

Introduction to Parliamentary Procedure~ (also called Robert's Rules)

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When in doubt; Know your **CHARTER~** and district policy

Bylaws are:

- Your Ground Rules
- Your Expectations
- Your Processes
- Your Responsibility



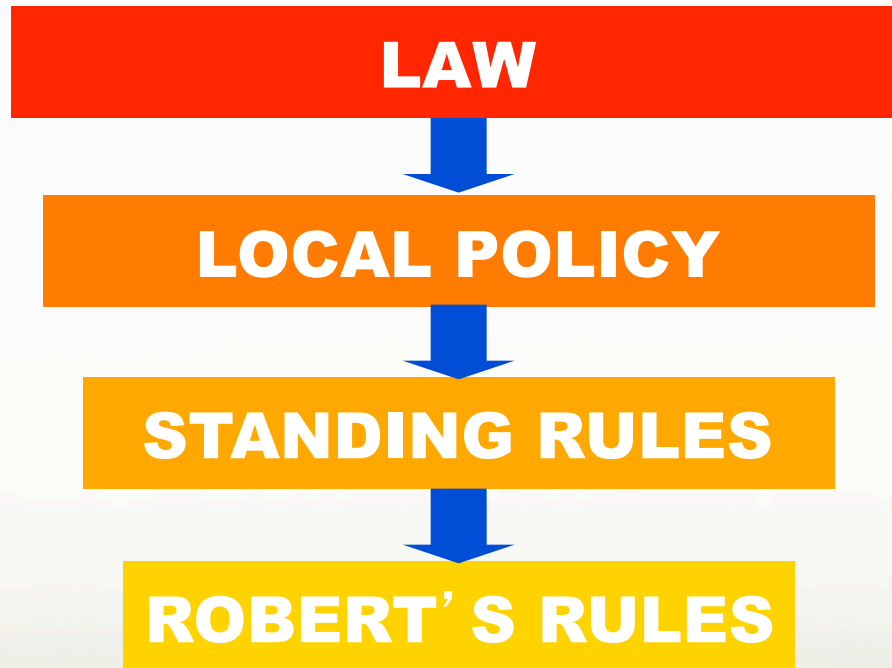
If nothing else, know your charter and policy!!!

Common Questions

- How to make a motion
- How to amend a motion
- How to postpone an item
- How to end debate
- How to “undo” an action
- How to count the vote



Which Rules Apply?



“The great lesson for democracies to learn is for the majority to give to the minority a full, free opportunity to present their side of the case, and then for the minority, having failed to win a majority to their view, **gracefully** to submit and to recognize the action as that of the entire organization, and **cheerfully** to assist in carrying it out, until they can secure its repeal.”

—Robert’s Rules of Order,
Newly Revised, p.xviii

Basic Principles of Robert's Rules of Order



KNOW THE RULES!

- One thing at a time, one person at a time, one time per meeting
- All discussions should be germane to the pending question
- No interruptions
- Majority rules
- Silence implies consent

- No surprises!
 - How can you help to avoid surprises?
- Right to know what will be discussed
- Everyone is equal (including the chair)
- Over and under dedication to Robert's Rules can be disastrous



Robert's Rules in a Nutshell

- **C**ommon
Courtesy
- **C**ommon
Sense



Does Your Board Really Need To Follow Robert's Rules of Order?

In small boards (less than 12), most Parliamentary Rules apply, but certain modifications permitting greater flexibility and informality are commonly allowed.

Robert's Rules of Order~10th edition

Page 9, Line 21

Most Common Protocol Mistakes Charter School APC's Make

- Not understanding what the chair's role is ...
and what it is NOT
- Allowing surprises
- Poor agenda planning
- Forgetting to demand proper respect and protocol by all board members
- Forgetting that board member conduct sends messages to your community

The board must NOT forget...

**that someone is always
watching!!**

How to Make a Motion

- **Say:**
 - I Move that...
or
 - I Move to...
- **Don't say:**
 - Why don't we...
or
 - How about we...

Handling motions and amendments

There are six steps for adopting a motion.

