

Effective Meetings

Roberts Rules of Order

- A Practical Guide

Nicholas Caruso, CABE, Associate Executive Director for Field Services and Technology
Conrad Vahlsing, CABE, Deputy General Counsel

Question

Why do Boards of Education Exist?

Question

Where do Boards of Education do their work?

Meetings

Meetings

- What is a meeting?
- Focusing on achievement
- Agendas
- Meeting tips

Procedure

- History of Parliamentary Procedure
- Framework of Robert's Rules
- How it all works

Meetings

Keeping Student Achievement First and Foremost

We encourage you to remain focused on student achievement. The chair should remind the other members of the board to remain focused on achievement as a priority.

Agenda items should relate to learning wherever possible.

The Killer B's



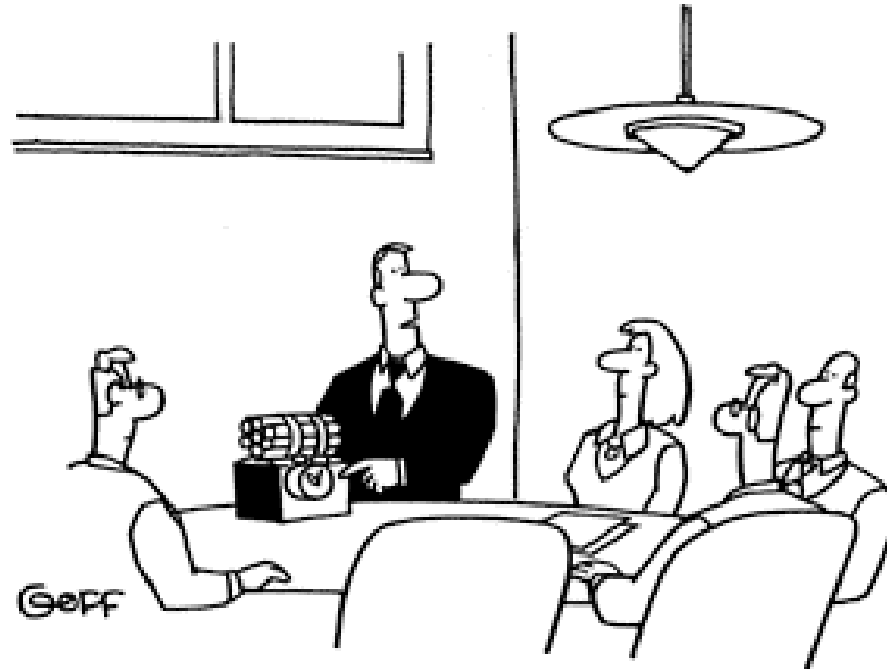
Eisenhower Matrix

	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important		
Unimportant		

Eisenhower Matrix

	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important	Do	Plan
Unimportant	Delegate Or Eliminate	Eliminate

Meetings



"To insure that we keep this meeting under thiry minutes, I'll just set this timer."

Meetings

What is a Meeting?

- The law defines most gatherings of the board of education as “meetings”.
- Bringing together members of a board of education to discuss business is subject to various laws.
- It is a major responsibility of the board chair to see that the board follows the rules.

Meetings

Regular Meetings

- Scheduled for the year.
- New agenda items can be added to a regular meeting by a 2/3 Vote.

Meetings

Special meetings

- Can be called at any time, provided proper notice is sent out. The meeting announcement must include the topic of the meeting, and list possible actions (agenda). At no time can the board discuss or take action on anything not listed in the meeting agenda. New agenda items cannot be added to a special meeting.
- Workshops, retreats, grievance or disciplinary hearings or other non-regular meetings are just ***special meetings*** and subject to the same rules and regulations.

Agenda

The agenda is the most important document at any board meeting. It is the first key to an effective meeting or the place where disaster strikes. The board chair can play an important role in determining whether the board will spend most of its time on policy making, “administrivia” or other areas by making sure the agenda contains items that are appropriate for discussion.

