

Catalog No: 8004A

# Parliamentary Guide for FFA

by: Jarrell D. Gray  
4<sup>th</sup> Edition (2016)



Instructional Materials Service  
Texas A&M University  
2588 TAMU  
College Station, TX 77843-2588  
myimsservices.com  
**ISBN: 978-1-62162-104-1**



**Parliamentary Guide  
for FFA**

**4<sup>TH</sup> Edition (2016)**

by  
Dr. Jarrell D. Gray  
(Retired)

Texas A&M  
University  
1955-1961

East Texas State  
University  
1961-1978

Sincere appreciation is extended to  
Darren Cosby, Todd Gregory, Dr. Dwayne Pavelock,  
Bill Treptow, Rod Vincent, Rodger Welch, and Gerald Young  
for the 2016 revisions to the Parliamentary Guide.

Copyright © 2016  
Instructional Materials Service  
Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education, and  
Communications  
Texas A&M University  
ISBN 978-1-62162-104-1

## Original Preface

Parliamentary procedure is based upon democratic principles. To learn about parliamentary law is to learn about democracy. In our public schools in our society, there is an ever-increasing need to understand and appreciate our democracy. This book has been designed to facilitate the learning and teaching of parliamentary procedure, thereby providing for the further development of good citizens.

In schools where much time is spent studying parliamentary procedure, there is an urgent need for a reference that is simple, complete, and permanent. This need is also present among other groups studying parliamentary procedure. This book is designed to fulfill these objectives.

Material contained herein is in agreement with Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised (11<sup>th</sup> ed., Perseus Publishing, Cambridge, Massachusetts.) It is recommended that a copy of Robert's Rules of Order be maintained in the library, with copies of the Parliamentary Guide for FFA for use by students in their study and practice sessions. In this manner, Robert's Rules of Order can be used as a reference for more detailed and complex parliamentary situations and for parliamentary study questions and practice problems.

## DEDICATION

To my wife, Mildred

## Classification and Summary of Motions A

(Classification Listed in Order of Rank excluding Incidental Motions which can be offered at any time;  
Incidental Motions have NO rank amongst themselves.)

PAGE	CLASSIFICATION OF MOTION	SECOND REQUIRED	DEBATABLE	AMENDABLE	INTERRUPT A SPEAKER	VOTE REQUIRED	CAN RECONSIDER
<b>PRIVILEGED MOTIONS</b>							
42	To Adjourn (unqualified)	Yes	No	No	No	Majority	No
<b>SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS</b>							
18	Lay on the table	Yes	No	No	No	Majority	No
19	Previous Question	Yes	No	No	No	Two-thirds	Yes <sup>6</sup>
23	Commit / Refer to a Committee	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	Yes <sup>7</sup>
24	Amend	Yes	Yes <sup>8</sup>	Yes <sup>9</sup>	No	Majority	Yes
<b>INCIDENTAL MOTIONS</b>							
28	Point of Order	No	No	No	Yes	Chair	No
29	Appeal	Yes	Yes <sup>2</sup>	No	Yes	Majority	Yes
31	Suspend the Rules	Yes	No	No	No	Two-thirds	No
35	Division of the Assembly	No	No	No	Yes	None	No
36	Close Nominations	Yes	No	Yes <sup>3</sup>	No	Two-thirds	No
37	Reopen Nominations	Yes	No	Yes <sup>3</sup>	No	Majority	Yes <sup>4</sup>
36	Make Nominations	No	Yes	No	No	Majority <sup>5</sup>	No
39	Parliamentary Inquiry	No	No	No	Yes	Chair	No
39	Withdraw / Modify a Motion	No	No	No	Yes	Majority	Yes <sup>4</sup>
<b>MOTIONS TO BRING A QUESTION AGAIN BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY</b>							
46	Take from the Table	Yes	No	No	No	Majority	No
50	Rescind	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	— <sup>11</sup>	Yes <sup>4</sup>
47	Discharge a Committee	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>13</sup>	No	— <sup>11</sup>	Only the negative vote
49	Reconsider	Yes	Yes <sup>10</sup>	No	No	Majority	No
<b>MAIN MOTION</b>							
17	Main Motion	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	Yes

- 1 Two-thirds negative vote required not to return to the orders of the day
- 2 No if it relates to indecorum, priority of business, or deviation from the rules of speaking
- 3 Time only
- 4 Only the negative vote
- 5 To elect
- 6 Before alternative vote has been taken on the pending question or questions
- 7 Before any action is taken by the committee
- 8 If applied to a debatable question
- 9 Only first rank amendment
- 10 If the motion to be reconsidered is debatable
- 11 Majority when previous notice given, otherwise two-thirds
- 12 Only the affirmative vote can be reconsidered
- 13 As to time or outcome

## Table of Contents

## Chapter

1	Importance of Parliamentary Procedure.....	5
2	Teaching Parliamentary Procedure .....	6
3	Fundamental Parliamentary Practices .....	7
4	Classification and Order of Precedence of Motions.....	14
5	Main Motion .....	15
6	Lay on the Table .....	16
7	Previous Question .....	17
8	Refer to a Committee.....	18
9	Amend.....	20
10	Point of Order .....	23
11	Appeal from the Decision of the Chair .....	25
12	Suspend the Standing Rules .....	26
13	Division of the Assembly.....	28
14	Nominations and Elections .....	29
15	Parliamentary Inquiry .....	33
16	Withdraw or Modify a Motion.....	34
17	Adjourn .....	35
18	Take from the Table.....	36
19	Discharge a Committee.....	37
20	Reconsider.....	39
21	Rescind.....	40
22	Fix the Time to Which to Adjourn.....	44
23	Recess .....	45
24	Raise a Question of Privilege.....	46
25	Call for Orders of the Day.....	48
26	Limit or Extend Limits of Debate .....	49
27	Postpone to a Certain Time (Definitely) .....	50
28	Postpone Indefinitely .....	52
29	Object to the Consideration of a Question .....	53
30	Division of the Question .....	54
31	Miscellaneous .....	56
	Adopting an Order of Business.....	56
	Committees .....	57
	Committee Reports .....	57
	Treasurer's Report .....	58
	Minutes of the Previous Meeting.....	59
	Suggested Lesson Plan.....	61
	Glossary of Parliamentary Terms .....	63
	Acknowledgements.....	68

## CHAPTER 1

### Importance of Parliamentary Procedure

To live and work in a democratic society such as ours, we must possess the knowledge and ability that will enable us to influence the thoughts and actions of others. In a similar manner, this same knowledge and ability will enable us to follow group leaders. The ability to lead and the ability to follow are important when participating in society groups that operate in a democratic manner.

Whenever groups of people come together, there is usually the matter of conducting discussions and arriving at group decisions. It is here where democratic discussions must prevail. Such discussions must be conducted according to certain fundamental principles that we have come to know as parliamentary procedure.

Parliamentary procedure is based upon several democratic principles. First, debate in a society must be fair to all concerned. The right to debate must also be free to those so entitled. Another parliamentary principle guarantees to the majority the right to decide. At the same time, the minority is guaranteed the right to express their opinions, and they are guaranteed the protection afforded by parliamentary law. The majority, according to democratic principles, are given the opportunity to rule, but they must rule fairly and justly. When this is done, the minority group will respect the manner in which decisions are made even though they may disagree with the decision. Further, even if the minority disagrees with the decision, parliamentary law dictates that they must abide by the decision once the vote has been taken.

These democratic principles give purpose to parliamentary procedure. That primary purpose is to assist groups to achieve their objectives. Parliamentary law may be thought of as a code of ethics to be followed by individuals in a group as they conduct business. Following such a code of ethics permits a group to conduct business in the most effective and efficient manner. Parliamentary procedure, then, is for the purpose of enhancing a democratic way of arriving at group decisions.

In a society that is as complex as ours, there is a need for people who have the ability, willingness, and skill to work together. If any group,

even any nation, is to survive and progress, the people comprising it must work together in a harmonious manner. Possessing knowledge of parliamentary law is desirable for one to gain the ability, willingness, and skill of working with others.

## CHAPTER 2

### Teaching Parliamentary Procedure

Students. Because the principles of parliamentary procedure are so important to our democratic form of government and to the development of good citizenship, teachers may well justify the allocation of several days of school time to teaching parliamentary procedure. Teaching students to follow parliamentary principles will enable them to conduct more efficient and effective meetings and to become better citizens in a democratic society.

Selecting a starting point in the process of teaching parliamentary procedure is frequently a problem for the teacher. It is suggested, however, that such a study begin with the first chapter and continue through the book, spending only enough time on each chapter for students to obtain a working knowledge of principles involved.<sup>1</sup>

Practice sessions may be conducted during the study of each chapter. Such sessions are important as they make teaching and learning more effective. During practice periods, it is suggested that students alternate in serving as president. As a method of alternating students, each individual may be given a number, this number placed in a box, then numbers drawn to see who serves as president. This procedure may add interest and fun to practicing parliamentary procedure.

Teams. Chapter conducting team events are held in many schools. Teams participating in such events benefit from training in addition to that obtained in the classroom. This concentrated training, even though directed toward winning, must also be directed toward becoming more proficient at solving parliamentary problems that might occur in any group meeting. To do this, serious consideration must be given to selecting members of the chapter conducting team. Some guidelines that might be used in making that selection are:

---

<sup>1</sup> See table of contents for suggested lesson plan

1. Willingness to work
2. Ability to learn parliamentary procedure
3. Team spirit
4. Well-developed voice
5. Calmness and self-confidence
6. Neat appearance

Hints for the Event. In addition to selection and training being important in developing a successful parliamentary team, appearance is also important. State leadership development event (LDE) rules require that all members of a chapter conducting team be in official FFA dress, creating a team appearance.

Answering Questions from Judges. When judges of a parliamentary event ask questions of team members, a better impression is made if members rise to answer. Too, if members desire that questions be repeated, they should not hesitate to request such.

Characteristics of a Presiding Officer. The presiding officer is probably the most important member of a chapter conducting team, or of an organization, since it is the presiding officer's responsibility to lead it. To be an effective leader, a presiding officer should possess the following characteristics:

1. Willingness to work
2. Ability to learn parliamentary procedure
3. Team spirit
4. Well-developed voice
5. Calmness and self-confidence
6. Neat appearance
7. Fair and impartial judgment
8. Skill in leading people

## CHAPTER 3

### Fundamental Parliamentary Practices

Quorums. A quorum is a minimum number of members who must be present at a meeting for the valid (legal) transaction of business to occur. The chapter has the right to set its own number for a quorum. Some examples could be half of the membership of the chapter, or the average number of members that attend a regular meeting. Whatever



the number the chapter or organization establishes as a quorum, it should be in the chapter bylaws. During a chapter meeting, if a quorum is not present, the chapter can do everything on the agenda except transact business that would require a vote.

**Introducing Business.** The most common way of bringing an item of business before the chapter is by a main motion. The purpose of a main motion, then, is to present an item of business for consideration and action by the chapter.

**Steps in Presenting an Item of Business.**

1. Rising and addressing the president: “Mr. / Madam President.” Other appropriate titles, depending on the circumstances, are “Madam Chair” or “Mr. Chair” if someone other than the president is presiding. In large groups, members should, after addressing the presiding officer, give their name and the name of their chapter or town.

