assembly." (e.g. – Asking that members in the meeting stop making so much noise.)

What are 'Subsidiary Motions'?

'Subsidiary Motions' are motions that deal with how a main motion is handled; they speed up, slow down or remove from consideration the main motion on the floor. They are also listed with a number which indicates the order of precedence. A motion to call the previous question takes precedence over a motion to postpone.

1. "Call the question" or "Call the previous question":

This is a motion to cut off debate and is worded simply: "I call the previous question."

2. Limit or extend debate:

These motions modify debate by limiting or extending the number or length of speeches. "I move that debate be limited to one speech of two minutes for each member"; or, "I move that the speaker's time be extended three minutes."

3. Postpone to a certain time:

Defers consideration to a definite day, meeting, or hour, or until after some particular event; a motion to "table" or "lay on the table" suspends consideration indefinitely. "I move that the question be postponed until the next meeting" or "I move to postpone the motion until after the address by our guest speaker."

4. Refer to a committee:

Gives a motion more detailed attention or permits it to be handled in privacy. "I move to refer the matter to the Program Committee."

5. Amend:

Modifies a main motion by inserting, adding, striking, striking and inserting, striking and adding, or substituting some specific language. "I move to amend by adding the words ..."; or, "by striking "; or, "I move to substitute for the pending motion the following:"

Incidental Motions

'Incidental Motions' have nothing to do with a motion on the floor; they are incidental to the process. They deal largely with the process or procedure of the meeting and are listed below in order of precedence:

1. Point of information:

Inquires as to the facts affecting the business at hand and is directed to the chair or, through the chair, to a member. "I rise to a point of information" or "A point of information, please."

2. Point of procedure:

Requests the chair's opinion - not a ruling - on a matter of procedure as it relates to the business at hand. "I rise to a point of procedure."

3. *Division of the house:*

Calls for a verification when a member doubts the accuracy of a voice vote or show of hands. "Division!" or "I call for a division."

4. *Point of order:*

Challenges an error in procedure and requires a ruling by the chair. "I rise to a point of order" or "Point of order!"