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1. PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

1.1 The Basics of Parliamentary Procedure

By Teresa A. Dean, Professional Registered Parliamentarian (PRP)

(Dean, “The Basics of Parliamentary Procedure”)

As a board member, one of your most fundamental rights and responsibilities is to take an active part in meetings. The following will help you know some of your rights, including when and how to use parliamentary procedure to promote fair and orderly discussion and decisions.

To propose business by making a motion or a resolution

Once adopted, a motion or resolution becomes the action or opinion of the group. The basic steps for a motion are as follows:

1. You (or any other board member) gain the right to speak (obtain the floor) by raising a hand or by standing and awaiting recognition.
2. The chair recognizes you by calling your name.
3. You make the motion (saying, “I move that...” or “I move to...,” not “I make the motion that...” or “I so move...”).
4. Another member seconds the motion by calling out, “Second.” Recognition is not required.
5. The chair states the motion. (“It is moved and seconded that.... Is there any discussion?” However, some motions cannot be discussed. Consult your parliamentary authority for details on this.*)
6. The assembly discusses (debates) the motion according to these rules:
   a. Members wishing to speak must first obtain the floor (as in steps one and two above).
   b. The maker of the motion may speak first, if desired; he or she cannot speak against the motion but may vote against it.
   c. Remarks must be addressed to the chair and confined to the motion being discussed. Speakers should refrain from using members’ names; instead they should use titles or “the previous speaker” or “the speaker who...”
   d. Everyone must observe time limits. Sometimes these are previously established; if not, the limit should be 10 minutes per speech.
   e. No more than two speeches per member per motion are allowed on the same day. No second speeches are allowed if another is seeking to make a first one.
7. The discussion may end in one of two ways. The chair may sense that discussion is exhausted and simply call for a vote. Or a member can attempt to bring the discussion to an end by making the motion “previous question.” When this motion is made and seconded, the chair must put it to a vote without debate; to end the discussion, this motion must pass by a two-thirds vote. However the discussion ends, the chair then conducts the vote. (“The question is on the adoption of the motion that [repeat the motion]. Those in favor say aye. [Pause.] Those opposed say no.”)
8. The chair announces the results of the vote. “The ayes (or noes) have it, the motion is adopted (or lost), and [the chair then states the outcome—what has been decided].”
To second another’s motion
By proposing a second, you as the seconder merely indicate that you agree that the motion has merit and should be discussed. The seconder may oppose the motion in discussion (debate) and vote against it. If a motion does not receive a second, the group does not consider it. However, if discussion begins before a second is obtained, there is no need to seek one. The fact that the group wants to discuss the motion indicates that it has merit.

To amend a pending motion
The amendment, when adopted, becomes part of the motion.

To enter into discussion (debate)
Your remarks should let others know of your support or opposition. You should add information and not echo another’s comments.

To know the rules of discussion (debate) found in your parliamentary authority or the organization’s special rules:
- Some organizations limit speakers to two minutes per speech.
- To ask questions (as a point of information): Your questions may bring forward information that others may be seeking.
- And finally, to vote: You, or any other member, cannot be compelled to vote unless required by the rules. If the motion to be voted on relates to a direct personal or financial interest, you should abstain. When you doubt that the results of a voice vote have been properly stated, you should demand a retake of the vote by calling out “division.” To have the vote counted, a motion is required that must be approved by majority vote. Once the vote is concluded, you and your fellow board members have the satisfaction of knowing you’ve fulfilled your responsibility to make a well-organized effort to reach a conclusion and move along the business of your association.

Note: Per the Local PTA Bylaws and New Jersey PTA Bylaws, parliamentary authority for all PTAs is the current edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised*, or successor publication.

### 2. PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE IN MOTION

#### 2.1 When to Make a Motion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions requiring a MOTION by general members</th>
<th>Actions requiring a MOTION by board of directors</th>
<th>Actions that can be accepted or approved as presented/amended” NO MOTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Election of nominating committee</td>
<td>• Standing rules changes (to be taken to members for approval)</td>
<td>• Approval of minutes: general membership meetings, board meetings, and executive committee meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Approval of standing rules</td>
<td>• Budget changes (to be taken to members for approval)</td>
<td>• Approval of financial report; monthly and year-end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Approval of budget</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Election of officers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Adding line item(s) to budget; changes to budget (if</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
budget doesn’t contain language allowing board to reallocate)

- Endorse or oppose advocacy-based issues, such as levies or bonds

- Adding line items to budget (to be taken to members for approval)
- Changes to vision/mission statements/goals
- Changes in membership fees (usually incorporated into standing rules)
- Entering into a contract with a third party
- Endorse or oppose advocacy-based issues, such as levies or bonds

- Approval of financial review; mid-year and year-end
- For board-approved committee appointments
- Meeting adjournment if:
  - Time adopted for adjournment has arrived
  - End of agenda has been reached

Note: All of the actions noted must be noted in the meeting minutes, whether a motion is involved or not.

