

Effective Meetings



ZONTA
INTERNATIONAL

DISTRICT 11

EMPOWERING WOMEN
THROUGH SERVICE & ADVOCACY

INTRODUCTION TO EFFECTIVE CLUB MEETING MANAGEMENT

Zonta clubs vary widely as to cultural norms, managerial experience of its members, the number of members in the club, and their languages spoken. As it is easier to have discussions and make tough good decisions when everyone knows and abides by the rules, this document should be considered a useful guide for establishing the framework for conducting effective club meetings. This document and the Zonta Club Manual are intended for use in combination with, and not as a substitute for, the Zonta International Governing Documents.

To have effective club meetings, club members must respect the rights of other members to their own quiet judgment on issues, activities and projects. Club decisions should be based on consideration of the facts rather than on the skill of speakers or on an opinion of how others might vote. Club members should not use any form of personal criticism or ridicule to persuade another member. A member may criticize an idea but should never criticize a fellow member. A member must never interject or interfere with another member's right to an uninterrupted floor when speaking, except as allowed under a point of order. The president should insist that this rule be followed.

New club members and officers alike should ask for assistance with practicing efficient meeting management. Club members should let it be known when they appreciate help. Ask members to call out if they can't hear you and to gently remind you if you forget something. Ask members to confidently give you copy of the rules of order in which they have highlighted the points you most need to "review." Club members can study the bylaws, standing rules, and rules of order as a group or get tips from club members with demonstrated experience in managing effective meetings.

Parliamentary Authority

Effective meetings have structure and good order. Robert's Rules of Order is recognized as the standard for facilitating discussions and group decision-making. The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order newly revised (RONR) shall govern the club in all cases in which they are not inconsistent with club bylaws or bylaws of Zonta International. Please note that the ZI Bylaws and Rules of Procedure take precedence over all other Zonta documents, and over RONR and other adopted parliamentary authorities. During club meeting discussions, a point of order may be raised if the rules of parliamentary procedure appear to have been broken. A point of order may interrupt a speaker during debate, or anything else if the breach of the rules warrants it. The point is resolved before business continues.

Members must discuss only one topic or motion at a time. If necessary, the president should interrupt a speaker to insist that this rule be obeyed. A member must not take more than a fair share of floor time nor speak more than once on a motion until all others who wish to do so have had a turn. Exceptions may occur, however, with new information or a series of questions and answers involving useful facts. If necessary, clubs could have a standing rule limiting each speaker's time and appoint a timekeeper to enforce it.

The Role of Club Officers

A good team of officers is important to the efficient running of a club. The following provides brief descriptions of the role of the required officers; however, all officers and club members should be familiar with their expected participation requirements to ensure a sustainable club. Each officer should be familiar with club, district, and international bylaws, and policies (summarized in this document). The responsibilities in each club are different; you should use this information as a guide and refer to your club bylaws and the ZI club manual for official policy and procedures.

President's (or meeting chairman) Responsibilities

- Present club board recommendations to the club at its next business meeting.
- Preside at all meetings of the club and of the board and shall be the chief executive officer of the club.
- Prepare an agenda in advance to establish the planned order of business. Allow time for postponed business and anticipate potential parliamentary problems.
- Call the meeting to order, establishing a pattern of starting on time.
- Establish the presence of a quorum before proceeding. In the absence of a quorum, business requiring a vote should be postponed. If urgent action is required, the action must be ratified by a quorum at the next meeting.
- Distribute the agenda before requesting agenda approval.
- Announce meeting business in proper sequence.
- Announce the result of the vote.
- Always take both sides of the vote except in a courtesy resolution when a negative vote is not requested. (be impartial)
- State which side (affirmative or negative) received the most votes.
- Declare the motion “adopted” or “lost.”
- State the effect of the vote (what action is to be taken). If necessary, order execution of the action.
- Announce the next item of business.
- Ensure adherence to the rules relating to debate and decorum.
- Recognize members entitled to the floor.
- When recognizing, identify participants where possible.
- Pay attention to the discussions.
- Ensure that members' remarks are directed to the presiding officer.
- Confine discussion to the pending question. Discussion must relate to, and be relevant to, the pending motion.
- Be courteous to everyone, a priority in parliamentary procedure.
- Expedite business efficiently.
- Conduct the order of business according to the agenda and established time limits.
- Maintain control of the proceedings.
- Assist with proper wording of motions. The proposer should state the motion fully. If there is a question on the motion, ask the intent of the proposer.
- Decide on questions of order.
- Rule as to whether the point of order is legitimate and meeting action correct. If in doubt, consult the parliamentarian or the judgment of the members. Any two members may appeal the decision of the presiding officer.
- Respond to questions involving parliamentary procedure. A parliamentary inquiry is a

question directed to the presiding officer to obtain information on a matter of parliamentary procedure.