Step 1~ A member makes a motion

Step 2~ A member seconds a motion

Step 3~ The chair states the question

Step 4~ The members debate

Step 5~ The members vote

Step 6~ The chair announces the vote

Types of Motions

- Main
- Subsidiary
- Privileged
- Incidental

Using the Motion Chart

Principle requirements for motions:

- Recognition
- Second
- Debatable
- Amendable
- Vote Required
- Reconsiderable

Step 1

A Member Makes a Motion

- Motions written out to avoid confusion
- When motion poorly worded, chair has the option to assist in clarifying
- Maker says a few brief words if needed
- Chairs CAN make motions – cautiously
- Be Precise

Main motions are out of order if:

- Not germane to the pending question
- Conflicts with local, state or federal law
- Presents same question dealt with earlier in that meeting
- Action outside the scope of the organization



Step 2

Second the Motion

- Implies a member wishes to hear discussion not necessarily that they are in favor
- If no one seconds the motion, it FAILS
- Some items do not require a second
 - Any ideas on what those are?
- No need for recognition for seconds

Step 3

Chair States the Motion

- Formally places motion before members
- Transfers ownership to the full board
- Chair should restate the motion during debate
- Chair reminds board if straying from question
- After this step, the board must do “something” with the motion

Step 4

Members Debate

- Maker of motion should speak first
- Debate focus on immediate pending question
- Debate alternated between pros & cons
- Members who have not yet spoken recognized before members speaking a second time



Step 5

Members Vote

- The chairperson repeats motion before calling for vote
- Secret ballots should not be used
- The vote of each member on each item required in the minutes



"I propose a cooling-off period of 100 years."

Members Vote

- Announce vote totals for the minutes
- Chair should vote on all matters
- Tie vote is a lost vote



Step 6

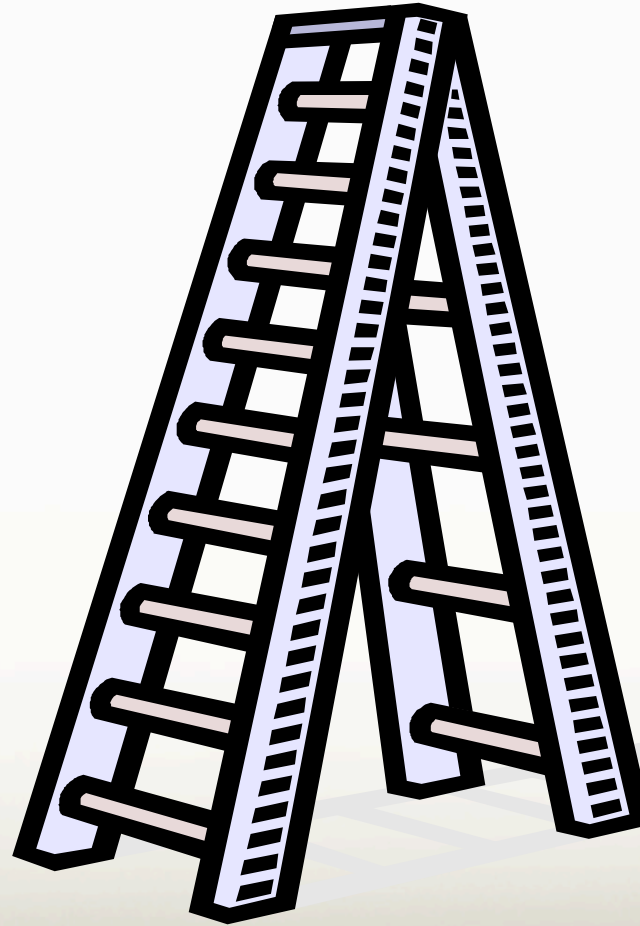
Announcing the Vote

- Announce outcome of vote - give number of those in favor and those opposed
- Announce “next steps”



The 10 “Must-Know” Motions for Meetings

1. Adjourn
2. Recess
3. Lay on the table
4. Previous question
5. Limit/extend limits of debate
6. Postpone to a certain time
7. Commit or refer
8. Secondary amendment
9. Primary amendment
10. Main motion