### 2.2 Making a Motion

| Member A | [Member A addresses the chair.]
|          | Madam/Mister President! |
|          | [Member A waits to be recognized.] |
|          | I move that… |

| Member B | [Without seeking recognition, Member B calls out.]
|          | I second the motion (or) Second! |

| Chair    | It is moved and seconded that… [Chair repeats the motion.] |
|          | Is there any discussion? Or Are you ready for the question? |
|          | *Discussion should be: |
|          | • Germane – directly related to the motion |

| Members  | [Members discuss the motion after being recognized by the chair.] |
| Chair    | [After discussion ends] The question is on the adoption of the motion that…[Chair repeats the motion] |
|          | Those in favor of the motion, say “aye.” [Pause] Those opposed, say “no.” [Pause] |
The ayes have it and the motion is adopted Or
The no’s have it and the motion is defeated.

*Motions (adopted and defeated) are:

- Recorded in the minutes
- Chair sees that the action taken is implemented

2.3 Amending a Motion

- “I move to amend the motion by:” then indicate the method of amending:
  - Adding a word or words at the end of a sentence.
  - Inserting a word or words within a sentence.
  - Striking out a word or words in a sentence.
  - Striking out a word or words and inserting a different word or words in a sentence and then specify exactly what words are affected by the method above.

2.4 Modifying a Proposal

*Example of adding a word or words at the end:
Motion: Local PTA dues shall be valid for one year.
Amendment: I move to amend the motion by adding the words “and must be renewed by June 15” at the end of the sentence.
*Motion would read if amended: Local PTA dues shall be valid for one year and must be renewed by June 15.

*Example of inserting a word or words within a sentence:
Motion: The president, vice president, and treasurer shall be bonded.
Amendment: I move to amend the motion by inserting the word “secretary,” between the words “vice president” and “treasurer.”
*Motion would read if amended: The president, vice president, secretary and treasurer shall be bonded.

*Example of striking out a word or words in a sentence:
Motion: An annual conference of the officers, board of directors, and committee chairs shall be held during the annual membership meeting.
Amendment: I move to amend the motion by striking out the words “board of directors” after the word “officers.”
*Motion would read if amended: An annual conference of the officers and committee chairs shall be held during the annual membership meeting.

*Example of striking out a word or words and inserting a word or words in a sentence:
Motion: The local PTA legislative chair shall be the PTA liaison to the state membership committee.
**Amendment:** I move to amend the motion by striking out the word “legislative” before the word “chair” and inserting the word “membership.”

*Motion would read if amended:* The PTA membership chair shall be the PTA liaison to the state membership committee.

**Note:** Never make an amendment by saying, “I move to amend the motion so that it reads as follows…” [restate the entire motion with the amendment]. Instead, always follow one of the four steps above. Following the procedure above makes it easier for the chair to state the amendment, allows members to focus only on the proposed change (the amendment), and helps the secretary keep track of changes to the main proposition.

### 3. APPENDIX

#### 3.1 Parliamentary Procedure Cheat Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To Do This:</th>
<th>Say This:</th>
<th>May you interrupt the</th>
<th>Do you need a second?</th>
<th>Is it debatable?</th>
<th>Can it be amended?</th>
<th>What vote is needed?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adjourn Meeting</td>
<td>I move that we adjourn.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Majority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call an Intermission</td>
<td>I move that we recess.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Majority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Complain about Heat, Noise, etc.</em></td>
<td>I rise to a question of</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporarily Suspend Consideration of an Issue</td>
<td>I move to table the motion.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Majority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End Debate and Amendments</td>
<td>I move the previous question.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postpone Discussion for a Certain Time</td>
<td>I move to postpone the discussion…</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Majority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give Closer Study of Something</td>
<td>I move to refer the matter to the committee.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Majority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amend a Motion</td>
<td>I move to amend the motion by…</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Majority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduce Business</td>
<td>I move that…</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Majority</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The motions listed above are in order of precedence. The motions below do not have order of precedence.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>*Protest Breach of Rules or Conduct</th>
<th>I rise to a point of order.</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>No vote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Vote on a Ruling of the Chair</td>
<td>I appeal the chair’s decision.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Majority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspend Rules Temporarily</td>
<td>I move to suspend the rules</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verify a Voice Vote – Members Stand</td>
<td>I call for a division. (or) Division!</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Ask a Question for Information</td>
<td>Point out information</td>
<td>Not usually</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take up a Matter Previously Tables</td>
<td>I move to take from the table.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Majority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconsider a Hasty Action</td>
<td>I move to reconsider the vote</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Depends</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Majority</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*May go to head of line at microphone.*