Meetings

- Start meeting on time!
- Use (but don't abuse) Consent Agenda.
- Chair limits discussion to agenda topic.
- Agenda set with time limits.
- Superintendent should limit staff presentations.
- Superintendent must prepare adequate board packet.

Parliamentary Procedure



“Now we’ve reached the important part of the meeting. Those in favor of pretzels for our snack, raise your hands!”

Parliamentary Procedure



Parliamentary Procedure



Parliamentary Procedure

- Derived from the method used to maintain order in England's Parliament.
- Thomas Jefferson published the first book on procedure
 - *Manual of Parliamentary Practice* in 1801.

Parliamentary Procedure



- General Henry Roberts, an army engineer, wrote *Robert's Rules of Order*, which quickly became the standard from its inception in 1876.

Current Edition #12 - ©2020

Parliamentary Procedure

Robert's Rules are designed to:

- Ensure the rights of the majority.
- Protect the rights of the minority.
- Defend the rights of individual members.

Parliamentary Procedure

Robert's Rules are designed to:

- Ensure the rights of the majority.
- Protect the rights of the minority.
- Defend the rights of individual members.

Purpose: Get the Work Done!

Parliamentary Procedure

It is the responsibility of all members to:

- Treat one item at a time.
- Extend courtesy and fairness to all.
- Let the majority rule.
- Guarantee the rights of the minority.

Parliamentary Procedure

- Robert's Rules allow for flexibility when small (under 12) groups meet.
- Boards may adopt the rules as written or modify them in any way they see fit.
- The key to a successful meeting is consistent, fair application of the rules.

Parliamentary Procedure

- The chair is the key to an effective meeting
- The chair's tool to accomplish this is *Robert's Rules of Order*.
- Only one person may speak at a time and only after being recognized by the chair.

Parliamentary Procedure

- When a person raises a hand, the chair must recognize the person before he or she can speak. Unless the agenda allows otherwise, the recognized speaker may only discuss the matter before the board.
- While large group rules would require a motion to be made prior to *any* discussion, small groups sometimes need more flexibility.

Parliamentary Procedure

Motions

Motions follow two basic principles. Some motions affect the **order** of the meeting, while others generate the **substance** of the meeting.

Numerous motions are procedural in nature, while others help the board frame the decisions that required them to meet in the first place.

Parliamentary Procedure

Motions

There is a distinct hierarchy of motions, all designed to facilitate an orderly procession through the meeting. Motions can be **debatable**, to which members of the board may ask questions or speak for or against the motion. In some cases, motions are not debatable. When a non-debatable motion is moved and seconded, the chair must call for an immediate vote.

Parliamentary Procedure

Motions

Motions also follow an **order of precedence**. There is an order to which motions can be made, and in some instances, a motion would not be appropriate because it is **out of order**. It is the chair's responsibility to know the order of precedence, and to rule at which times motions may or may not be made for certain actions. It is up to the chair to ensure that all motions are clear and make sense.