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Handling Amendments

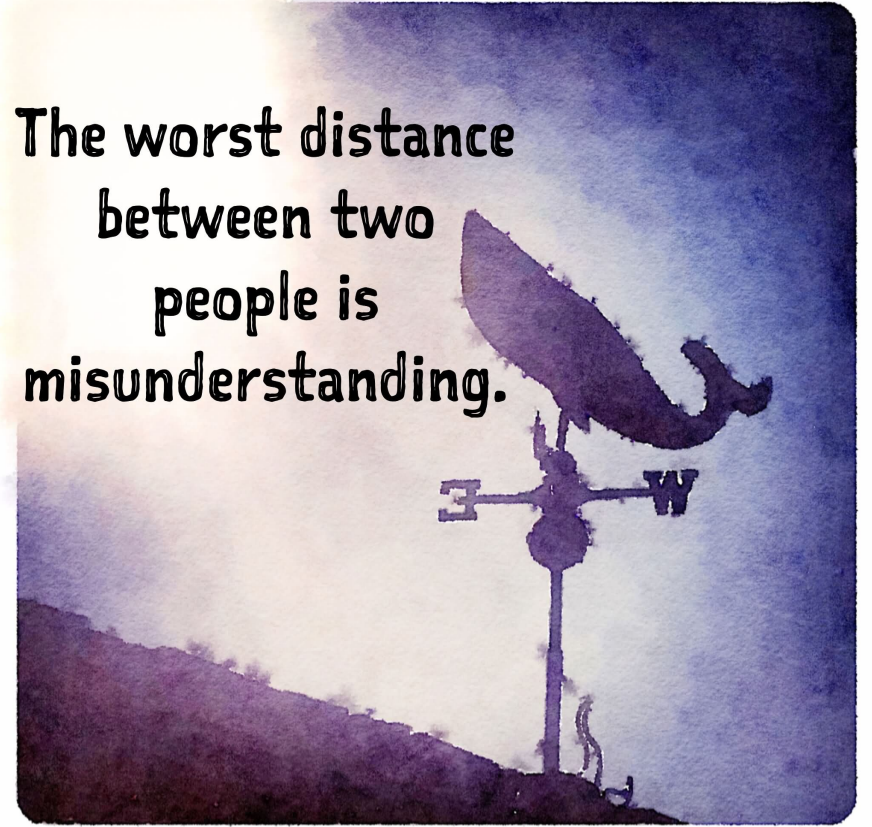


- A main motion is limited to primary & secondary amendment
- A primary amendment modifies the main motion
- A secondary amendment modifies the primary amendment (amending the amendment)

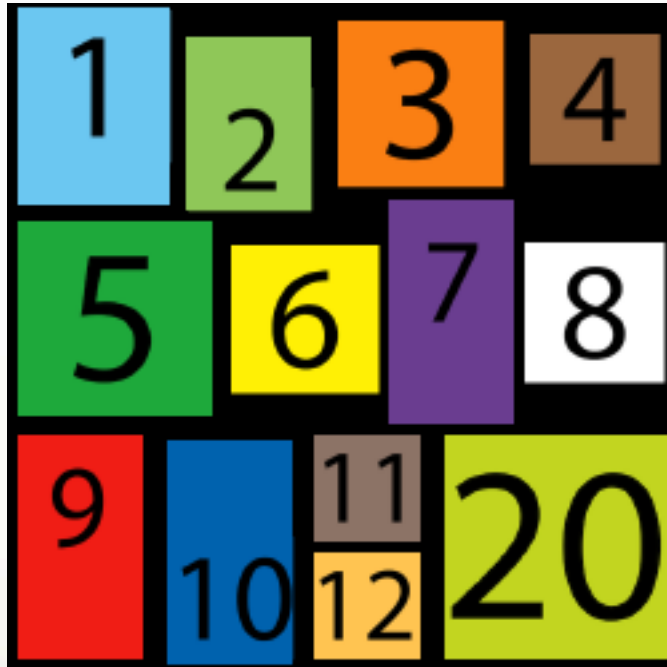
Misunderstood Motions

- Lay on the table
- Previous question
- Reconsider
- Rescind
- Withdraw a motion