- A point of information is a request directed to the presiding officer, or through the presiding officer to another member, for information relating to the business at hand. The presiding officer must not allow this device to be used as a strategy to further discuss the motion.

The Recording Secretary Responsibilities

- Attend meetings of the club and club board and keep a record (the minutes) of all proceedings, stating without personal comment what was discussed, acted upon, and the rationale.
- Bring the following items to all meetings:
 - A copy of the agenda including unfinished business from previous meetings.
 - The minutes of club and board meetings for the last year
 - A policy book - in order to maintain easy access to the motions that set policy for the club, it is recommended that the club keep a policy book, divided by topics: service, finance, committees, public relations, etc. Decisions relating to specific topics are recorded in the relevant section with a notation of the date of the decision.
 - Prepare draft minutes for the president to review. Distribute the minutes in advance and of the next meeting and record corrections.
 - Keep proceedings of club board meetings privileged to the club board, but provide a summary report on club board actions to the club members. Maintain the following files:
 - Minutes of meetings: Note: New clubs send the minutes of their club and board meetings to the SOM (Sponsoring, Organizing and Mentoring) chairman, area director and the governor for at least one year after their charter date.
 - Policy book
 - Club newsletters
 - Area director's and governor's newsletters
 - *The Zontian* magazines

Corresponding Secretary Responsibilities

If a corresponding Secretary is elected, the following could be the responsibilities given.

Otherwise, these duties are the responsibilities of the secretary (recording) as well:

- Bring updated membership, officer and committee lists, and paper for ballot votes to all meetings.
- Keep a record of all members' attendance at meetings (if applicable)

Treasurer Responsibilities

- Submit financial reports to the club and its board as required, and a written report of the club's annual financial position at the annual meeting.
- Prepare and present a report at the annual meeting.
- Make monthly reports to the board and the club and be ex-officio a member of the Finance Committee.

Meeting Requirements

Regular meetings of the club shall be held each month unless otherwise ordered by the club board. Under exceptional circumstances, regular clubs can hold meetings through the use of electronic communication. E-clubs may hold their meetings through the use of electronic communication.

The meeting in March, April or May and may be known as the annual meeting and shall be for the purpose of receiving reports of officers, the club board, committees and for any other business that may arise.

Special meetings may be called by the president and shall be called upon the written request of five (5) members of the club. At least ten (10) days' notice of a special meeting shall be given. The business to be transacted at a special meeting shall be limited to that mentioned in the meeting notice.

The quorum shall be determined by vote of the club provided that no less than one-fourth (1/4) of the members shall constitute a quorum at any regular or special meetings of the club.

CONDUCTING ZONTA MEETINGS

The following guidelines can form the rules of order for the club and can be used to referee activities when needed. Club members should agree that we all belong to the same organization, with a common purpose. Club members can have widely differing views and still work together for a common good without dividing into opposing sides, each trying to get its own way. The club must establish rules of order (established by the standing rules and bylaws) to govern their meetings. Club members also agree rules of order are automatically overruled when other laws (ZI, club or government) apply.

Sharing the decision-making process in meetings is often a learned process that often reflects the formal or informal culture of the club.

Club size often determines the level of formality required to efficiently run a meeting. In large club meetings and formal settings, the president cannot make a motion, must avoid showing bias, be impartial, refrain from expressing personal opinions, and should not participate in discussions except to guide it in an orderly fashion. In small clubs or less formal meetings, members may have a standing rule or custom permitting the president to participate in discussions with the same privileges as other members.

Whether formal or informal, effective meetings are characterized by members seeking the best answers together, not sides debating or insisting to have their own viewpoints and positions adopted. With some ground rules in place, club meetings can run smoothly although some modifications to formal rules might be appropriate to make them conform to the needs of the club and its members. Given a quorum, compliance with bylaws and regulations, the will of the majority of members present and voting at any meeting is the final authority for the club.