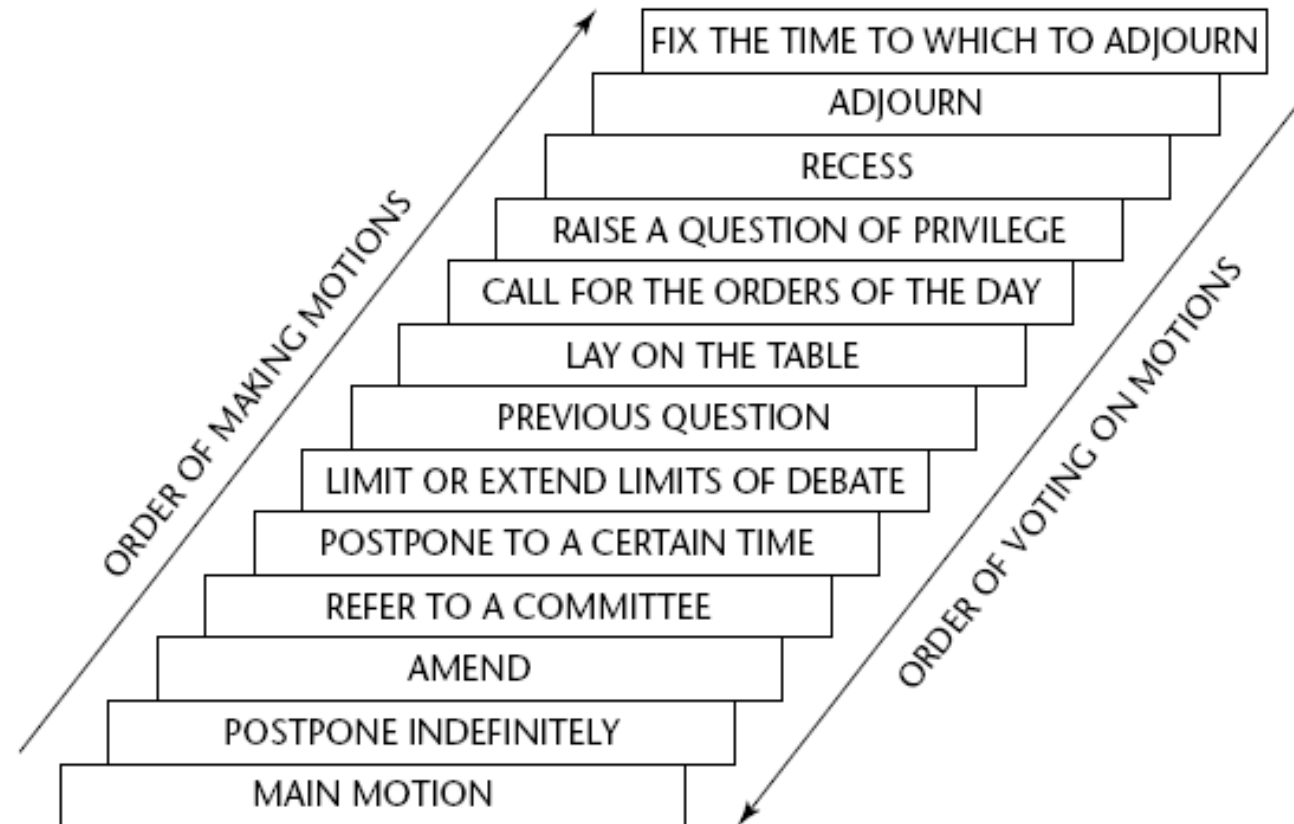
Parliamentary Procedure

Motions

Does the Chair have the final word?

Parliamentary Procedure

Motions



Parliamentary Procedure

Motions

The cornerstone to any debate is the **Main Motion**. It must be passed by a majority of the board (not counting abstentions). The maker of a motion may not speak against the motion but may vote against it. Sometimes after debating an issue for a while, the maker of the motion may withdraw it, thereby effectively killing any further discussion.