**The worst distance
between two
people is
misunderstanding.**



Counting Votes



A majority is:

- One more than half
- Of those present and voting
- During a legally called meeting

Votes Necessary to Pass a Motion

| Board Membership | Majority | Two-thirds |
|------------------|----------|------------|
| 5 | 3 | 4 |
| 7 | 4 | 5 |
| 9 | 5 | 6 |

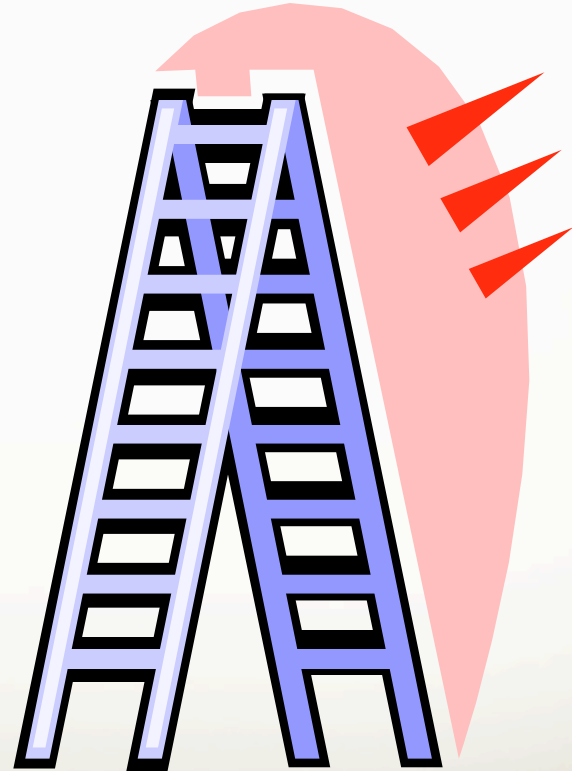
Does It Pass?

| | Present | Voting | For | Against | Pass? |
|----------|---------|--------|-----|---------|-------|
| 5-member | 5 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Yes |
| 5-member | 4 | 4 | 2 | 2 | No |
| 7-member | 6 | 4 | 1 | 3 | No |
| 7-member | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Yes |

Simplified Chart of Most Used Parliamentary Motions

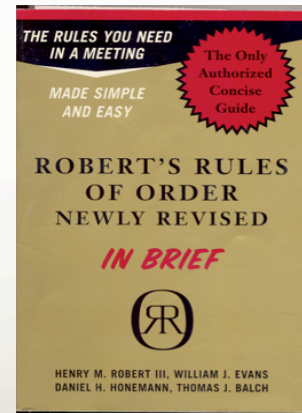
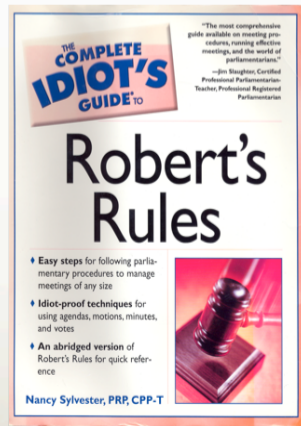
| Motion | Debatable | Amendable | Vote |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Adjournment | no | no | majority |
| Recess | no | yes | majority |
| Lay on the table | no | no | majority |
| Close debate | no | no | 2/3 |
| Postpone definitely | yes | yes | majority |
| Refer to committee | yes | yes | majority |
| Second amendment | yes | no | majority |
| Primary amendment | yes | yes | majority |
| Main motion | yes | yes | majority |

Remember



Books

- *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, Tenth Edition*
- *Robert's Rules of Order in Brief*
- *Notes and Comments on Robert's Rules*, Jon L. Ericson





Thanks to Texas Association of School Boards
&

Dr. Paul Krohne, Executive Director
South Carolina School Boards Association

Related Web Sites

- The Official Robert's Rules of Order Web site
 - <http://www.robertsrules.com/>
- The American Institute of Parliamentarians
 - <http://www.aipparlipro.org>
- The National Association of Parliamentarians
 - <http://parliamentarians.org>
- James Slaughter's Web site
 - <http://www.jimslaughter.com>