Rights and Responsibilities

The bylaws of the club are designed to address its structure and processes: the number of officers, their duties, how they are elected, the term of office, and removal from office etc. Organizations need a minimum of two officers: a president and a secretary. The president presides at the meeting, and the secretary records the transactions of the meeting in the minutes. When members become officers, they still retain all the rights that they had as regular members: the right to make motions, to debate, and to vote. However, in a formal

organizational structure, the president does not vote except in three situations: 1) if the president's vote would break a tie vote; 2) if the president's vote would create a tie vote; or 3) if the vote is taken by ballot.

A Member has the right and responsibility to:

- Attend club and relevant committee meetings and participate in the proceedings.
- Give proper notice of absence.
- Be familiar with club bylaws and parliamentary procedure.
- Understand the fundamentals of parliamentary procedure.
- Abide by the rulings of the chair without debate except when a point of order is made.
- Participate actively in meetings and deliberations and accept majority decisions.
- Expect member rights to be upheld by the chairman.
- Propose motions.
- Debate issues.
- Seek clarification.
- Vote.
- Recommend action and change needed for progress.
- Provide any report in writing and deliver to the secretary for the records.
- Ensure tasks are completed.

The President or chairman has the responsibility to conduct the meeting in an efficient, courteous manner and to maintain order by requesting participants to participate as follows:

- Adhere to bylaws and rules.
- Follow an established order of business (agenda).
- Use parliamentary procedure.
- Address all remarks through the chair.
- Follow legitimate orders from the chair. Members must abide by the rulings of the chair without debate except when a point of order is made.
- Refrain from disturbing others or interrupting the speaker.
- Accept the will of the majority.
- Act with decorum at all times.

The president demonstrates leadership while presiding at meetings through the tone, focus, actions, control and efficient operations. Although the president's authority is limited to the things that are assigned to that office by the bylaws, their influence and abilities are demonstrated through the administrative duties invested in committees and the legislative power vested in the executive board.

The key duties of the president are to keep order, be fair and impartial and to protect the rights of all the members. To keep order in a meeting, the president should be thoroughly familiar with the ZI and club bylaws, parliamentary procedure and the club's selected parliamentary authority.

The president and the secretary should prepare the agenda together. The president should be familiar with any unfinished business and any new business that must appear on the agenda.

When some proposed business is controversial, the president can plan ahead for problems that may arise during the meeting and consult with a parliamentarian beforehand to learn how to handle the situation.

CONDUCTING CLUB BUSINESS

Meeting planners should know answers to the 5 W's for every meeting – why (reason), what (type of event), where (venue), when (date), and who (attendees) – and share the information with all appropriate individuals (this can be simply informing attendees or developing a comprehensive all-out marketing and public relations plan). Meeting planners must know the budget parameters, be aware of any competitive or political sensitivity and meet all relevant deadlines and timelines. Efficient meeting planners make use of notes, histories, resources and information from previous meetings to understand what went well and what didn't. They also must know what should be changed this time around to improve the experience for the attendees. Following are some topics essential to understanding how to conduct an effective meeting.

Order of Business/Agenda

The agenda or order of business is the sequence of subjects to be considered at a meeting. The president should announce all business in the proper sequence and entertain every motion that is in order. The agenda should be made known to members beforehand. The agenda can be changed by the members any time during the meeting except when another motion is on the floor. The agenda change must be voted on if one or more members object.

Quorum

- The quorum, normally set in the club bylaws, is the minimum number of voting members who must be present for business to be transacted legally.
- In the absence of a quorum, business requiring a vote is postponed.
- The Zonta International Bylaws require that a quorum for club meetings be at least one-fourth of the members, and that the quorum for club board meetings is a majority of the members of the board.