Parliamentary Procedure

Motions

Action Motions

- Main Motion
- Subsidiary Motions
 - Amend
 - Division

Parliamentary Procedure



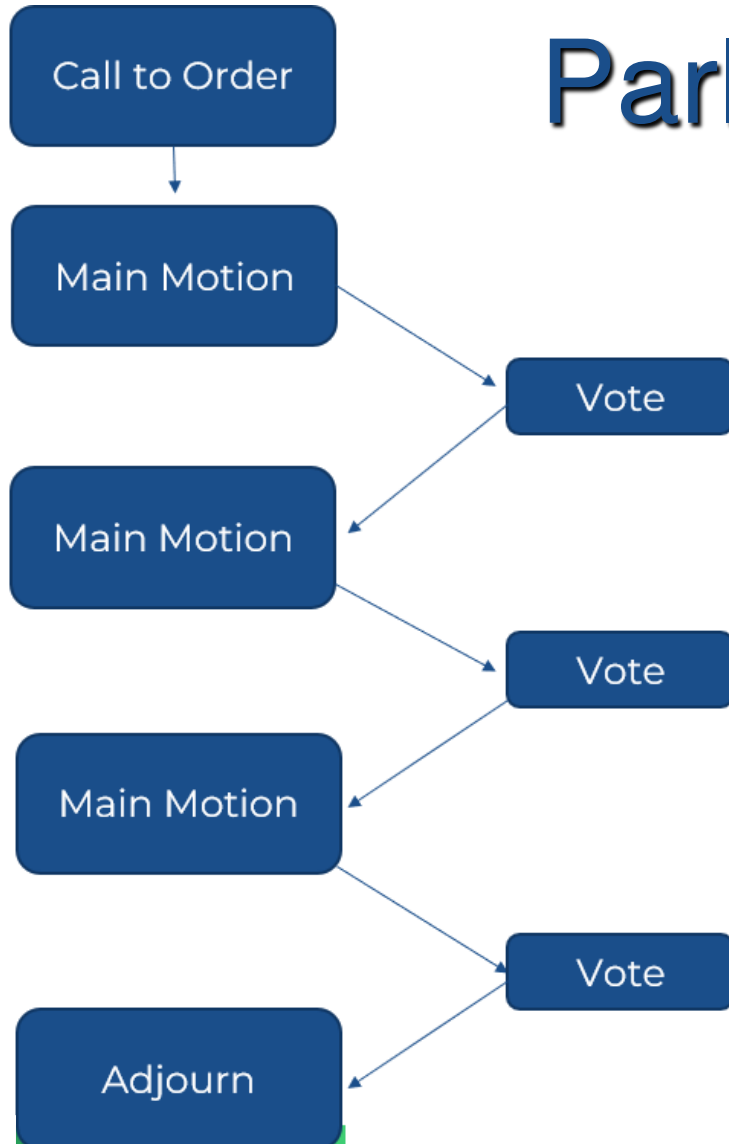
This video is 17 Years old!

Visit Youtube.com and Search for "Carpentersville".

Parliamentary Procedure

Motions

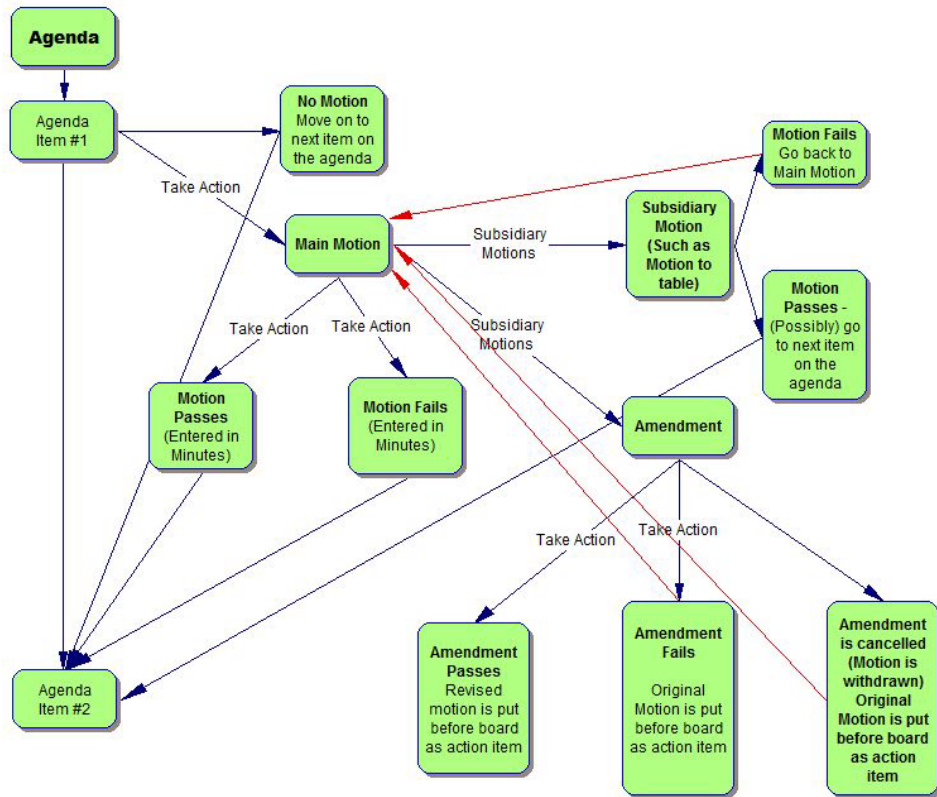
A Simple Meeting



Parliamentary Procedure

Motions

The minutes must reflect any action (or inaction) of the board. Motions, seconds, votes, and even withdrawing a motion must show up in the minutes.



