



## Meeting Etiquette Based on Robert's Rules of Order

Parliamentary Procedure, or Meeting Rules of Order, is a set of rules for conduct at meetings that allows everyone to be heard and to make decisions without confusion as well as maintaining an organized and timely meeting.

### Motions

There are certain items on the agenda that require a motion whereas other items may simply be discussed. All motions and their outcomes must be recorded in the minutes. Discussions can be recorded simply as "Issue was discussed" or it can go into detail for reference.

### Those static items that require motions are:

1. **Calling the meeting to order** does not require a motion, but this is the time to make note of those members who are present as well as those who gave their regrets (for the minutes) and to establish whether quorum has been met. If quorum has not been met, the Chair may choose to continue the meeting but all Main Motions must be tabled until the next meeting.

### 2. Approving of minutes of last meeting

**Motion:** *(Made by the Presiding Officer – "Chair")*

"I move to approve the minutes as written." – or, if changes have been suggested:

"I move to approve the minutes as amended by today's changes"

**(ACTION ITEM:** *make changes to the minutes but no need to re-present*)

The Chair asks for someone to second the motion. If received, the Chair asks "All in favour?"

With a majority vote, motion has been approved.

### 3. Treasurer's report

**Motion:** *(Chair asks for someone to move the motion)*

"I move to approve the Treasurer's report as presented."

If there is a simple change needed, the motion can be:

"I move to approve the Treasurer's report with the following changes (state changes)"

**(ACTION ITEM:** *make changes to the report but no need to re-present*)

If there are major changes required to the report, the motion should read:

"I move to postpone the motion to the next meeting to allow for today's changes to be entered"

**(ACTION ITEM:** *make changes to the report and present the revised copy at the next meeting*)

The Chair asks for a second to the motion. If received, the Chair asks "All in favour?"

With a majority vote, motion has been approved.

### 4. Adjournment

The Chair will ask for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Once received, the Chair asks "All in favour".

With a majority vote, motion has been approved and the meeting is adjourned.

The above motions are the standard motions that should be included in all meeting minutes. Other motions can arise during a meeting, moved either by the Chair or a committee/board member, for decisions on meeting planning issues, funding/budget expenditures, etc...

One of the main roles of the Chair is to act as mediator in order to keep the meeting on track and on time. Try to keep on topic and if an issue arises that was not on the agenda that requires further discussion and debate but for which the current meeting has no time allowance, the Chair may choose to “move to postpone the issue to the next meeting”.

One person on the committee or Board should act as secretary (during times when the official Secretary is not in attendance) to ensure proper minutes are taken at every meeting. Minutes should be completed and distributed in a timely manner and outline all ACTION ITEMS, if any, as well as the member(s) designated to carry out each action item.

It is also recommended that all meeting documentation is circulated at minimum a couple of days prior to the meeting to allow all members a chance to review and prepare. If all documentation has been distributed beforehand, minutes, proposals, etc. will not need to read into the minutes (minutes can simply state that a document was distributed), allowing more time for comments and discussion.

**In summary, below are a few of the golden rules of meeting management:**

- 1. BE PREPARED AND ENSURE THAT ALL THE PARTICIPANTS CAN BE AS WELL**
- 2. STICK TO A SCHEDULE – START THE MEETING ON TIME AND END IT ON TIME**
- 3. STAY ON TOPIC AND FOLLOW THE AGENDA AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE**
- 4. WRAP UP MEETINGS WITH A CLEAR STATEMENT OF THE NEXT STEPS AND WHO IS ASSIGNED TO COMPLETE REQUIRED TASKS**