Motion

A motion (with few exceptions) requires six (6) steps

1. A member stands up, is recognized and makes a motion

Member: "I move" followed by the statement of the motion

2. Another member seconds the motion.

3. The president restates the motion to the club (and provides reference to the agenda item)

4. The members debate the motion

5. The president asks for affirmative votes and then the negative votes and abstentions.

6. The president announces the result of the voting; instructs the corresponding officer to take action; and introduces the next item of business

Important Voting Terms

- **Majority Vote:** Over 50 percent in favor, i.e. more than half of the votes cast by those present and legally entitled to vote.
- **Two-Thirds Vote:** At least two-thirds of the votes cast by those present and legally entitled to vote.
- **Plurality Vote:** Highest number of votes for any candidate or proposition when three or more choices are possible. Candidate or proposition receiving the most votes has a plurality.
- **Unanimous Consent:** Action taken without all the formal steps to process a motion; requires presence of a quorum.
- **General Consent:** Can be used: (Wording: “If there is no objection, the motion to be adopted.” (Pause.) “Hearing no objection...”)
 - Where there seems to be no opposition to routine business or on questions of little importance
 - To adjourn, when it appears there is no further business
 - To correct the minutes, when there is no objection to the corrections being offered
 - For amendments, when they are simple amendments and obviously acceptable.

Possible Meeting Sequence

- Call the meeting to order on time and welcome attendees
- Approval of the agenda
- Review and approval of minutes of previous meeting, asking for “corrections” and including all changes. Until approved, the minutes constitute a draft document.
- If desired, and especially if extensive, Committee reports, minutes and treasurers reports (anything non-controversial) may be grouped into a Consent Agenda to expedite a meeting
- Correspondence
- Business arising from the minutes or unfinished business
- Unfinished business is usually listed on the agenda for action. It generally covers only items postponed or incomplete from the previous meeting or items postponed to a later time within the current meeting.
- Reports of club board, treasurer and standing committees
- Committee Reports- If standing committees are to give reports, the president should call these committee members prior to the meeting to see if they have a report to give. At the meeting, the president should call on only those people who have indicated in advance that they have reports. A recommendation contained within a committee report may be moved for adoption at the end of the report.
- New business on the agenda
- Introduction of new substantive material usually on the agenda.
- Any other business and general discussion
- Guest speaker
- Announcements/date of next meeting
- Closing

A consent agenda is a meeting practice which packages routine committee reports, Meeting minutes, and other non-controversial items not requiring discussion or independent action as one agenda item. This can save precious meeting time by allowing the Members to approve this 'package' of items together in one motion. Reports and information can be grouped together under a consent agenda only if all members agree. If only one member selects a specific item for discussion, it must be removed and placed on the regular Board meeting agenda. Depending upon the organization, a few minutes up to a half hour can be freed up for more substantial discussion on those items requiring strategic thought, decision making or action.

Election of Members of the Nomination Committee

- Election of members to the nominating committee may take place at the election meeting, allowing the nominating committee a full year to identify future office bearers.
- A club officer or director generally should not also be a member of this committee.
- Report the slate of officers, directors and, if desired, the candidates for the nominating committee, before the election meeting.

Club Elections

- Election for the club board shall be held in the month specified in the club bylaws.
- At the election, additional nominations may be made from the floor, provided the nominee is qualified and has consented to serve.
- If a club is using a parliamentary authority such as Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, the same person may be nominated for more than one office even if voting for all offices is to take place simultaneously. A member elected to more than one office may choose the preferred position. A new election is held for the unfilled office after the announcement of the results of the first election. This new election should take place immediately.
- The president calls for the nominating committee report, which is usually read by the chairman and handed to the president. The president repeats the names of the nominees and asks if there are any nominations from the floor for each office. After all names are placed in nomination, the president declares the nominations closed.
- If there is only one nominee for each position, and the club bylaws allow it, a voice vote may be taken on each officer position, director grouping and nominating committee grouping (optional). The membership may also choose to adopt the entire slate at one time by voice vote.
- The president informs the membership of the procedure for casting ballots, repeats the list of nominees for each position and the vote required for their election, and declares polls open.
- The tellers distribute, count and report on ballots at the direction of the presiding officer.
- After the president determines that all eligible members who wish to vote have done so, the president declares the polls closed and asks the tellers to count the votes.
- If voting is by ballot, the business of the meeting may continue while the tellers count the ballots outside the meeting room.
- When the count has been completed, the tellers prepare a report and their chairman informs the president of its completion.
- When called upon by the president, the chairman of the tellers reads the tellers' report including the number of votes received by each candidate (see example below from the ZI Club Manual):