“Mr. / Madam President. (name of person) from (name of chapter or town)”

Members must wait until the floor has been yielded before they rise to request recognition. If a member rises before the floor has been yielded, or if another member is standing at the time, the member is not entitled to be recognized, provided someone else rises afterwards and addresses the chair.

It is out of order to be standing when another member has the floor, except to interrupt a speaker when such is permitted under parliamentary rules. Consequently, if one is standing when the floor is yielded, a member cannot claim that he or she rose first, since the member did not rise after the floor was yielded.

2. Recognition by the president: “(name of person.)”

If a member is entitled to the floor, the president recognizes the member by name or official title, such as “Mr. / Madam Reporter.” In small assemblies, the president may merely bow or nod when recognizing a member. This is not nearly so formal, however, as calling the member by name.

### 3. Presenting the motion:

“I move that ....” or “I move to ....”

This is the recommended terminology to use in offering a proposal. Such terms as *I so move* or *I make a motion* are incorrect.

In general, when a member has obtained the floor while no motion is pending, it is appropriate for the member to make the motion or proposal immediately. Brief explanatory remarks may precede the making of a motion, without being considered debate.

Motions that obstruct or otherwise interfere with the purpose(s) of the assembly are not appropriate, and are referred to as *dilatory*. Examples of these types of motions include, but are not limited to, unfounded appeals, irrelevant points of order, divisions without merit and inappropriate or even ridiculous amendments; it is the chair’s duty to prevent these type of motions. So when warranted, the presiding officer should either not recognize a member whose intent is obstructive or after presentation of such a proposal, rule it out of order altogether.

### 4. Seconding the motion:

“Mr. / Madam President, I second the motion.” or “Second”

A motion is seconded without obtaining recognition. Neither is it necessary to rise. Doubt as to whether a motion is seconded may be eliminated, however, by rising to second it. It is proper to second it, though, by merely stating, “I second the motion.” This may be done without rising or obtaining recognition.

If a motion that requires a second does not receive one, it dies for lack of a second. If a second is not offered immediately, the president may ask if there is a second. This is asked to make sure members are given ample opportunity to second it, if they so desire.

### 5. Statement of the question:

“It is moved and seconded that ....”

If the question is debatable, the president states, “The question is now open for debate.” Or, the president may ask, “Are there any remarks?” or “Is there any debate?”

It is proper, but not necessarily essential, for the president to state whether the motion is debatable, amendable, and the vote required. On motions that are undebatable, unamendable, or require a two-thirds vote, it is good practice to so state.

A question is not before the chapter until it has been stated by the president. The president should always stand while presiding, except when someone has the floor for an extended time.

**Obtaining the Floor.** Following recognition by the president, a member “has the floor” and is entitled to speak or present business. In accordance with proper rules of procedure, other members should remain seated while this member has the floor, unless they are entitled to interrupt.

**Debate.** Debate, or discussion, on debatable questions is in order after the president has stated the question and a member has obtained the floor.

In basic parliamentary law, the maker or presenter of any debatable motion should be called on first by the presiding officer to debate the motion. The rule should be followed even if the presenter of the motion was not the first member to rise and request recognition, assuming the presiding officer had not recognized another member. The maker of the motion can always defer that privilege.

Also, unless the rules of debate were modified, a member is entitled to speak twice on the same day on the same proposal that is debatable. However, a member is not entitled to make a second speech on a motion if another member—one who has not spoken on the pending question—wishes to obtain the floor. Unless otherwise specified by rule, any one speech by a member may not exceed ten minutes in length. Unless the organization has a special rule, a member cannot yield any expired portion of the member’s time to another member, or reserve any portion of the member’s time for a later time. If a member yields the floor before speaking the member’s ten minutes, that member is presumed to have waived the right to the

remaining time. If a speaker yields to another member for a question, the time consumed by the question is charged to the speaker. Further, the presentation of a secondary motion (e.g., an amendment) during the discussion period does not count toward a member's two allotted speeches.

It is the presiding officer's responsibility to make sure both sides of an issue are heard. If the first two debates are on the same side of the issue, the presiding officer should ask if anyone wants to speak for the other side of the issue. If someone wishes to speak for the other side, that person should speak next. If no one wants to speak for the other side of the issue the presiding officer should ask "Is there any further discussion?" or "Are you ready for the question?" There is no need to continue discussing an item if everyone in the meeting is on the same side of the issue.

Debate must be limited to the immediately pending question (this is known as *germane*), which is the last question stated by the president. During debate, members should be courteous and should avoid references to others that might be interpreted as personal conflicts. The right to the floor may be refused to those members who are not courteous and polite.

When no discussion occurs or it is evident that discussion is drawing to a close, the president may encourage its termination by asking, "Are you ready for the question?" or "Is there any further discussion?"

If there is no response, the president puts the question (or takes the vote). Such an inquiry does not stop debate because members may still offer discussion if they so desire. Too, a motion of higher rank may be proposed here or previously at the proper time.

If, after asking, "Are you ready for the question?" or "Is there any further discussion?" the president puts the question with such rapidity that members do not have time to claim the floor, they are entitled to do so even after the vote has been announced. However, if the president gave ample opportunity, members cannot claim the right of debate after voting has commenced.

The maker of a motion cannot offer discussion against the motion but is entitled to vote against it.

Putting the Question. Immediately prior to putting the question, or taking the vote, the president may wish to restate the question by saying, “Those supporting the motion that ... say aye. Those opposed, say no.” or “Those in favor of the motion that ... please rise.” Then, “Those opposed please rise.”

After voting is completed, the president announces the result and effect of the vote. “The ayes have it, and the motion is carried. We will (state effect of the motion passed).” A tap of the gavel should follow the announcement of the results. A vote does not go into effect until the announcement is made. Motions are voted upon in reverse order of their proposal.

Vote. The acceptable methods of voting are rising (show of hands or standing), voice, roll call, ballot, and unanimous (general) consent.

Frequently, when a voice vote is taken, the president is unable to determine on which side a majority voted. In such a situation, the presiding officer should immediately take another vote using a method that will permit an actual count of members, for example, a rising vote. A member can demand this by moving for a division of the assembly.

If a two-thirds vote is required, either a rising or a unanimous (general) consent vote should be taken.

Until the result of a vote is finally announced, members may change their votes. After the result of a vote is announced, members cannot change their votes without permission of the chapter. This may be done by general consent or by a motion to that effect. A member may not be compelled to vote.

When a counted vote is wanted, a motion to this effect must be made to have a counted standing vote, roll call vote, or a ballot vote (if secrecy is desired). This is an incidental motion; it requires a second, is undebatable and amendable, and it requires a majority vote. The presiding officer may use any of the types of voting without a motion from the membership; however, any member may order a rising or counted vote simply by presenting an incidental main motion to that effect. Counted votes are: rising, unanimous general consent, ballot, and roll call. These methods of voting **must** be used to determine the outcome of two-thirds votes.

### **When voting, the basic rule is “one member, one vote.”**

Votes taken on motions conflicting with the constitution and bylaws are null and void. A tie vote means that a motion is lost, assuming the motion required a majority vote.

The president is entitled to vote when the vote is by ballot and in all other situations when the vote changes the result. For example, if the vote on a main motion is 12 for and 11 against, it will pass if the president does not vote. However, if the president wants the motion to fail, the chair could cast a negative vote, thus making it a tie vote and causing the motion to fail. Likewise, if the vote is a tie vote, the chair could cast a positive vote with the affirmative side, breaking the tie and causing the motion to carry. The chair cannot be compelled to vote.

Majority, Plurality, and Two-thirds. At least half of the votes cast plus one is a majority vote. Two-thirds of the votes cast is a two-thirds vote. When there are three or more candidates, and one candidate receives more votes than any other candidate, yet less than a majority, that candidate received a plurality vote.

Unanimous (General) Consent. Sometimes, the transaction of business is expedited by the president requesting that such be approved by *unanimous* or *general* consent. When this request is made, and there is no objection, approval is granted. If there is an objection, even by just one member, a vote must then be taken to determine the outcome.

The president may request action by unanimous (general) consent by asking, “Shall we (states action desired) by unanimous consent?” (If no objection) “We will (states action taken) by unanimous consent.” Or “Shall we, by unanimous consent, (states action desired)?” (If no objection) “We will, by unanimous consent, (states action taken).”

President Leaving the Chair. A president should rarely leave the chair and take part in debate. In so doing, particularly on questions where there are strong feelings on both sides, a presiding officer may lose the confidence of the opposing side. A president should be most concerned with presiding in a fair and impartial manner. It is not necessary for the president to leave the chair when providing

information for members. However, the president may sometimes desire to leave the chair for the purpose of debating an item of business.

When this is done, the president should ask the vice president, or some other officer if the vice president is absent, to preside. This may be done by the president merely asking, "Will the vice president please come to the chair and preside?" The president then hands the gavel to the vice president. The vice president presides for at least as long as is necessary to dispose of the item of business upon which the president debated. At a convenient time after disposing of such an item, the president should be asked to resume the chair.

If the president is absent for an extended period of time and it does not seem reasonable that his/her return is imminent, and the meeting business has been completed, the vice president should close or adjourn the meeting. In considering FFA chapter meetings, this would mean that the vice president conducts the closing ceremonies. If the president returns before the closing ceremonies have been conducted, then the president should be recalled and the president should conduct the closing ceremonies.

After the president returns and resumes the duties of the chair, either the vice president should inform the president of the business transacted during his/her absence, or the president should call on the secretary to do so.

## CHAPTER 4

### Classification and Order of Precedence of Motions

**Rules of Precedence.** According to rules of parliamentary procedure, some motions are of a higher rank than others. This rank of importance is called precedence. Two fundamental rules of precedence operate in parliamentary law. One rule specifies that when a motion is pending, one may propose a motion of higher precedence but cannot propose a motion of lower precedence. The other rule specifies that motions must be voted upon in reverse order of their proposal.

**Privileged motions** are secondary motions (**not** main motions) that assist the group in addressing particular situations of immediate

importance, such as items that should be allowed to interrupt the consideration of the main motion.

**Subsidiary motions** are secondary motions (**not** main motions) that assist the group in dealing with or disposing of a main motion.

**Incidental motions** are secondary motions (**not** main motions) that assist the group in addressing questions of procedure when dealing with a main motion or other item of business.

**Motions to bring an item of business back before the assembly** are secondary motions (**not** main motions) that assist the group in addressing items of business that need revision or further consideration.

**Main motions** are proposals by members of a group, assembly, or chapter that request that the group take a particular action. All proposals must be placed in the form of a motion before they may be considered by the group.

## CHAPTER 5

### Main Motion

**Purpose.** The purpose of a main motion is to present an item of business for consideration and action by the chapter. Only one main motion may be before the chapter at any one time. When a main motion is pending and a subsidiary or an incidental motion arises, the subsidiary or incidental motion must be disposed of before further consideration is given to the main motion. Additionally, a subsidiary motion may dispose of a main motion.

