



# Parliamentary Procedure

## *GFWC Club Manual / Club Management*

GFWC strives to ensure that all members have the privilege of voicing their opinions. As such, the organization has adopted the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* as the official parliamentary authority.

Leaders at all levels are encouraged to follow basic parliamentary procedure when conducting Federation business. The International President appoints a parliamentarian to serve the organization during each two-year term of office. Clubs, districts, State Federations, and regions are encouraged to do the same. If needed, the GFWC Parliamentarian is available to assist members and clubs with issues of procedure and process so that the rights of all members are protected.

The following information is intended to serve as a quick and easy reference to some of the most basic and frequently used procedures. For a comprehensive guide, refer to *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*.

### **MOTIONS**

#### *Steps to a Motion*

- 1) A member seeks recognition for the floor ("Madam President")
- 2) Presiding officer recognizes the member (member obtains the floor)
- 3) Member makes a motion ("I move that...")
- 4) Another member seconds the motion, when appropriate
- 5) Presiding officer states the question
- 6) Debate (amendment and secondary motions)
- 7) Presiding officer puts the question to a vote
- 8) Presiding officer announces the result of the vote

#### *Amendments to Motions*

A motion may be amended by any of the following:

- To insert
- To add (only at the end)
- To strike out

- To strike out and insert
- To substitute

### *Acting on Amendments*

- When a motion is amended, the amendment then becomes the pending motion and must be acted upon first. An amendment may also be amended. Remember to work backward when taking the vote. Following is the order that amendments should be considered. Examples appear in parentheses.
- Amendment to the amendment (motion to amend by striking \$300 and inserting \$100)
- Amendment to the main motion (motion to amend by striking \$500 and inserting \$300)
- Main motion (motion to donate \$500 to a shelter)

### *Methods of Voting*

- Voice: verbal “aye” or “no”
- Division: Standing vote
- Roll Call: “yea” or “nay” upon name call
- Ballot: Written secret vote
- Unanimous Consent: members show agreement by voicing no objection

## **PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING A MAIN MOTION**

### **I. Obtaining and Assigning the Floor**

- A) A member rises when no one else has the floor and addresses the chair (Madam President, Madam Chairman, or other proper title.)
  - 1) In a large assembly (e.g., convention), the member gives her name and identification.
  - 2) The member remains standing and awaits recognition by the chair.
- B) The chair recognizes the member by name or title, or in a small assembly by nodding to the member.

### **II. How the Motion is Brought Before the Assembly**

- A) A member makes the motion, “I move that (or to)...,” and is seated.
- B) Another member, without rising, seconds the motion: “I second the motion,” or “I second it,” or even “second.”
- C) The chair states the question on the motion: “It is moved and seconded that (or to) [state motion]. Are you ready for the question?”

### **III. Consideration of The Motion**

- A) Members debate the motion.

- 1) Before speaking in debate, members obtain the floor (see I, above).
  - 2) The maker of the motion has first right to the floor if claimed promptly.
  - 3) All remarks must be addressed to the chair.
  - 4) Debate must be confined to the merits of the pending motion.
  - 5) Debate can be closed only by order of the assembly (2/3 vote) or by the chair if no one seeks the floor for further debate.
- B) The chair puts the question (puts the motion to a vote).
- 1) The chair asks: “Are you ready for the question?” If no one rises to claim the floor, the chair proceeds to take the vote.
  - 2) The chair says:
    - “The question is on the motion that (to) [state the motion].
    - Those on favor of the motion say aye. (Pause for response.)
    - Those opposed, say no. (Pause for response.)”
- C) The Chair announces the result of the vote.
- 1) First, report which side is more numerous: “The ayes have it” or “The noes have it.”
  - 2) Then, declare the result: “The motion is adopted” or “The motion is lost.”
  - 3) Give a statement indicating the effect of the vote or ordering its execution.
  - 4) Make the announcement: “The next item of business is...” Or, ask the question: “Is there further new business?”

## **PRIVILEGED, SUBSIDIARY, AND MAIN MOTIONS**

**Privileged Motions** relate to the rights or privileges of the organization or its individual members, rather than to particular items of business. They are of such urgency that they are entitled to immediate consideration.

**Subsidiary Motions** may be applied to another motion for the purpose of modifying it, delaying action on it, handling its consideration, or disposing of it.

**Main Motions** are the basis of all parliamentary procedure and bring business before the assembly for consideration and action. They may be introduced only when no other business is pending.

The chart below lists privileged and subsidiary motions in order of precedence (or ranking order), assuming that a main motion is pending. Several of these motions may also be made when no business is pending, in which case they are main motions.