- Sample Tellers' Report:
 - Number of votes cast for (office) 30
 - Necessary for election 16
 - Candidate (name) received 19
 - Candidate (name) received 10
 - Candidate (name) received 1
 - Illegal votes 0

(Tellers' signatures)

- The report is submitted to the president who rereads the results on each position and declares the result for that office.
- Where a candidate has a majority, the president declares that candidate elected. Where no candidate has a majority, the president announces "no election."
- In election by plurality, the president declares elected, in descending order, the number to be elected who received the highest number of votes. After the tellers' report for all offices has been read and elections declared, the president directs new ballots be distributed for the "no election" position(s), and a second balloting takes place following the same procedure until election is declared.
- The tellers' report is entered into the minutes, and the president may ask for general consent to destroy the ballots at the adjournment of the meeting. Otherwise, ballots may be kept for a period of 3 months and then destroyed.
- Newly elected members of the club board take office on 1 June. Installation may take place before or after this date

CLUB ADMINISTRATION

Club members should become familiar with the records, documents, policies, and procedures essential to maintain operating consistency from year to year despite changes in club leadership and membership.

Contents of Minutes

The secretary should include the following in the minutes of a meeting:

- The type of meeting, date, time and place.
- The name of the organization.
- The names of the presiding officer and the secretary or the names of any substitute.
- That a quorum was present.
- That previous minutes were read and approved or approved with corrections.
- Those specific reports were presented, including the name of the presenter, any action taken on the report and a reference to a file where the report may be found.
- The name of the mover of each main motion and the exact text of each main motion. The names of seconders are not included in the minutes.
- The disposition of each main motion, including any amendments and whether the motion was adopted, defeated, postponed, referred to a committee or otherwise handled.
- Notices of motions to be introduced at future meetings.

- Points of order and any rulings that set precedents for future meetings.
- The time of adjournment/closure.
- The signature of the recording secretary.

Parliamentary Procedures

Parliamentary procedures form a consistent set of rules that govern voting assemblies in a way that promotes justice and order. The rules are intended to protect the rights of the individual, the minority, the majority, the absentee and the organization.

The parliamentary authority for Zonta International is the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*. Each club shall adopt a recognized parliamentary authority used in its country. An overview of some common and relevant procedures is conveniently summarized in this document for convenience of club members. For additional information, a copy of the parliamentary authority used by the club should be available for reference at club meetings.

A club parliamentarian may be designated to advise the president or other members of the group on request. The role of parliamentarian is purely an advisory and consultative one since parliamentary law gives the president alone the power to rule on questions of order or to answer parliamentary inquires. The president takes account of the advice but makes the final ruling. The parliamentarian can only speak to the club if the president makes such a request.

The presiding officer always refers to himself or herself in the third person when talking to the members. For example, the presiding officer may say,

President: "The chair rules the discussion is out of order at this time".

If possible, the president sits down when a member is assigned the floor. If there is no place to sit, or if members can't see the president when he or she is seated, the president stands back from the lectern.

Sometimes decisions are made by consensus in which the president says,

President: "If there are no objections then [the decision is described],"

but otherwise all decisions are made with motions or resolutions in which a member says

Member: "I move [that some action be taken]."

Before any motion can be considered it must be seconded by another member; this prevents time being spent discussing an idea that has little chance of approval.

A member may, any time before the motion has been voted on, move to postpone the motion on the floor (including any amendments passed) to an indefinite or a specific future occasion or to refer it to a standing or ad hoc committee for further study. A member believing that consideration of a particular motion would be unwise could move "that we postpone the motion indefinitely." If the motion to postpone indefinitely is seconded and passed, then that particular motion cannot be discussed further at that meeting. It can be brought up at subsequent meeting. A motion cannot be postponed permanently, because one meeting cannot bind a future meeting.

A member who believes that a law or the meeting's good order is being breached may rise at any time and say,

Member: "Madam President, point of order."

The president should immediately acknowledge this member, who should then briefly explain why he or she believes a law or good order is being breached. The president then rules on the point, either correcting the situation or explaining why it is in order. If the president declares that the situation is in order, the member may exercise one last option by rising and saying:

Member: "Madam President, I request a vote on this point of order."

First the member and then the chair briefly explain their reasons. Then with little or no further discussion, the chair calls for a vote, saying

President: “All who believe that [this action] conforms to our rules [or good order], please say ‘yes’ [or raise a hand]” (pause), “Those who disagree, please say ‘no’ [or raise a hand].”