**Pertinent Facts.** A main motion has these characteristics:

- It may not interrupt a speaker.
- A second is required.
- It is debatable and amendable.
- A majority vote is necessary.
- It may be reconsidered.
- It ranks last in precedence.



Practice. To develop skill in performing this ability, students may alternate in serving as president, during which time they may receive and dispose of an item of business. The sequence may be as follows:

President: “What is the next item of business?”

Member: “Mr. / Madam President” or “Mr. / Madam Chair”  
(Recognition)

Member: “I move that ....”

Member: “Mr. / Madam President, I second the motion.”

President: “The motion before the chapter is that .... This motion is debatable, amendable, and requires a majority vote. It is now open for debate.”  
(Debate, if any)

President: “Are you ready for the question? Those supporting the motion that ... say ‘aye’ (pronounced “I”). Those opposed, say ‘no.’ The ayes (noes) have it, and the motion is carried (lost).  
(The presiding officer should state the effect of passage, for example, “We will have an FFA party next Friday night.”)

## CHAPTER 6

### Subsidiary Motion

#### Lay on the Table

Purpose. To lay an item on the table means to temporarily delay action on an item of business. Reasons for such a delay may be to consider business of a more urgent nature. A motion that is temporarily delayed should be brought back before the assembly as soon as possible. A motion that has been laid on the table should only remain there if the meeting is adjourned or delayed. If the motion is still on the table when the meeting is adjourned, at the next meeting (if not scheduled past a quarterly calendar time frame) the motion can be taken from the table as unfinished business. If the motion is not taken from the table at the next meeting, it would become void. The motion may be presented again in the form of a new motion at the next regular meeting.

When a main motion is tabled, all amendments and other motions belonging to it are also tabled. They will then accompany the motion back to the assembly when the motion is taken from the table.

Pertinent Facts. A motion laid on the table has these characteristics:

- It may not interrupt a speaker.
- A second is required.
- It is undebatable and unamendable.
- A majority vote is necessary.
- It cannot be reconsidered.

Practice. During discussion of a main motion, a member may gain possession of the floor and state:

- President: “What is the next item of business?”
- Member: “Mr. / Madam President” or “Mr. / Madam Chair”  
(Recognition)
- Member: “I move to lay on the table the motion that ....” or “I move to table the motion that ....” (A reason for tabling the motion may be given.)
- Member: “Mr. / Madam President, I second the motion.”
- President: “It has been moved and seconded to table the motion that .... This motion is undebatable, unamendable, and requires a majority vote. Those supporting the motion say ‘aye.’ Those opposed, say ‘no.’ The ayes (noes) have it, and the motion that ... is (is not) tabled.”

## CHAPTER 7

### Subsidiary Motion

#### Previous Question

Purpose. The purpose of a previous question is to terminate discussion on the motion, or motions, before the chapter and to secure an immediate vote.

If the previous question is called for without qualifications, only the immediately pending question is affected. If it is desired to close debate on more than one pending question, which is called a *qualified previous question* or *previous question with qualifications*, and vote on all pending questions, such as to refer to a committee and its

amendment, then it is necessary to state, “I move the previous question on the motion to refer and its amendment” or “I move the previous question on all pending business.”

Pertinent Facts. A previous question has these characteristics:

It may not interrupt a speaker.

A second is required.

It is undebatable and unamendable.

A two-thirds vote is necessary.

It may be reconsidered before the affirmative vote is taken on the pending question or questions.

Practice. A main motion may be received, and during debate, the following sequence may take place:

President: “What is the next item of business?”

Member: “Mr. / Madam President” or “Mr. / Madam Chair”  
(Recognition)

Member: “I move the previous question.”

Member: “Mr. / Madam President, I second the motion.”

President: “The previous question has been called. This motion is undebatable, unamendable, and requires a two-thirds vote. Those supporting the motion please rise.”  
Then, “Those opposed, please rise. The vote is 12 for and 3 against. There being a two-thirds majority in favor, the motion carries, and the previous question is called. We will now vote on the main motion that ....”

\*Note: If the previous question is qualified, then the president would state, “The previous question has been called with qualifications” or “The qualified previous question has been called.” This applies the results of the vote to any items of business related to that particular motion.

## CHAPTER 8

### Subsidiary Motion

#### Refer to a Committee

Purpose. The purpose of referring to a committee is to temporarily place the action in question in a committee.

This action may be desired (1) to secure more detailed information, (2) to secure a recommendation from a smaller group, (3) to ensure privacy when dealing with a delicate matter, (4) to allow a more informal discussion of the item of business, and (5) to give a committee power to act.

The member offering the motion to refer to a committee may specify whether it is to go to a standing or special committee. If the member specifies a special committee, the member may also indicate the number of members to serve on the committee, how members will be selected, who is to be chair, and special instructions for its operation. Amendments may also be used to bring about these events.

When a main motion is referred to a committee, the amendment or amendments that are pending to the main motion are also referred.

An item of business referred to a committee may be withdrawn (1) by reconsidering the vote referring to a committee, provided the question has not been taken up by the committee or (2) by discharging the committee if the question has been taken up. For the latter method of withdrawal, a motion should be offered to discharge the committee.

See Chapter 19, Discharge a Committee

Pertinent Facts. Referring to a committee has these characteristics:

It may not interrupt a speaker.

A second is required.

It is debatable and amendable.

A majority vote is necessary.

It may be reconsidered before the committee takes up the question.

Practice. After a main motion, with or without an amendment, has been opened for discussion, a member obtains the floor and states:

President: “What is the next item of business?”

Member: “Mr. / Madam President” or “Mr. / Madam Chair”  
(Recognition)

Member: “I move that we refer the motion that ... to a committee” or “to a committee consisting of ... ” or “to the standing committee on ...”

Member: “Mr. / Madam President, I second the motion.”

President: “It has been moved and seconded that we refer the motion that ... to a committee. This motion is debatable, amendable, and requires a majority vote. It is now open for discussion.”

(Discussion, if any)

President: “Are you ready for the question? Those supporting the motion to refer the motion that ... to a committee, say ‘aye.’ Those opposed, say ‘no.’ The ayes (noes) have it, and the motion is (is not) carried.” (Assuming passage) “It will be referred to a committee consisting of ...” or “It will be referred to the standing committee on ...”

If the motion is only to refer the item of business to a committee, it is then the responsibility of the president to appoint the committee. The presiding officer may do so during the meeting or, upon majority consent of the chapter, committee appointments may be made after the meeting adjourns.

## CHAPTER 9

### Subsidiary Motion

#### Amend

**Purpose.** The purpose of amending is to modify the motion that is under consideration.

Amendments are of two kinds—first rank and second rank. These two types of amendments are also called *primary* and *secondary* amendments. An amendment applying to an original motion is of the first rank and an amendment to an amendment is of the second rank. There can be only one amendment of each rank under consideration at a time (pending), but as soon as one is voted on, another of the same rank may be proposed.

Amendments must be *germane*; that is, they must pertain to the motion to which they apply. For example, a first rank amendment

must pertain to and modify the original motion, while an amendment to an amendment (an amendment of the second rank) must pertain to and modify the first rank amendment.

A member may offer an amendment to an amendable motion after the chair states the question and the member obtains the floor.

An amendment, either first or second rank, may be made by striking out words, inserting or adding words, or by striking out and inserting words.

**Pertinent Facts.** An amendment has these characteristics:

It may not interrupt a speaker.

A second is required.

It is debatable when the motion to which it applies is debatable.

An amendment can be amended by an amendment of the second rank; an amendment of the second rank cannot be amended.

A majority vote is necessary.

It may be reconsidered.

**Practice.** The president may receive a main motion, an amendment, and an amendment to the amendment when practicing these abilities. To explain fully the correct procedure, a specific example will be used to illustrate the proper steps. For example, after obtaining the floor a member, may state:

President: “What is the next item of business?”

Member: “Mr. / Madam President” or “Mr. / Madam Chair”  
(Recognition)

Member: “I move that our chapter sell peanuts at basketball games.”

Member: “Mr. / Madam President, I second the motion.”

President: “It has been moved and seconded that our chapter sell peanuts at basketball games. This motion is debatable, amendable, and requires a majority vote. It is now open for discussion.”  
(Discussion, if any)

Member: “Mr. / Madam President.”  
(Recognition)

- Member: "I move to amend the main motion by inserting the words 'popcorn and cold drinks' after the word 'peanuts.'"
- Member: "Mr. / Madam President, I second the motion." or "I second the amendment."
- President: "It has been moved and seconded to amend the main motion by inserting the words 'popcorn and cold drinks' after the word 'peanuts.' This motion is debatable, amendable, and requires a majority vote. It is now open for discussion."  
(Discussion, if any)  
(If an amendment to the amendment was not offered, a vote on the pending first rank amendment would be taken at this point.)
- Member: "Mr. / Madam President."  
(Recognition)
- Member: "I move to amend the amendment by striking out the words 'and cold drinks.'"
- Member: "Mr. / Madam President, I second the motion." or "I second the amendment."
- President: "It has been moved and seconded to amend the amendment by striking out the words 'and cold drinks.' This motion is debatable, unamendable, and requires a majority vote. It is now open for discussion."  
(Discussion, if any)
- President: "Are you ready for the question? Those supporting the amendment to the amendment that we strike out the words 'and cold drinks' say 'aye.' Those opposed, say 'no.' The ayes (noes) have it, and the amendment to the amendment is carried (lost)."  
(Assuming passage) "The words 'and cold drinks' are stricken from the amendment."  
(At this point, another second rank amendment may be introduced.)
- President: "The question now before the chapter is that we amend the main motion by inserting the word 'and popcorn' after the word 'peanuts.' It is now open for discussion."  
(Discussion, if any)
- President: "Those supporting the amendment to the motion that we insert the words 'and popcorn' after the word 'peanuts' say aye. Those opposed, say 'no.' The ayes

(noes) have it, and the amendment is carried (lost).” (Assuming passage) “The amended motion that our chapter sells peanuts and popcorn at basketball games is now before the chapter. It is now open for discussion.” (NOTE: Using the word “and” as a conjunction is implied. If the intended meaning of the proposal is not substantially changed, this and similar words or phrases may be used at the chair’s discretion.)

(Discussion, if any)

(At this point, another first rank amendment may be introduced.)

President: “Are you ready for the question? Those supporting the amended motion that our chapter sells peanuts and popcorn at basketball games say ‘aye.’ Those opposed, say ‘no.’ The ayes (noes) have it, and the motion is carried (lost). (Assuming passage) We will sell peanuts and popcorn at basketball games.”

Amending Rules of Order, Bylaws, or Constitutions. Previous notice (determined by that organization’s rules) and a two-thirds vote are generally required for the adoption of changes to these types of documents. The previous notice document, or scope of notice, should include the current wording, the wording of the proposed amendment, and how the wording will read if the amendment passes. The amendment to the rules of order, bylaws, or constitution may be amended but only if the amendment is within the scope of notice. Example: if an amendment is to raise the dues of the organization \$10.00, it could be amended by any amount under \$10.00. Anything over that amount would be out of order, because it was outside the scope of notice. Once these amendments are passed, the vote cannot be reconsidered. If the amendment fails, that vote can be reconsidered.

