Understanding Parliamentary Procedure

Parliamentary Procedure

- Results in better meetings
- Knowledge enhances leadership credibility
- Makes the difference between official actions and illegal ones
- Is a tool and not a weapon

Purpose of a Meeting...

Is to make decisions!

Keys to Efficient Meetings

- Plan a yearly calendar
- Provide a positive environment
- Streamline the meeting with agenda preparation
- Follow the agenda
- Start the meeting on time
- Use parliamentary procedure

Order Of Business

- Reading and approval of minutes
- Reports of officers and standing committees
- Reports of special committees
- Special orders
- Unfinished business and general orders
- New business

Order Of Business

- Reading and approval of minutes – approves the record of actions taken at previous meeting
Order Of Business

• Reports of officers and standing committees
  – Gives update on assignments and/or considers actions as recommended by an officer or committee
  – Correspondence received is read if not distributed prior to the meeting
  – Financial report is made at every meeting

Order Of Business

• Reports of special committees – considers actions as recommended by a group formed for a particular purpose
• Special orders – considers items that were made special orders for this meeting or items required to be taken up at this meeting by provision in the bylaws

Order Of Business

• Unfinished business and general orders – considers items not reached when the last meeting adjourned or items postponed to this meeting
• New business – considers actions proposed by members

Preparing the Agenda:

• Are the draft minutes and financial report ready?
• Is there any correspondence to share?
• Do any officers or committee chairs have reports and/or actions to propose?
• Are any special committees ready to report?

Preparing the Agenda:

• Was anything postponed to this meeting?
• Do the bylaws or rules require that something be done at this meeting?
• Does your annual calendar require that something be done at this meeting?
• Has an outside speaker been invited to make remarks?
• Is there a special program scheduled?
• Do announcements need to be made or distributed?
• What type of closing is appropriate for this meeting?
Agenda

• Opening – recite creed
• Approval of 1/31/13 minutes
• Financial report
• Vice President of Recruitment’s report
  – Items for action
  • Approve dates for recruitment
  • Approve recruitment rules
• Program Chair’s report
  – Items for action
  • Approve proposal for retreat
• New Business
• Closing – pass the gavel

Bringing Business Before the Organization

• Motion - a formal proposal for consideration and action

8 Steps in Processing a Motion

• Step 1: Member rises and addresses the chair when nothing is pending. “Mr./Madame Chairman”
• Step 2: Chair recognizes member by nodding at the member or stating her name. “Emily”

8 Steps in Processing a Motion

• Step 3: Member states her motion. “I move that we have a canned food drive.”
• Step 4: Another member seconds the motion (without recognition). “Second.”

8 Steps in Processing a Motion

• Step 5: Chair states the motion and places it before the assembly for discussion. “It is moved and seconded that we have a canned food drive. Is there any discussion?”

8 Steps in Processing a Motion

• Step 6: Members have the right to get recognition and debate the motion. During debate subsidiary motions (i.e. amend, refer) may be introduced to help the assembly make a final decision
The Decorum of Debate

- Assume good faith on the part of all
- Remarks must be germane – related to the issue
- Remarks are addressed through the chair
- RONR allows 10 minutes per speaker and speakers can speak twice ... a total of 20 minutes
  - Consider adopting a special rule of order limiting speakers to 2 to 3 minutes
- Time cannot be yielded to another speaker or saved for later use

8 Steps in Processing a Motion

- **Step 7:** When discussion is finished the Chair puts the question to a vote. “Are you ready for the question?”
  - “The question is on the adoption of the motion that we have a canned food drive.”
  - “Those in favor, say AYE.” [Pause.]
  - “Those opposed, say NO.” [Pause.]

Knowledge into Action

- This mock meeting demonstrates the following:
  - 8 steps in processing a motion
  - Process of amending
  - Inquiries by a member
  - Proper language of parliamentary procedure

Questions