The president and the member raising the point of order must abide by this vote. Member’s right to speak is essential for efficient meetings. Every member has a right to speak once to a motion but in large meetings a motion limiting speaker's times could be passed. The president should not normally accept a motion to “vote now” if members who have not yet spoken are waiting to do so. However, if arguments on both sides of the question have been fairly presented and good order is being jeopardized by discussions becoming repetitive, the president should accept such a motion.

When all members who wish to speak have done so on the topic, the president should call for a vote. Unless a larger majority is required (according to bylaws), a decision is made (the motion is passed) when a quorum is present and more than half the votes are affirmative.

After the members have decided to vote, either by general consensus or by passing a motion to vote, the president or the secretary should read out the motion again, and the president should make sure that all members understand it.

Calling for a vote is sometimes necessary. Members who believe discussion is complete sometimes call out

Member: “question,”

or the chair might ask

President: “Are you ready to vote?”

The response from the group is a guide for the chair only and does not force a vote. A member can move that “we delay the vote for more discussion” or that “we vote now.” Such a motion needs seconding and should be voted on with little or no discussion.

Custom, bylaws or a standing rule usually determines how votes are taken. Voting options include, vote by voice, by show of hands, voting cards, standing, secret ballot, and or roll call. A member who believes that there has been a miscount can ask—or, if necessary, move—“that we repeat the count with a standing [or ballot] vote.” If this motion is seconded and passed, then the vote must be taken again. Motions can be made requiring that a vote be by ballot, that the counted ballots be destroyed, that the number of votes for and against be announced, or any other decisions the members wish to make. Members must be present to vote, unless a bylaw specifically allows proxy or absent voting. A member who would personally benefit from a decision may participate in the discussion but should voluntarily refrain from voting. A tie vote means the motion has not passed. Members might wish to reconsider it immediately or at a subsequent meeting at some future time. In some organizations, a bylaw gives the president an extra vote to break a tie.

The president must represent all the members, not a select few and not just those who share their views. Sometimes it may be a challenge to keep control of the meeting, manage the debate and remember all relevant facts - pros and cons – that result from the discussion so that the club can make an informed decision. No member should feel that the president takes sides. Club members must trust the president to allow the club to arrive at the will of the majority. To ensure fairness and impartiality, the president adheres to the following rules:

The president rules out of order all motions that conflict with the parliamentary rules, bylaws or violate local, state, or national government. The president should rule it out of order and then explain the proper procedure that helps the members accomplish their goals.

The president protects the club from problem, frivolous or dilatory motions (undemocratic ways of delaying business) and from any attempt by members to push an action through without following the democratic process. When parliamentary options are not successful, the president should expect pressure and reaction from club members, who expect everyone to work together for the common good of the club. Examples of problematic, unruly and disruptive activities include the following:

- A member calling for a division when it is very clear which side has won, or calling for a division after every vote that is taken. In a very formal organizational setting, a division is a voting method in which some members stand up or go to different areas of the room, literally dividing into groups indicating a vote in favor of or in opposition to a motion on the floor.
- A member filibustering, speaking too long, after repeated requests to limit their speeches.
- A member continually making the motion to adjourn for the purpose of obstructing business.
- A member making absurd motions or amendments.
- Several members raising points of order for no reason.

If members are using dilatory practices to obstruct the meeting, the chair needs to remain calm and courteous, but firm. The chair can do one of two things: not recognize the members or rule the motions out of order. However, the chair must not do either of these two things just to speed up a meeting. These are strictly measures to take if a member is clearly being dilatory. The president's duty is to serve the wishes of the entire assembly, and he or she should not allow any personal feelings to affect his or her judgment.

The president can give information, correct misinformation, and help members with parliamentary procedures. •The president is obligated to help members phrase motions, even when he or she is opposed to the motion. When there is a difference over the meaning of a bylaw or a procedure, etc., the president may assist in solving the dispute. For example, the chair could pose a question designed to resolve the dispute and ask for show of hands on it. The final decision rests with the members.