## CHAPTER 10

### Incidental Motion

#### Point of Order

Purpose. The purpose of a point of order is to enforce the rules by calling attention to a violation of the rules or a mistake in procedure.



The president is duty bound to enforce correct rules of procedure. Therefore, he/she should call members out of order when they are in error. Members may also insist upon correct procedure of business by rising to a point of order when the need arises. The point of order should be made at the time the breach of order occurs.

Exceptions to this are situations where the motion was in violation of the constitution or standing rules, so that, if adopted, it would be null and void. In these situations, it is never too late to rise to a point of order.

If a member rises to a point of order and does not agree with the decision rendered (chair's ruling), the member may appeal the chair's decision.

**Pertinent Facts.** A point of order has these characteristics:

- It may interrupt a speaker.
- Recognition is not necessary.
- It does not require a second.
- It is undebatable and unamendable.
- It cannot be reconsidered.

**Practice.** After a main motion has been presented, a member may offer an amendment that is unrelated, or not germane, to the main motion. Upon noticing this fact, another member would then rise and without obtaining recognition, state:

- Member: "Mr. / Madam President" or "Mr. / Madam Chair, I rise to a point of order." (Member takes a seat.)
- President: "State your point."
- Member: (Rising) "The amendment offered is not related to (germane to) the main motion, and therefore is out of order."
- President: "The point is sustained. The amendment is out of order." or "The point is not sustained. The amendment is in order."

A member wishing to appeal the decision of the chair must do so at this time.

If in doubt, the president may, rather than making a decision (ruling), ask the chapter to decide, in which case there can be no appeal. This is done as follows:

President: “The chair is in doubt as to the correct decision to make and submits the question to the assembly. The question is, ‘Is the amendment related to the main motion?’ Those of the opinion that the amendment is related say ‘aye.’ Those of the opinion that the amendment is not related say ‘no.’ The ayes (noes) have it, and the amendment is (is not) in order.”

## CHAPTER 11

### Incidental Motion

#### Appeal from the Decision of the Chair

**Purpose.** The purpose of an appeal from the decision of the chair is to obtain a decision from the chapter to a question on which the presiding officer has made a decision.

A decision is usually made in connection with items of business concerning the welfare of the entire chapter, such as the president deciding the chapter will sponsor a banquet, or the chair deciding on a point of order.

An announcement of a vote and an answer to a parliamentary inquiry are not decisions of the chair, and therefore cannot be appealed from.

An appeal must be made at the time the ruling (decision) is made and before any debate or business has intervened; otherwise, it is too late.

**Pertinent Facts.** An appeal from the decision of the chair has these characteristics:

- It may interrupt a speaker

- Recognition is not necessary.

- It is debatable except in cases where it relates to indecorum (improper conduct), priority of business, or deviation from the rules of speaking.\*

- It requires a second.

It is not amendable.

A majority vote or tie vote is required to sustain the chair.

It may be reconsidered.

\*Note: Rules of speaking deal with: the presenter of a motion offering remarks or debate before presenting the motion, the time allotment (10 minutes), the number of debates per member (2) per debatable motion, and the right of first refusal of debate for the presenter of the motion.

Practice. The president may, during the course of a business session, make a decision affecting the chapter, such as deciding that the chapter will purchase a portable computer. Immediately after the decision is made, a member may rise and, without obtaining recognition, state:

Member: “Mr. / Madam President” or “Mr. / Madam Chair, I appeal from the decision of the chair.”

Member: “Mr. / Madam President, I second the appeal.”

President: “An appeal has been taken from the decision of the chair. This motion is debatable, unamendable, and requires a majority or tie vote to sustain the chair. It is now open for discussion.”

(At this point the president may state his/her reason(s) for the decision, and may also ask the member appealing to state his/her reason(s) for making the appeal.)

(Discussion, if any)

President: “Are you ready for the question? Those supporting the decision of the chair that ... say ‘aye.’ Those opposed, say ‘no.’ The ayes (noes) have it, and the decision of the chair is (is not) sustained. We will (will not) purchase a portable computer for our chapter.”

## CHAPTER 12

### Incidental Motion

#### Suspend the Standing Rules

**Purpose.** The purpose of suspending the standing rules is to permit the chapter to do something that cannot be done without violating its standing rules.

Standing rules are those rules that are adopted in a meeting without the need of giving previous notice. A majority vote is required. These rules might pertain to the time for starting chapter meetings, the place where meetings will be held, the penalty for being late to a meeting, the changes to the chapter program of activities, or the spending of chapter funds.

The motion to suspend a standing rule may be offered prior to the item of business to which it pertains or it may be offered while the question is pending. For example, if it is desired to introduce an item of business that would be in violation of a standing rule, the rule might first be suspended, then the item of business introduced. However, it is also proper to first introduce the item of business and when it is opened for discussion, one may then move to suspend the rule involved and after this motion is passed, proceed with the disposal of the main motion.

The suspension of a rule is in effect only for the reason for which it was suspended. Following the action taken under the suspension, the original rule is again in effect.

Unanimous (general) consent is frequently used in situations where standing rules need to be suspended. This may be done by the president stating, "Shall we suspend, by unanimous (general) consent, the standing rule of this chapter that ...?"

It is not in order to suspend rules relating to a constitution or to bylaws. Neither is it in order to suspend rules dealing with fundamental principles of parliamentary law.

**Pertinent Facts.** The suspension of standing rules has these characteristics:

It may not interrupt a speaker.

A second is required.

It is undebatable and unamendable.

A majority or two-thirds\* vote is required.

It cannot be reconsidered.

\*Note: Advance notice and a two-thirds vote is necessary to suspend written rules of parliamentary procedure that were formally proposed and adopted by an assembly or group. Such rules relate to the orderly transaction of business in regular meetings or the duties of the officers with those duties.

Practice. Assume that a certain standing rule is in effect and an individual wishes to propose something in violation of this rule. For example, assume that a standing rule prohibits the spending of chapter funds for advertising in local newspapers. Also be assumed that a member wishes to propose that an advertisement be purchased to publicize the local chapter project show. After obtaining the floor, a member may state:

Member: “Mr. / Madam President” or “Mr. / Madam Chair, our chapter has a standing rule prohibiting the spending of chapter funds for advertising in local newspapers. Because it may be desirable to do this, I move that we suspend this standing rule.”

Member: “Mr. / Madam President, I second the motion.”

President: “It has been moved and seconded that we suspend the standing rule prohibiting the spending of chapter funds for advertising in local newspapers. This motion is undebatable, unamendable, and requires a majority vote. Those supporting the motion please rise.” Then, “Those opposed please rise. The vote is 35 for and 11 against; therefore, the motion carries and the standing rule is suspended.”

(At this point, the desired proposal may be presented and disposed of in the ordinary manner. For this purpose, a main motion would be appropriate.)

## CHAPTER 13

### Incidental Motion

#### Division of the Assembly

Purpose. The purpose of a division of the assembly is to determine the accuracy of a vote, especially when taken by voice or show of hands.

If a member feels that a voice vote, or one taken by a show of hands, is not accurate, that member may request verification of the vote by calling for a division of the assembly. This must be done before another motion has been stated and may be requested even if another member has the floor.

**Pertinent Facts.** A division of the assembly has these characteristics:

- It may interrupt a speaker.
- Recognition is not necessary.
- A second is not required.
- It is undebatable and unamendable.
- A vote is not necessary.
- It cannot be reconsidered.

**Practice.** At any time a vote has been taken by voice or by show of hands, a member, without obtaining recognition, may rise and state:

**Member:** “I call for a division.” or “Division.”

**President:** “A division has been called for. Those supporting the motion that ... please rise.” Then, “Those opposed, please rise. The affirmative vote is 19 and the negative vote is 15. The motion is carried (lost), and ... (The presiding officer states effect of the vote).”

## CHAPTER 14

### Incidental Motion

#### Nominations and Elections

**Purpose.** The purpose of nominations and elections is to present to the chapter the name of a candidate for a certain office or position.

Nominations may be made by six common methods: by the chair, from the floor by a member, by a committee, by ballot, by mail, and by petition. Even when a nominating committee is used, members may make nominations when the floor is open for further nominations.

There is no motion to open nominations. A member can move to have an election for a position with a main motion, and then the presiding officer opens the floor for nominations. Or, the presiding officer can inform the chapter of the need to elect an individual to fill a certain position, and then say “the floor is open for nominations.” If a member moves to open nominations, he/she would have made an invalid motion.

To offer a nomination, after the floor is open for such, a member obtains the floor and states, “I nominate ... for ...” The president then asks for further nominations. If there are none, nominations are closed.

Closing Nominations. The motion to close nominations requires a second, is undebatable, and can be amended as to time only. Nominations may be closed by a two-thirds vote or by unanimous (general) consent. The vote on the motion to close nominations cannot be reconsidered.

Practice: After the main motion to elect has passed, the president may open the floor for nominations.

President: “The floor is now open for nominations.”

Member: “I nominate ... for ... (office).”

Member: “I nominate ... for ... (office).”

President: “If there are no further nominations, then ...”

Member: “I move that nominations cease.” or “I move to close nominations.”

Pertinent Facts. Making nominations has these characteristics:

It may not interrupt a speaker.

A second is not required to nominate.

All nominees can be discussed.

Candidates are voted on in the order they were nominated.

A majority vote is required to elect.

Pertinent Facts. Closing nominations has these characteristics:

It may not interrupt a speaker.

A second is required.

It is undebatable.

It is amendable as to time only.\*  
 A two-thirds vote is required.  
 It cannot be reconsidered.

\*Note: A motion to close nominations may be amended as to time when an individual offers the amendment that ‘nominations close in 30 minutes.’ No other amendments to this incidental motion would be in order.

Pertinent Facts. Reopening nominations has these characteristics:

It may not interrupt a speaker.  
 A second is required.  
 It is undebatable.  
 It is amendable to time only.  
 A majority vote is required.  
 Only the negative vote can be reconsidered.

\*Note: The term *time only* refers to being able to amend the motions to close nominations and to reopen nominations by changing the motions to stipulate a specific time to close nominations or to reopen nominations. An example would be “I move to amend the motion to close nominations by inserting the phrase ‘next Friday at 5:00 pm’” or “inserting the phrase ‘after one more candidate is nominated.’” The same strategy applies to the motion to reopen nominations, “I move to amend the motion to reopen nominations by inserting the phrase ‘reopen nominations at the conclusion of today’s business, or next Friday at 5:00 pm.’”

Practice. After the president has asked for further nominations and none is presented, a member may obtain the floor and state:

President: “What is the next item of business?”  
 Member: “Mr. / Madam President” or “Mr. / Madam Chair”  
 (Recognition)  
 Member: “I move that nominations cease.” or “I move to close nominations.”  
 Member: “Mr. / Madam President, I second the motion.”  
 President: “It has been moved and seconded that nominations cease. This motion is undebatable, amendable to time only, and requires a two-thirds vote. Are there any amendments? We will now proceed to vote. Those



supporting the motion please stand.” Then, “Those opposed to the motion please stand. There being a two-thirds majority, the motion is carried and nominations are closed. Would anyone like to speak on any of the candidates?”