A Not So Simple Meeting

Parliamentary Procedure

Motions

Parliamentary Motions – Main Motions

Motion	Requires Second	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Required
1. Main Motion	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Reconsider	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
Rescind	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

Parliamentary Procedure

Motions

Subject	Timing	Maker of Motion	Outcome of Original Motion	Timing of consideration	Second Needed	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Needed
Reconsider	Same Session	Must have voted on the prevailing side	Passed or failed	If made at one time can be called up later	Yes	Yes, only if motion being considered is debatable	No	Majority
Rescind	Later Session	No restrictions of vote on original	Passed	At time the motion is made	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3 Majority

motion to rescind simply nullifies the prior action.

A motion to reconsider brings back for further consideration the matter previously acted upon.

Parliamentary Procedure

Motion	Requires Second	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Required
2. Postpone Indefinitely	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
3. Amend	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
4. Amend Amendment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
5. Refer to Committee	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
6. Postpone Definitely	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
7. Previous Question	Yes	No	No	2/3
8. Lay on the Table	Yes	No	No	Majority

Parliamentary Procedure

Motion	Requires Second	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Required
2. Postpone Indefinitely	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
3. Amend	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
4. Amend Amendment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
5. Refer to Committee	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
6. Postpone Definitely	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
7. Previous Question	Yes	No	No	2/3
8. Lay on the Table	Yes	No	No	Majority

Parliamentary Procedure

Motions

Common (and often misused) Motions - CONDUCT

Motion	Requires Second	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Required
Point of Order	No	No	No	None
Parliamentary Inquiry	No	No	No	None
Divide a Motion	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
Withdraw or Modify a Motion	No	No	No	Majority



Parliamentary Procedure

Less Common (and often misused) Motions

Motion	Requires Second	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Required
Point of Information	No	No	No	None
Appeal the Decision of the Chair	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
Object to Consideration	No	No	No	2/3
Suspend the Rules	Yes	No	No	2/3
Raise a Question of Privilege	No	No	No	None

Parliamentary Procedure



Connecticut Association of Boards of Education
 81 Wolcott Hill Road, Wethersfield, CT 06109-1242
 Telephone: 800-317-0033 or 860-571-7446 • Fax 860-571-7452

Simplified Chart of Parliamentary Motions

Motion	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Required
8. Adjourn	No	No	Majority
7. Recess	No	Yes	Majority
6. Close Debate	No	No	2/3
5. Postpone Definitely	Yes	Yes	Majority
4. Refer to Committee	Yes	Yes	Majority
3. Amend the Amendment	Yes	No	Majority
2. Amend or Substitute	Yes	Yes	Majority
1. Main Motion (Resolution)	Yes	Yes	Majority
Reconsider	Yes	No	Majority
Rescind	Yes	Yes	Majority (with notice)

Motions Dealing with General Conduct of Meeting No Order of Precedence

Point of Order	No	No	None
Parliamentary Inquiry	No	No	None
Appeal from the Decision of the Chair	Yes	No	Majority
Division of the Assembly	No	No	No
Suspend the Rules	No	No	2/3
Divide a Motion	No	Yes	Majority
Withdraw or Modify a Motion	No	No	Majority

From Notes and Comments on Robert's Rules, by Jon Ericson,
 Southern Illinois University Press, 1991.

Questions?



Nicholas Caruso
Associate Executive Director
for Field Services and Technology

ncaruso@cabe.org

Conrad Vahlsing
Deputy General Counsel

cvahlsing@cabe.org

www.cabe.org