While presiding over a formal meeting, the president must not make motions or enter into debate. The president can enter into debate only if he or she leaves the chair and lets the vice president or another officer preside. In other words, the president must give up his or her function of presiding over the meeting to participate. If the presiding officer steps down and enters debate, he or she must stay out of the chair (not return to presiding) until the motion has been disposed of either temporarily or finally. Similarly, the president leaves the chair position when a motion has direct, personal or monetary interest, or when he or she is censured or reprimanded. However, the president may preside during nominations and elections when he or she is a candidate for office or is being considered in a motion with others - for example, if there is a motion to send delegates to a convention and the president is nominated as one of the candidates.

The president should announce all business in the proper sequence and entertain every motion that is in order. If in doubt about why a member rises, the president can ask:

President: For what purpose does the member rise?

If the member rises to say something that is not in order at that time, asking this question allows the president to stop the incorrect procedure immediately without wasting the club's time. If it is in order, the president allows the member to proceed. This phrase keeps business going in the right direction.

The president must state each legitimate motion for the purpose of discussion and for taking a vote. The president ensures the rights of the members to debate the motion by allowing each side fair representation during controversial issues and by keeping debate to its time limits.

The president takes the vote on motions and knows the proper type of vote required for the different classes of motions. The president announces the result of the vote so that all members know what action is taken and, if adopted, for the purpose of the records, which is responsible for carrying out the action.

The president should rule on any procedure that does not follow correct procedures (for example, motions that are not in order at a certain time, debate that gets off the subject, and any effort by members to deprive others of their rights to debate and make motions). The president must entertain all appeals to his or her rulings and let members vote on the appeal. The president has an obligation to answer any member's questions about the discussed business or any parliamentary inquiries about procedure.

SUGGESTED LANGUAGE OF A MEETING

Call to Order

The presiding officer rises, taps the gavel once and says, "the meeting will come to order."

Introductions

Present individuals known to the members. Introduce individuals not known.

Review and Approval of the Minutes

The presiding officer says:

"The secretary will read the minutes." (Pause for reading.)

"Are there any corrections to the minutes?" (Pause.)

"If there are no corrections (or no further corrections), the minutes stand approved as read (or approved as corrected)."

If the minutes have been previously distributed, they need not be read unless a member specifically requests it. The presiding officer may then say, "the minutes of the last meeting were printed in the (name of publication) or were mailed with the meeting announcement. Are there corrections to the minutes as distributed (or as mailed)?"

Report of Officers, Club Board or Committees

Executive boards, committees, and individuals often report to the members at meetings with information and/or recommendations. After a report containing information has been read to the meeting, no motion is necessary. However, in some clubs it is customary to finish with "I move that this report be received as read," which means that the members have heard and understood the report. If the report contains a recommendation, the person presenting the report might move that "this report be adopted as read." This motion means that the members have agreed with and adopted the report and its recommendations

Secretary and Treasurer: The presiding officer says:

"The next business in order is hearing reports of the officers."

"Has the secretary a report on correspondence?" (Action on correspondence will be taken up under "new business.")

"May we have the treasurer's report?"

“Are there any questions?” (Pause.)

“The treasurer's report will be filed for audit.”

Other officers and the club board: The presiding officer asks other reporting officers to speak. Standing committees are called upon to report in the order of listing in the bylaws.

The presiding officer states the name of the chairman of the committee, followed by “Chairman of the ... committee is recognized to report.”

If uncertain, the presiding officer may ask: “Does the ... committee have a report?”

Special committees are called upon to report in the order in which they were appointed or alphabetically. It is wise to inquire before the meeting of any intentions to report. The presiding officer says, “the next business in order is hearing the reports of the special committees.”

Unfinished Business

The presiding officer should know whether there is unfinished business, and says:

“Under unfinished business, the first item of business is...,” or

“The next business in order is...”

New Business

This includes correspondence requiring action by members. The presiding officer says:

“Is there any new business?”

“Is there any further new business?”

Announcements

Prepare a list of announcements to be made by the presiding officer or others.

Program

The program committee chairman presents the program. The program presenter closes with, “Madam President, this concludes the program.”

Adjournment/Closing

The presiding officer asks: “is there any further business?”

(pause) A motion may then be made to adjourn.

Alternatively, to save time, the presiding officer says, “if there is no objection, the meeting will now adjourn.” (pause); “Since there is no objection, the meeting is adjourned.” The presiding officer then raps the gavel once.

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