During this time, members may speak for the nominees. At the conclusion of the candidate discussion, they would vote on the candidates in the order they were nominated.

If, during the discussion of candidates, a member wanted to nominate someone else, he/she would do the following after gaining the floor.

Member: “I move to reopen nominations.”

Member: “Mr. / Madam President I second the motion.”

President: “It has been moved and seconded to reopen nominations. This motion is undebatable, amendable to time only, and requires a majority vote. Are there any amendments? We will proceed to vote, those supporting the motion say ‘aye.’ Those opposed, please say ‘no.’ The ayes have it, the motion is carried, and we will reopen nominations. The floor is now open for nominations.”

After nominations are complete the motion to close nominations should be offered. After closing nominations, the chapter would be allowed to again discuss the candidates. At the conclusion of the discussion the members would vote on the candidate in the order they were nominated. Unless provided for by a local assembly’s rules or constitution, a candidate must receive a majority vote to win an election.

Election by Acclamation. Sometimes, an error is made by offering the motion “to close nominations and elect by acclamation.” This is not correct because it combines two motions requiring different votes into one motion. The motion to close nominations requires a two-thirds vote, and the motion to elect requires a majority vote. To perform these two procedures correctly, nominations should first be closed, either by a two-thirds vote or by unanimous (general) consent, and then the nominee can be voted upon.

Election by acclamation is used when, during the nominating process,

the exact number of candidates that you are electing is nominated. An example would be: The motion passes to elect a student council representative. After one candidate is nominated, the motion to close nominations passes. The presiding officer could then state, “Since we have voted to elect one student council representative and only one candidate is nominated, shall we by unanimous general consent elect ... as our student council representative? There being no objections, ... is elected as our student council representative.” It would be out of order for a member to close nominations and elect a candidate or candidates by acclamation. This is incorrect because you cannot have two main motions on the floor at the same time.

## CHAPTER 15

### Incidental Motion

#### Parliamentary Inquiry

**Purpose.** The purpose of a parliamentary inquiry is to permit a member to gain parliamentary information.

The parliamentary information desired may pertain to the procedure for introducing business, rules governing a motion, action to take concerning a pending question, which motion to use, or the effect of a motion.

**Pertinent Facts.** A parliamentary inquiry has these characteristics:

- It may interrupt a speaker.
- Recognition is not necessary.
- It is undebatable and unamendable.
- A vote is not required.
- It cannot be reconsidered.

**Practice.** During a business session, a member desiring parliamentary information may, while the floor is vacant or while someone else is speaking, rise and, without gaining recognition, state:

**Member:** “Mr. / Madam President” or “Mr. / Madam Chair, I rise to a point of parliamentary inquiry.”

(If such is made while someone else is speaking, that person should stop talking and wait for the president to give attention to the inquiry.)

President: “State your inquiry.”

(Immediate attention may be given the inquiry or, if there is no urgency, attention may be given at a more appropriate time.)

## CHAPTER 16

### Incidental Motion

#### Withdraw or Modify a Motion

**Purpose.** The purpose of withdrawing or modifying a motion is to permit the modification or withdrawal of a motion from consideration by the chapter.

The proposer of a motion may withdraw or modify his/her motion without consent of anyone before the chair has stated it. However, if the proposer modifies the motion in any way after it receives a second, the seconder may withdraw the second.

After the chair has stated a motion, it then belongs to the chapter and cannot be withdrawn without its consent. This may be granted by unanimous (general) consent. However, if there is an objection, a vote must be taken.

**Pertinent Facts.** (Assuming the presiding officer has stated a motion.)  
Withdrawing a motion has these characteristics:

It may interrupt a speaker.

It is undebatable and unamendable.

A majority vote is required.

Only the negative vote can be reconsidered.

A motion cannot be withdrawn after voting has commenced.

**Practice.** At some time after a motion has been stated by the president and before voting has commenced, the proposer of the motion, during a time when no one is speaking, may obtain the floor and state:

***Withdraw***

Member: “Permission is requested to withdraw my motion.”

President: “Shall we, by unanimous (general) consent, grant permission to withdraw the motion?” If there is no objection, the chair announces: “The motion is withdrawn.” If there is an objection, the presiding officer may put the question to a vote, or a member may offer a motion that it be withdrawn.

### ***Modify***

Member “Permission is requested to modify ... (by adding a word or words, subtracting word or words, or both).”

President “Shall we, by unanimous (general) consent, grant permission to modify the motion in the following way: ...?” If there is no objection, the chair announces, “The motion is modified, and now reads ....” If there is an objection, the presiding officer may put the question to a vote.

## CHAPTER 17

### Privileged Motion

#### Adjourn

**Purpose.** The purpose of adjournment is to terminate (close) the meeting.

The motion to adjourn is a privileged motion when unqualified, but if it is qualified (e.g., as to time), it loses its privilege and becomes a main motion. It is also a main motion when made in an organization that has no provision for another meeting.

For example, a motion to adjourn is unqualified when the maker of the motion merely states, “I move that we adjourn;” this proposal is a privileged motion. However, it becomes qualified when the proposer adds something such as, “I move that we adjourn in fifteen minutes;” this proposal is a main motion.

**Pertinent Facts.** (when unqualified.) Adjournment has these characteristics:

It may not interrupt a speaker.

A second is required.

It is undebatable and unamendable.

A majority vote is required.

It cannot be reconsidered.

It cannot be made while counting votes or verifying a vote unless the vote is by ballot.

Practice. A member, after gaining possession of the floor, may state:

President: “What is the next item of business?”

Member: “Mr. / Madam President” or “Mr. / Madam Chair”  
(Recognition)

Member: “I move that we adjourn.”

Member: “Mr. / Madam President, I second the motion.”

President: “It has been moved and seconded that we adjourn. This motion is undebatable, unamendable, and requires a majority vote. Those supporting the motion say ‘aye.’ Those opposed, say ‘no.’ The ayes (noes) have it, and the motion is carried (lost).” (Assuming the motion carried) “The meeting is adjourned.”

During an FFA meeting, the closing ceremony should be performed because adjourning affects only the business session. Any unfinished business resulting from adjournment becomes unfinished business at the next meeting and should be taken up where it was interrupted.

## CHAPTER 18

### Motions that Bring a Question Again Before the Assembly

#### Take from the Table

Purpose. The purpose of taking an item from the table is to again bring a question before the chapter for further consideration.

A motion cannot be taken from the table until some business has been transacted after it was tabled. When taken from the table, the motion is in exactly the same condition as when tabled.

Pertinent Facts. Taking an item from the table has these characteristics:

It may not interrupt a speaker.  
 A second is required.  
 It is undebatable and unamendable.  
 A majority vote is required.  
 It cannot be reconsidered.

Practice. Assume that a certain motion has been tabled and that some business has been transacted after it was tabled. A member may obtain the floor and state:

President: “What is the next item of business?”

Member: “Mr. / Madam President” or “Mr. / Madam Chair”  
 (Recognition)

Member: “I move that the motion ... be taken from the table.” or “I move that we take from the table the motion that ....”

Member: “Mr. / Madam President, I second the motion.”

President: “It has been moved and seconded that we take from the table the motion that .... This motion is undebatable, unamendable, and requires a majority vote. It cannot be reconsidered. Those supporting the motion say ‘aye.’ Those opposed, say ‘no.’ The ayes (noes) have it, and the motion is carried (lost).” (Assuming the motion to take from the table carried)  
 “The motion now before the chapter is ....” (The proposal now pending is the motion that was tabled previously.)

## CHAPTER 19

### Motions that Bring a Question Again Before the Assembly

#### Discharge a Committee

Purpose. The purpose of discharging a committee is to permit an assembly to again consider a question that was previously placed in a committee.

The motion to discharge a committee is in order only when the committee has not yet made its final report to the assembly. As long as the question remains in a committee, it is not permissible for the assembly to consider any proposal that is essentially the same

question. Usually, it is desirable to discharge a committee under only three circumstances:

1. When the committee has failed to report with appropriate promptness.
2. When an urgent reason encourages the assembly to proceed on the question without further assistance from the committee.
3. When the assembly has decided to drop the matter.

However, if a committee has not yet taken up the question, and it is the same day as referral or the next calendar day, then it is appropriate to reconsider the vote on the motion to refer.

Once a committee has been discharged and the assembly wishes to again take up the motion that had been put to the committee, the motion must be presented again since discharging the committee also discharges the item of business that was given to the committee.

Further, in the case of special committees following the passage of a motion to discharge, the committee ceases to exist; standing committees continue to function.

The motion to discharge a committee takes precedence over nothing, and can only be moved when no other question is pending.

**Pertinent Facts.** Discharging a committee has these characteristics:

It may not interrupt a speaker.

A second is required.

It is debatable.

It is amendable in special cases, such as time or outcome.

A two-thirds vote is required, unless previous notice of the discharge was given; then a majority vote is required.

Only the negative vote can be reconsidered.

**Practice.** At the last meeting, a motion was referred to a committee and the committee has not taken up the matter. A member gains the floor and states:

President: "What is the next item of business?"

Member: "Mr. / Madam President" or "Mr. / Madam Chair"

(Recognition)

Member: “Mr. / Madam President, at the last meeting the motion ... was referred to a committee. Because the committee has not taken up the ... matter, I move to discharge the committee.”

Member: “Mr. / Madam President, I second the motion.”

President: “It has been moved and seconded to discharge the committee .... This motion is debatable, amendable, and requires a two-thirds vote. It is now open for discussion.”

(Discussion, if any)

President: “Are you ready for the question? Those supporting the motion to discharge the committee please stand.” Then “Those opposed, please stand. The vote is 46 for and 12 against. There being a two-thirds vote in favor, the motion carries and the committee is discharged.”

In discharging the committee, the chapter also does away with the motion referred to the committee. If the chapter wants to discuss that motion, it must be re-offered or remade.

## Chapter 20

### Motions that Bring a Question Again Before the Assembly

#### Reconsider

Purpose. The purpose of reconsideration is to permit the reevaluation of a vote previously taken on a motion and to again consider the question.

The motion to reconsider must be made by a member who voted on the prevailing side, unless the vote was by ballot. It is also necessary to offer the motion on the day the vote was taken or on the next calendar day.

Pertinent Facts. Reconsideration has these characteristics:

It may not interrupt a speaker.

A second is required.



It is debatable if the question to be reconsidered is debatable.

It is unamendable.

A majority vote is required.

It cannot be reconsidered.

Practice. Assume that a main motion has been voted on earlier in the current meeting or at a meeting held the previous day. A member may obtain the floor and state:

President: "What is the next item of business?"

Member: "Mr. / Madam President" or "Mr. / Madam Chair"  
(Recognition)

Member: "I move to reconsider the vote on the motion that ....  
I voted on the prevailing side."

Member: "Mr. / Madam President, I second the motion."

President: "It has been moved and seconded that we reconsider the vote on the question that .... This motion is debatable (if the motion to be reconsidered is debatable), unamendable, and requires a majority vote. It is now open for discussion."  
(Discussion, if any)

President: "Are you ready for the question? Those supporting the motion to reconsider the vote on the question that ... say 'aye.' Those opposed, say 'no.' The ayes (noes) have it, and the motion will (will not) be reconsidered." (Assuming the motion to reconsider carried) "The motion now before the chapter is ...." (The motion is disposed of in the usual manner according to established rules of procedure.)