Name of Motion	Privileged (generally)	May interrupt when another is speaking	Requires a second	Debatable	Amendable	Vote required for adoption	May be reconsidered
<b>Fix the Time in Which to Adjourn</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	Yes
<b>Adjourn</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
<b>Recess</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
<b>Raise a Question of Privilege</b>	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Chair handles	No
<b>Call for the Orders of the Day</b>	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Chair handles	No
<b>Lay on the Table</b>	No	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	Neg. Only
<b>Previous Question</b>	No	No	Yes	No	No	2/3	Yes
<b>Limit or Extend Limits of Debate</b>	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	2/3	Yes
<b>Postpone to a Certain Time (Postpone Definitely)</b>	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
<b>Commit (Refer to Committee)</b>	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
<b>Amend</b>	No	No	Yes	Yes*	Yes	Majority	Yes
<b>Postpone Indefinitely</b>	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	Aff. Only
<b>Main Motion</b>	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes

## INCIDENTAL AND “BRING-BACK” MOTIONS

**Incidental Motions** are made in response to a variety of situations that may arise during the consideration of a pending question. They must be resolved before business can continue. They have no rank.

**Bring-Back Motions** (also called Restorative Motions) return a question to the assembly for further consideration and action.

The chart below lists those incidental and bring-back motions that are used most often.

Name of Motion	May interrupt when another is speaking	Requires a second	Debatable	Amendable	Vote required for adoption	May be reconsidered
<b>Point of Order</b>	Yes	No	No	No	Chair handles	No
<b>Appeal From a Decision of the Chair</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes (usually)	No	Majority against to reverse	Yes
<b>Suspend the Rules</b>	No	Yes	No	No	2/3	No
<b>Objection to</b>	Is in order if	No	No	No	2/3 negative, to	Neg. Only

<b>Name of Motion</b>	<b>May interrupt when another is speaking</b>	<b>Requires a second</b>	<b>Debatable</b>	<b>Amendable</b>	<b>Vote required for adoption</b>	<b>May be reconsidered</b>
<b>Consideration of Question</b>	another has the floor, but has not begun to speak				sustain objection	
<b>Division of a Question</b>	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
<b>Consideration by Paragraph or Seriatim</b>	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
<b>Division of the Assembly (I)</b>	Yes	No	No	No	Chair Handles	No
<b>Parliamentary Inquiry</b>	Yes	No	No	No	Chair Handles	No
<b>Point of Information</b>	Yes	No	No	No	Chair Handles	No
<b>Take from the Table</b>	No	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
<b>Rescind/Amend Something Previously Adopted</b>	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3	Neg. Only
<b>Reconsider</b>	See objection to consideration, above	Yes	Yes*	No	Majority	No

## SUBSIDIARY MOTION TO AMEND

The subsidiary motion to amend (or primary amendment) is a motion to change the wording or even the meaning of a pending motion, before the pending motion is acted upon.

- It must be germane to the pending motion. If in doubt, the presiding officer can ask the assembly to decide.
- It can be applied to any main motion
- It can be applied to any motion that has a variable factor.
- It must be seconded.
- It is debatable, *whenever the motion to which it applies is debatable*. Debate must be confined to the merits (or desirability) of the proposed amendment.
- It can itself be amended, thus creating an amendment to an amendment (a secondary amendment).
- Only one primary and one secondary amendment are permitted at a time; an amendment of the third degree is not allowed.
- It requires only a majority vote.
- It can be reconsidered.

<b>Primary Amendment</b>		<b>Secondary Amendment</b>
<b>Insert or Add</b> <i>first process</i>	a word or words	can use any process(es): <i>insert</i> or <i>add</i> ; <i>strike out</i> ; <i>strike out and insert</i>
	a paragraph	can use any process(es)
<b>Strike Out</b> <i>second process</i>	a single word	cannot be amended
	certain words	strike out only
	a paragraph	can perfect the paragraph, can use any process(es)
<b>Strike Out and Insert</b> <i>Third process</i>	a word or words	if only one word, cannot be amended; if more than one word, strike out only
	Two steps: Step one: strike out Step two: insert Chair has the option to reverse these steps	a paragraph

## RESOURCES

### *Books*

*Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* ("RONR"), 10th Edition (2000)

Highly recommend getting a spiral bound version and tab the most relevant portions.

*Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised in Brief* (2004)

This is a short, simple book (approximately one-fourth the size of RONR) that covers the essentials on the rules most frequently used at meetings. It will give you the appropriate wording to use, and has reference tables in the back of the book.

*Robert's Rules for Dummies* by C. Alan Jennings (2004)

Topics include common preparation and meeting tasks, such as creating agendas; recording and preparing minutes; handling disciplinary problems; avoiding common meeting mistakes.

*The Complete Idiot's Guide to Robert's Rules* by Nancy Sylvester (2004)

This book presents various topics in five sections: basic concepts and benefits; how to use motions to present, discuss, and decide on possible courses of action; a deeper look at different types of motions and how they are used; successful meeting strategies; and how officers and committees do their work.

All books are available in an electronic format for e-readers, such as the Kindle or the NOOK.

### *Websites*

[www.Parliamentarians.org](http://www.Parliamentarians.org)

This is the website of the National Association of Parliamentarians.

[www.RulesOnline.Com](http://www.RulesOnline.Com)

[www.ParliPro.org](http://www.ParliPro.org)

*Information courtesy of 2010-2012 GFWC Parliamentarian Ida Dorvee*