## CHAPTER 21

### Motions that Bring a Question Again Before the Assembly

#### Rescind

Purpose. The purpose of rescinding is to cancel action taken by the chapter.

Any action, except an action that cannot be reversed, may be rescinded. Motions to purchase an item in the future or to hold an

FFA banquet next month are examples of actions that may be rescinded. The motion to rescind is a main motion and can be made by any member when no other motion is pending. It is debatable and opens the main question to debate if the main question is a debatable motion.

**Pertinent Facts.** Rescinding an action has these characteristics:

It may not interrupt a speaker.

A second is required.

It is debatable and amendable.

A majority vote is required if previous notice\* of the proposed action was given; otherwise, a two-thirds vote is required.

It cannot be applied to action that cannot be reversed.

Only a negative vote can be reconsidered.

**Practice.** After an item of business is passed, a member may obtain the floor and state:

President: “What is the next item of business?”

Member: “Mr. / Madam President” or “Mr. / Madam Chair”  
(Recognition)

Member: “I move that we rescind the motion that ....”

Member: “Mr. / Madam President, I second the motion.”

President: “It has been moved and seconded that we rescind the motion that .... This motion is debatable, amendable, and requires a two-thirds vote.” (Assuming no previous notice was given. If previous notice was given, a majority vote would be in order.) “It is now open for discussion.”  
(Discussion, if any)

President: “Are you ready for the question? Those supporting the motion that we rescind the motion that ... please rise.” Then, “Those opposed, please rise. There are 25 for and 7 against. This being a two-thirds vote, the motion is rescinded. We will not ....” (The president states the effect of the vote.)

\*Note: Previous notice is a verbal or written notice by a member of a society that he/she intends to try to cancel business that was previously passed by that society. This can be done at the conclusion

of the previous meeting or before the agenda or the next meeting has been set.

The motion to rescind may be amended if the motion contains multiple parts—one that a person or group wishes to cancel, and one or more other parts that the person or group wishes to keep.

Here is an example: The motion passed that the chapter buy a computer and printer. After passage of this motion and before the chapter has acted on the passed motion, the chapter is given a printer, thus removing the need to purchase one. A member makes a motion to rescind the motion to purchase a computer and printer. After the motion to rescind is presented, a member could rise and state that since there is still a need to purchase a computer, he/she moves to amend the motion to rescind by rescinding only the part of the motion dealing with the printer.

Two examples of motions that may not be rescinded are:

1. a motion that the chapter have a banquet, the facility has been rented, invitations have been sent, and the cancellation deadline has passed; and
2. a motion that the chapter buy a new set of scales when the chapter has already ordered the scales and paid a deposit.

## Classification and Summary of Motions

(Listed in order of rank, excluding incidental motions which can be offered at any time;  
incidental motions have NO rank amongst themselves.)

PAGE	CLASSIFICATION OF MOTION	SECOND REQUIRED	DEBATABLE	AMENDABLE	INTERRUPT A SPEAKER	VOTE REQUIRED	CAN RECONSIDER
<b>PRIVILEGED MOTIONS</b>							
44	Fix Time to Adjourn	Yes	No	Yes	No	Majority	Yes
45	Recess	Yes	No	Yes <sup>1</sup>	No	Majority	No
46	Raise a Question of Privilege	No	No	No	Yes	Chair Rules	No
48	Call for Orders of the Day	No	No	No	Yes	— <sup>1</sup>	No
<b>SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS</b>							
49	Limit/Extend Limits of Debate	Yes	No	Yes	No	Two-thirds	Yes
50	Postpone Definitely	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	Yes
52	Postpone Indefinitely	Yes	Yes	No	No	Majority	Yes <sup>12</sup>
<b>INCIDENTAL MOTIONS</b>							
53	Object to Consideration of a Question	No	No	No	Yes	Two-thirds	Yes <sup>3</sup>
54	Division of a Question	Yes	No	Yes	No	Majority	No

- 1 Two-thirds negative vote required not to return to the orders of the day
- 2 No if it relates to indecorum, priority of business, or deviation from the rules of speaking
- 3 Time only
- 4 Only the negative vote
- 5 To elect
- 6 Before affirmative vote has been taken on the pending question or questions
- 7 Before any action is taken by the committee
- 8 If applied to a debatable question
- 9 Only first rank amendment
- 10 If the motion to be reconsidered is debatable
- 11 Majority when previous notice given; otherwise, two-thirds
- 12 Only the affirmative vote can be reconsidered

## CHAPTER 22

### Privileged Motion

#### Fix the Time to Which to Adjourn

**Purpose.** The purpose for fixing a time to which to adjourn is to set the time, and sometimes the place, for another meeting to continue the business of the session, with no effect on when the present meeting will adjourn.

The motion to fix the time to which to adjourn can only be presented when no meeting has been scheduled for later within the same session. The motion is privileged only if it is presented when other business is pending. If it is made when no business is pending, it is debatable and subject to all rules that apply to main motions.

When brought before the assembly, the effect of this motion is to establish an adjourned meeting. That is a continuation of the current meeting at which the motion to fix the time to which to adjourn is adopted. This motion, when passed, together with that meeting, will make up one session. Passing this motion does not adjourn the present meeting or set a time for its adjournment.

**Pertinent Facts.** Fixing the time to which to adjourn has these characteristics:

- It may not interrupt a speaker.
- It takes precedence over all motions, when privileged.
- It requires a second.
- It is not debatable, when privileged.
- It is amendable as to hour, date, and place.
- It requires a majority vote.
- It can be reconsidered.

**Practice.** The chapter is debating a main motion; a member obtains the floor and states:

President: “What is the next item of business?”

Member: “Mr. / Madam President” or “Mr. / Madam Chair”  
(Recognition)

- Member: “Mr. / Madam President, I move to fix the time to which to adjourn so that when we adjourn, we adjourn to next Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. in our normal meeting room.”
- Member: “Mr. / Madam President, I second the motion.”
- President: “It has been moved and seconded to fix the time to which to adjourn so that when we adjourn, we adjourn to next Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. in the normal meeting room. This motion is undebatable; amendable to hour, date, and place; and requires a majority vote. Are there any amendments?”
- President: “Those supporting the motion say ‘aye.’ Those opposed, say ‘no.’ The ayes have it, the motion passes, and when we adjourn this meeting, we will adjourn until next Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. in the normal meeting room. The main motion is open for discussion.”

## CHAPTER 23

### Privileged Motion

#### Recess

**Purpose.** The purpose of a recess is to allow a short intermission in a group’s meeting, commonly for only a few minutes.

A recess does not close the meeting, and upon resuming the session, business will immediately be taken up at the same place where it was at the time of the recess. This motion can be either a privileged motion or an incidental main motion. If business is pending, it is a privileged motion. When there is no business pending, it is treated as an incidental main motion. When privileged, it takes precedence over all motions.

If the chair just needs a very short break in the proceedings (i.e. one (1) or two (2) minutes), the chair would merely state, “The chair will stand at ease to ....” When the chair is ready to resume, the chair would state, “The meeting is back in session.” The chair would then pick up where the meeting was at the time of the pause.

**Pertinent Facts.** A recess has these characteristics:

- It may not interrupt a speaker.
- It requires a second.
- It is not debatable.
- It is amendable as to the length of the recess.
- It requires a majority vote.
- It cannot be reconsidered.

Practice. During the discussion of a motion, a member obtains the floor and states:

- President: “What is the next item of business?”
- Member: “Mr. / Madam President” or “Mr. / Madam Chair”  
(Recognition)
- Member: “Mr. / Madam President, I move to take a ten minute recess.”
- Member: “Mr. / Madam President, I second the motion.”
- President: “It has been moved and seconded to take a ten minute recess; this motion is undebatable, amendable as to the length of recess, and requires a majority vote. Are there any amendments?”
- President: “Those supporting the motion to take a ten minute recess say ‘aye.’ Those opposed, say ‘no.’ The ayes have it, and we will take a ten minute recess. We will reconvene at (time).”

## CHAPTER 24

### Privileged Motion

#### Raise a Question of Privilege

Purpose. The purpose of raising a question of privilege is to permit a request or main motion that relates to the rights and privileges of the assembly or any of its members.

By raising a question of privilege, a member is asking for the chair to rule on two points. First, is the request or motion that would follow the granting of admission, in fact a question of privilege? Second, is the question sufficiently urgent to permit interruption of the assembly’s pending business?

There are two types of questions of privilege: questions relating to the assembly as a whole and questions of personal privilege. An example of a question relating to the privileges of the assembly as a whole is one that involves the comfort of its members, such as temperature or noise level in the meeting room. Questions of personal privilege are less common; an example is a member's request to correct a mistake in the organization's minutes regarding that individual's previous meeting participation.

A member could request to raise a question of privilege by using a formal motion; for example, "I believe this question should be considered in a closed meeting. I move that our guests be excused and that the meeting go into executive session."

**Pertinent Facts.** Rising to a question of privilege has these characteristics:

It may interrupt a speaker.

Recognition is not necessary.

It does not require a second.

It is undebatable and unamendable.

It does not require a vote, only the ruling of the president, which can be appealed.

It cannot be reconsidered.

**Practice.** During a meeting, in the period of debate on a motion, a member, without recognition, states:

President: "What is the next item of business?"

Member: "Mr. / Madam President" or "Mr. / Madam Chair"  
(Recognition)

Member: "Mr. / Madam President, I rise to a question of privilege."

President: "State your question."

Member: "Could you ask the members to please speak louder during discussion? It is difficult to hear when they do not."

President: "Members, please speak loudly enough and clearly enough for all members to hear."



## Privileged Motion

### Call for Orders of the Day

**Purpose.** The purpose of calling for orders of the day is to demand that the chapter conform to its order of business or program.

A call for orders of the day can be made only when the order of business is being varied from and when no other privileged motion is pending. It is out of order to call for orders of the day when there is no variation from the order of business. No subsidiary motion may be applied to a call for orders of the day.

**Pertinent Facts.** A call for orders of the day has these characteristics:

It may interrupt a speaker.

Recognition is not necessary.

A second is not required.

It is undebatable and unamendable.

A two-thirds negative vote is required to not return to the orders of the day.

It cannot be reconsidered.

**Practice.** (Assume the chapter has previously adopted an orders of the day or a “program.”) If, during the meeting, a variation from this sequence occurred, a member may rise and without recognition state:

President: “What is the next item of business?”

Member: “Mr. / Madam President” or “Mr. / Madam Chair”  
(Recognition)

Member: “Mr. / Madam President, I call for the orders of the day.”

President: “Will the chapter proceed to the orders of the day? Those supporting this action please rise.” Then, “Those opposed, please rise. The vote is affirmative 25 and negative 6. Because there is not a two-thirds vote supporting the negative (not to return to the orders of the day), we will proceed to the orders of the day.”

## CHAPTER 26

### Subsidiary Motion

#### Limit or Extend Limits of Debate

**Purpose.** The purpose of limiting or extending limits of debate is to permit the chapter to exercise special control over debate on a pending question, or on a series of pending questions.

In regular meetings the right to speak is a basic tenet of parliamentary law. Basic rules are set, however, to control **dilatory** debates and the number of times that person may speak.

This motion can be applied to any immediately pending debatable motion, or to an entire series of pending debatable motions (e.g., a main motion with adhering amendments), or to any consecutive part of such a series beginning with the immediately pending question.

Limiting debate takes away the fundamental right of all members to fully discuss a question before the assembly. Thus, it may restrict the right of the minority to present its positions. Limiting can be done two ways: 1) reducing the number or length of debate permitted, or 2) requiring that debate is closed and the question put to a vote at a specified later time or after debate for a specified length of time. However, this motion cannot be used to impose an immediate termination of debate.

It is not permissible to move to limit or extend limits of debate in a committee meeting.

If a motion to limit or extend limits is proposed while no question is pending, such a proposal is an incidental motion; however, it requires a two-thirds vote for adoption as well.

**Pertinent Facts.** Limiting or extending the limits of debate has these characteristics:

- It may not interrupt a speaker.

- A second is required.

- It is undebatable.

- It is amendable, but amendments are undebatable.

A two-thirds vote is required.

Prior to the order being exhausted, it may be reconsidered without debate. However, if the order has been partially carried out, only the unexecuted portion (e.g., the remaining time) may be reconsidered.

Practice. After debate on a motion begins, a member obtains the floor and states:

President: “What is the next item of business?”

Member: “Mr. / Madam President” or “Mr. / Madam Chair”  
(Recognition)

Member: “Mr. / Madam President, I move to limit debate on this motion to not more than twenty minutes.”

Member: “Mr. / Madam President, I second the motion”

President: “It has been moved and seconded to limit the debate on this motion to not more than twenty minutes. This motion is undebatable, is amendable, and requires a two-thirds vote. Are there any amendments?”

President: Those supporting the motion that we limit the debate on the motion to no more than twenty minutes please rise.” Then, “Those opposed, please rise. The vote is 68 for and 13 against. There being a two-thirds vote in favor of the motion to limit debate, the motion carries; the debate on the main motion is limited to no more than twenty minutes. The motion is now open for discussion.”

## CHAPTER 27

### Subsidiary Motion

#### Postpone to a Certain Time (Definitely)

Purpose. This motion permits the action on a pending question to be postponed to a specific day, meeting, or time, or until after a particular event.

A question may be postponed so it can be considered at a time that is more convenient or because debate has revealed one or more reasons to delay a decision. It is in order regardless of how much debate has already occurred on the main motion. It cannot be moved after adoption to close debate on the main question at a definite hour, or

following passage of a motion to limit the total time allowed for debate.

Usually, a question may be postponed until, but not beyond, the next regular business session. It is not proper to postpone a question to a time between meetings, without having first made provision for an adjourned meeting.

It is not permissible to postpone a class of business that includes multiple items or subjects, such as reports of committees. However, reports can be postponed individually as they arise.

This motion's application to a main motion affects any motions that may be pending such as a motion to amend, refer, or appeal. If an undebatable appeal is pending, the main question cannot be postponed until the appeal is disposed of.

**Pertinent Facts.** Postponing to a certain time (definitely) has these characteristics:

It may not interrupt a speaker.

A second is required.

It is debatable.

It is amendable to time.

A majority vote is required.

The affirmative vote can be reconsidered.

**Practice.** During discussion on a main motion, a member obtains the floor and states:

President: "What is the next item of business?"

Member: "Mr. / Madam President" or "Mr. / Madam Chair"  
(Recognition)

Member: "Mr. / Madam President, I move to postpone this motion until the next regular meeting."

Member: "Mr. / Madam President, I second the motion."

President: "It has been moved and seconded to postpone the motion to the next regular meeting. This motion is debatable, amendable to time only, and requires a majority vote. It is now open for discussion."  
(Discussion, if any)

President "Are you ready for the question? Those supporting the motion to postpone the motion ... to the next

meeting say ‘aye.’ Those opposed, say ‘no.’ The ayes (noes) have it, and the motion is (is not) carried. We will (will not) postpone this motion to the next meeting.”

If the motion to postpone fails, then the chapter would continue to discuss the motion on the floor.

## CHAPTER 28

### Subsidiary Motion

#### Postpone Indefinitely

**Purpose.** To kill the motion on the floor and avoid a direct vote on the question.

The motion to postpone indefinitely can be applied only to the main motion: therefore, it can be made when a main motion is immediately pending.

The motion to postpone indefinitely is the lowest ranking of the subsidiary motions; however, it cannot be referred to a committee. If the main motion to which it applies is referred, the motion to postpone indefinitely is ignored and does not accompany the main motion to the committee. However, other subsidiary motions can be applied to the main motion or postpone indefinitely where applicable.

**Pertinent Facts.** Postponing a motion indefinitely has these characteristics:

It may not interrupt a speaker.

A second is required.

It is debatable and the debate may go fully into the merits of the main motion.

It is not amendable.

A majority vote is required.

Only the affirmative vote can be reconsidered.

**Practice.** During discussion on a main motion, a member obtains the floor and states:

President: “What is the next item of business?”

- Member: “Mr. / Madam President” or “Mr. / Madam Chair”  
(Recognition)
- Member: “Mr. / Madam President, I move to postpone the motion ... indefinitely.”
- Member: “Mr. / Madam President, I second the motion.”
- President: “It has been moved and seconded to postpone indefinitely the motion .... It is debatable, not amendable, and requires a majority vote. The motion is now open for discussion.”  
(Discussion, if any)
- President: “Are you ready for the question? Those supporting the motion to postpone indefinitely the motion ... say ‘aye.’ Those opposed, say ‘no.’ The ayes (noes) have it; the motion carries (fails), and we will (will not) postpone indefinitely the motion ....”

If the motion to postpone indefinitely fails, the chapter would continue to discuss the motion on the floor.

## Chapter 29

### Incidental motion

#### Object to the Consideration of a Question

**Purpose.** The purpose of objecting to the consideration of a question is to enable an assembly to avoid considering an original main motion when it believes it would be strongly undesirable for the question to come before the meeting.

While an objection is pending, the main motion may be laid on the table. If this occurs, the objection is also tabled.

Members are asked to vote for or against consideration of the question objected to (not for or against sustaining the objection.). So, those who wish to prevent consideration of the question vote in the negative.

If an objection to consideration is sustained, the motion is dismissed for that session and cannot be renewed during the same session except by unanimous (general) consent or by reconsidering the vote

sustaining the objection. However, the same main motion can be introduced at any succeeded session.

**Pertinent Facts.** Objection to the consideration of a question has these characteristics:

It may interrupt a speaker.

A second is not required.

It is not debatable and not amendable.

A two-thirds vote against consideration sustains the objection.

Recognition is not necessary.

Only the negative vote (sustaining) can be reconsidered.

It may only be presented before any debate or any subsidiary motion except lay on the table has been stated by the chair.

**Practice.** After a motion is made and before it is opened to debate, a member states:

**Member:** “Mr. / Madam President” or “Mr. / Madam Chair, I object to the consideration of the question.”

**President:** “Object to consideration of the question has been called. It is undebatable, unamendable, and requires a two-thirds vote. Those supporting the consideration of the question please stand.” Then, “Those opposed to consideration of the question please stand. The vote is 25 for and 28 against, this not being a two-thirds negative vote we will consider the question.”

## Chapter 30

### Incidental Motion

#### Division of the Question

**Purpose.** The purpose of a division of the question is to permit a main motion or an amendment to be divided into two or more separate questions.

Division of the question assumes that the original motion is comprised of component parts that can stand as separate and distinct items of business, and that dividing the question is desirable for the purpose of discussion and action. It is preferable to divide a question immediately following its initial introduction.

Proposals containing parts that cannot be readily separated are not eligible for division of a question. For example, if, after separation, one or more of the subsequent question(s) failed, in effect, leaving the remaining motion(s) either irrelevant or illogical, it is not appropriate to divide the original question.

Pertinent Facts. Division of the question has these characteristics:

It may not interrupt a speaker.

A second is required.

It is undebatable.

It is amendable.

A majority vote is required.

It cannot be reconsidered.

Practice. A motion is made with two definite parts that can stand alone independently and, after debate begins, a member obtains the floor and states:

President: “What is the next item of business?”

Member: “Mr. / Madam President” or “Mr. / Madam Chair”  
(Recognition)

Member: “Mr. / Madam President, I move to divide the motion into two parts with the first part being ... and the second part being ....”

Member: “Mr. / Madam President, I second the motion.”

President: “It has been moved and seconded to divide the question into two parts with the first part being ... and the second part being .... This motion is undebatable, is amendable, and requires a majority vote. Are there any amendments? Those supporting the motion say ‘aye.’ Those opposed, say ‘no.’ The ayes have it, and the motion carries. We will divide the motion into two parts. The first motion to be considered is ....”



## Chapter 31

### Miscellaneous

#### **Adopting an Order of Business**

It is sometimes customary to adopt a program, or order of business, especially in conventions or sessions lasting more than one day. No change may be made in this order of business except by a two-thirds vote.

A motion to adopt a certain order of business is treated as a main motion. Adopting an order of business may be done by unanimous (general) consent. A majority vote is required for adoption when the question is put to the chapter.

If it is desired to transact business out of the adopted order, when an order of business has been adopted, it is necessary to suspend the rules, which requires a two-thirds vote.

Another method of transacting business out of the adopted order is to lay on the table each item as it arises until the desired item of business is reached.

If, at the previous meeting, an item of business was on the floor and the motion to adjourn passed before the pending business was voted upon, this item of business becomes unfinished business, and should be conducted in the part of the next meeting that deals with unfinished business.

An order of business will vary among chapters but in general the following items will be included in an inclusive order of business:

1. Opening ceremony
2. Minutes of previous meeting
3. Orders of the day
4. Officer reports (including the treasurer's report)
5. Report on chapter program of activities
6. Special features (such as guest speakers and other activities not specified elsewhere in the order of business)
7. Committee reports:
  - a. Standing

- b. Special
8. Unfinished business
9. New business (In a chapter conducting event, parliamentary problems would be included here.)
10. Degree and installation ceremonies
11. Closing ceremony
12. Entertainment, recreation, refreshments

When engaged in a chapter conducting event, those items in the order of business that are not essential to the event format may be omitted.

## **Committees**

Committees are usually either classified as *standing* or *special*.

The chair of a committee is usually responsible for calling committee meetings, but any two of a committee's members may call a meeting.

The rules for conducting business in committees differ somewhat from those of conducting business in a chapter meeting, unless the committee is a very large one. For example, it is not necessary for a member to rise and address the chair before making a motion or speaking. The chair does not rise to put the question or leave the chair to speak or present motions. In committee meetings, it is not necessary to second motions. These formalities are not essential because of the small size of most committees.

## **Committee Reports**

When committees have been charged with responsibility for investigating or reporting on a matter, their reports should close with a formal resolution pertaining to their recommendation(s). The chapter may then adopt or reject the recommendation(s).

If a report contains only information for the chapter members, there is no necessity for adopting the report. If this motion passes, the chapter assumes responsibility for the committee report. A copy of each committee report should be filed with the secretary.

## Treasurer's Report

A financial report from the treasurer is not acted upon by the chapter. Such a report is for information only. It will later be checked by an auditing committee that will present a report on which the chapter will act. For this reason, the chapter should not vote to accept the treasurer's report.

Following a report from the treasurer, the president should remark that it is for information of the members and will be referred to the auditing committee. A copy of the report should be filed with the auditing committee and with the secretary for their information.

A treasurer's report may be structured as follows:

<b>Treasurer's Report (Date)</b>	
Balance on hand at date of last report: .....	\$ _____
Receipts since last report:	
FFA Christmas card sale .....	\$ _____
FFA Dues .....	\$ _____
Total: .....	\$ _____
Disbursements since last report:	
FFA Banners from National FFA Organization .....	\$ _____
FFA Dues to State Office .....	\$ _____
Total: .....	\$ _____
Present balance: .....	\$ _
<hr/>	
Signature of Treasurer: _____	

## **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The reading of the minutes is usually requested by the president stating, “We will now have the minutes of the previous meeting.”

After the secretary has read the minutes, the president may ask, “Are there corrections or additions to the minutes?” After a pause, “If not, they stand approved as read.” (One tap of gavel follows this announcement.)

Following approval of the minutes, the president should then sign them. It is proper for the secretary to take the minutes to the president’s station for signing.

Minutes may be corrected at any time without reconsidering the vote approving them. They may also be corrected whenever an error is noticed regardless of the length of time that has elapsed.

Corrections are usually made informally by the chair directing the correction to be made. If an objection is made, a formal motion in the form of an amendment may be offered and voted on by the chapter.

Minutes of a meeting may be structured as follows:

Minutes

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the \_\_\_\_\_ FFA Chapter  
City \_\_\_\_\_, State \_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by  
the president, \_\_\_\_\_.

Roll: Thirty-three members were present.

Minutes: Minutes of the previous meeting were read and  
approved.

Treasurer’s report: The treasurer reported:

Balance on hand (Date) ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

FFA Dues received, 5 members ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total receipts ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Disbursements:

Refreshments ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Official FFA Manuals ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Balance on hand, (Date) ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Committee reports: (Name), chair of the Human Resources  
committee, reported that a program had been  
planned for the next meeting. (Name), chair of  
the Recruitment committee, reported that an  
FFA social would be held (Date). Further  
arrangements are being made.

Program: (Name), superintendent of schools, presented a  
very interesting presentation on the  
“Importance of Leadership Education in  
Citizenship Development.”

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m. Light  
refreshments were served following  
adjournment.

Signed: President \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: Secretary \_\_\_\_\_

(The president signs the minutes after their approval at the  
next meeting.)

## Suggested Lesson Plan

Regardless of location or local situation, the instructor should teach a unit on parliamentary procedure to the students. This content is addressed in the Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for each Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources (AFNR) course. After this unit is taught, it is recommended that the teacher prepare a chapter conducting team to participate in an FFA leadership development event (LDE).

When teaching parliamentary procedure for the first time, a teacher is confronted with motivating students to become interested in parliamentary procedure. This motivation may be done by explaining and demonstrating the uses and advantages of correct parliamentary law, and by using correct parliamentary procedure in chapter meetings. To assist in this purpose, civic leaders may be invited to speak to students on the importance of effectively presiding over group meetings. These leaders may also stress the importance of effective participation by members in meetings. Moreover, FFA members who plan to work toward higher degrees in the FFA are required to possess a working knowledge of parliamentary procedure.

Following a motivational and interest-building approach, the teacher should then begin the study of parliamentary law. This may follow a plan to study in detail those abilities listed in the *Parliamentary Guide for FFA*. The length of time spent studying and practicing should be only for so long as active interest can be maintained. Spending too much time on any specific ability can cause students to become discouraged and lose interest in the subject. Teaching and learning objectives for the lesson are:

1. develop an appreciation for parliamentary procedure;
2. develop the ability to use correct parliamentary procedure;
3. develop the ability to properly conduct and actively participate in a business session; and
4. develop the ability and desire to participate in an FFA parliamentary procedure event.

Introduction (**Engage**) and Interest Approach (**Explore & Explain**):

1. Have you ever attended a meeting where the group was trying to conduct business, yet having a difficult time doing so?

Describe the meeting. What was the major cause as to why business could not be transacted?

2. How does a working knowledge of parliamentary procedure help us to conduct a more efficient meeting? (**Elaborate**)

Possible Activities:

- a. Have the chapter president or other students speak to the class on the value and proper use of parliamentary law.
  - b. Have experienced students demonstrate the correct use of parliamentary abilities.
3. Now, we will use a sample parliamentary procedure problem to conduct a practice meeting. (**Evaluate**)

## **Glossary of Parliamentary Terms**

Abstain – to publicly refrain from voting

Adjourn – a privileged motion to close the meeting

Adjourn Sine Die – to adjourn a meeting without setting a date for a future meeting and often used to adjourn conventions where the next convention date has not been set; pronounced “sign die,” (literally, without day)

Agenda – a list, plan, outline, or the like, of things to be done, matters to be acted or voted upon as in organized meetings

Assembly – a group of persons gathered together, usually for a particular purpose, whether religious, political, educational, or social

Aye – a positive, affirmative vote, the positive side of a voice vote; pronounced “eye”

Ballot – a method of secret voting by means of printed or written ballots or by means of voting machines

Budget – an estimate, often itemized, of expected income and expense for a given period in the future

Business – (as it pertains to parliamentary law) the items that are listed on a group’s posted agenda or the items that are entertained by a group in an official meeting

Bylaws – specific rules that an organization adopts for itself that are extensions of the group’s constitution

Candidate – one who seeks an office

Carried / Carries – term that describes the passage of a motion

Charter – authorization from a central or parent organization to establish a new branch, chapter



Classes of Motions – there are 5 classes of motions

1. Privileged
2. Subsidiary
3. Main
4. Incidental, and
5. Motions that again bring a motion before the assembly.  
The first three classes are listed in order of importance or precedence (pronounced *pres-i-duhns*)

Con – to be on the negative side of an issue

Constitution – a set of rules in which a parent organization governs itself and all sub-groups of that organization

Convention – a group of delegates chosen to serve a body in a series of meetings for a single purpose

Debate – (as it applies to parliamentary law) the deliberation or consideration, either positive or negative, of an issue properly brought before a deliberative assembly

Decorum – the dignified propriety of behavior, speech, and dress

Delegate – a member of a group who represents that group as a representative or voting entity for that group

Deliberative Assembly – an organization composed of members who use parliamentary procedure to make decisions

Dilatory – tending to cause delay

Dispose of – (as it applies to parliamentary law) the removal of a motion from consideration by the assembly by voting to adopt, reject, postpone, refer, or to lay the motion on the table

Election – the selection of an individual or group by vote of the majority

Executive Board – the body of elected or appointed members who jointly oversee the activities of a company or organization

Floor – the term denoting the recognition of a member to speak: after a member has been recognized by the presiding officer, that member is said to have the *floor*, and retains the floor until he/she relinquishes the floor by sitting down; only the member who has the floor is entitled to make a motion or to speak (the exception is if the member is officially interrupted by another member in the proper manner)

Gavel – the symbol of authority in an official meeting that uses parliamentary law to govern its transaction of business

Germane – (as it applies to parliamentary law) a debate that is closely or significantly related, relevant, or pertinent to the motion on the floor at the time

Incidental Motions – motions that relate to the business of the group, or to past or future actions of the group

Majority Vote – at least one more than half the legal votes cast on an item of business in an official business meeting

Mass Meeting – a meeting that is held for a special reason by a group of people having a common interest

Minutes – the official record of the items of business that are transacted at any official meeting

Motion – an idea or proposal at a meeting that is presented to the group for their debate and then voted upon

Nay/No – a vote in the negative on any voice vote taken in an official meeting

Negative Vote – any vote that is against the motion being voted upon

Nominate – to present the name of a person or group to fill an office or position to the official body

Notice – the official posting that informs an assembly or group of an item of business that will be conducted at a meeting that will take place sometimes in the near future

Null and Void – no longer valid or enforceable

Order of Business – the adopted scheduled agenda that is presented to a group for their consideration

Parliamentarian – any person, appointed or elected, whose purpose is to advise the group on items dealing with the proper running of a meeting that uses parliamentary law as its rule base

Parliamentary procedure – a body of rules, ethics, and customs governing meetings and other operations of clubs, organizations, legislative bodies, and other deliberative assemblies

Plurality Vote – a type of vote that is used only when dealing with an election where there are multiple candidates and one candidate does not receive a majority, but has more votes than the other candidates

Precedence – (as it applies to parliamentary law) the rules of rank of the classes of motion and the priority of order that governs the order in which motions are proposed, considered, and disposed of

Presiding Officer – the officer or person conducting a meeting

Prevailing Side – the winning side of an outcome of a vote; may be either the positive or the negative side

Privileged Motions – motions that relate to special matters of overarching or immediate importance, and are allowed to interrupt items of business or discussion without debate

Quorum – the minimum number of members required to be present at a meeting to officially conduct business

Resignation – a formal notice, usually written, relinquishing an office or position

Speaker – (as it applies to parliamentary law) the person who has officially been given the floor

Special Committees – committees that are appointed for a particular purpose and that are dissolved once the committee has presented its final report with or without recommendations and the group has officially accepted or rejected those recommendations (no action is required by the group for this dissolution)

Standing Committees – permanent committees that should be listed in the by-laws of the group or entity, along with the length of committee members' terms (generally one year for FFA standing committees)

Standing Rules – rules that affect the governing of the everyday running of a group rather than parliamentary law, usually dealing with time, date and place of meetings, amount of annual dues, etc.

Subsidiary Motions – motions offered to assist a group with the process of disposing of main motions

Sustain – to uphold the ruling of the presiding officer

Unanimous General Consent – the adoption (passage) of a motion or referendum without any dissent, negative comment, or vote; usually by voice request: "Shall we, by unanimous general consent accept the motion as presented? There being no objection, the motion carries (passes)."

Unfinished Business – business that was on the agenda but was not completed at the last meeting, unless it was made a special order; generally taken care of at the next meeting before opening the current meeting's new business (most groups have a line item labeled old or unfinished business in the order of business)

## Acknowledgements

### **Workgroup for Gray's Guide to Parliamentary Procedure for FFA, 4<sup>th</sup> edition**

Darren Cosby, Anderson-Shiro CISD

Dr. Kirk C. Edney, TAMU

Todd Gregory, Klondike ISD

Katlin Keppler, TAMU

Dr. Dwayne Pavelock, SHSU

Vangie Stice-Israel, Fable Communications, Sapulpa, OK

Bill Treptow, Weimar, TX

Rod Vincent, Bellville ISD

Joyce Wilkerson, TAMU

Gerald Young, Katy, TX

Sincere appreciation is extended to Dr. M. Craig Edwards for directing the 2004 revisions to the Guide.

Appreciation is extended to

Gerald Young for directing, and to Paul Booth, Jim Connors, Daniel Foster, and Kirk Overbey for reviewing the 2015 revisions to the Guide