

BASIC PRINCIPLES

Items of businesses in chapter meetings will be introduced in a form called a motion. A motion cannot be debated on the floor in a meeting or voted upon until it has been introduced in the form of a motion.

For convenience, motions are classified into five types, which are in order of highest precedence to the order of lowest precedence.

1. Unclassified Motion
2. Privileged Motion
3. Incidental Motion
4. Subsidiary Motion
5. Main Motion

A. MAIN OR PRINCIPAL MOTION

This is a motion made to bring before the meeting or assembly, for its consideration, any particular subject. Of the five types of motions it is the lowest in precedence because it cannot be introduced unless there are no other motions before the assembly. Also, it cannot be voted upon until all other types of motions associated with it are voted on and disposed of.

- Main motions are debatable, amendable, and can be reconsidered
- When a main motion is *laid on the table*, it carries with it all pending subsidiary motions
- Main motions may be written and presented in the form of a resolution.
- If a main motion is referred to a committee, it carries with it only the pending amendments.
- Two motions may not be presented at the same time.

B. SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS

This motion is applied to other motions for the sole purpose of most appropriately disposing them. By means of subsidiary motions, the original main motion may be modified, postponed, or referred to a committee for investigation and report, etc....

Subsidiary motions may be applied to any main motion. Since they are of higher precedence, the subsidiary motion must be decided before the main motion is acted upon.

The following lists the subsidiary motions in order of highest to lowest precedence.

1. Lay on the table
2. Motion to vote (AKA – Motion to question)
3. Postpone definitely
4. Commit or refer to committee
5. Amend
6. Postpone indefinitely

When one of the subsidiary motions is in immediate pending question, every motion above it is in order, and every one below is out of order

C. INCIDENTAL MOTIONS

These are actions that arise from another question, which is pending, and therefore, take precedent. It must be decided before the question or motion out of which they arise. These motions may also be incidental to a question that has just been pending and should be decided upon before any other business is originated. An incidental motion is in order only when it is legitimately incidental to the business at hand. It then takes precedence over any other motions pending.

The following incidental motions listed have no established order of precedence:

- Point of order
- Appeal
- Suspension of rules
- Object to the consideration of a question
- Division
- Leave to withdraw a motion
- Leave the Chair's position

D. PRIVILEGED MOTIONS

While not relating to the pending question, they are of such great importance as to require them to take immediate precedence over all other questions. Due to the high privilege, they are not debatable, amendable*, or reconsiderable.

In order of precedence from highest to lowest, the following are examples of privileged motions:

- Adjourn
- Recess
- Question of privilege
- Orders of the day

E. UNCLASSIFIED MOTIONS

These are motions, which cannot be conveniently classified.

In order of precedence from highest to lowest:

- Take from table
- Reconsider
- Rescind

DEFINING OF THE CHAIR AND ASSEMBLY

A chapter meeting requires the presence of the Chair and the Assembly.

The Chair is the presiding officer referred to as the President. Depending on gender, the President shall be referred to as Mr. President or Madam President. Formality is an absolute when addressing the presiding officer.

The definition of Assembly refers to all other members present during a chapter meeting.

Assembly members must be addressed with the formality of Mister or Madam followed by their first name, last name, or both.

In the presence of the Pre-Med Advisor, prefix formalities must also be used followed by the title of Archon.

A. SELECTION OF A PRESIDING OFFICER

The President can be either appointed by the Archon (Pre-Med Advisor) or voted on by the Assembly. Voting must be done through a silent ballot.

Characters of the President:

1. LEADER
 - a. Must have a positive attitude and willing to accept the responsibilities and assume the initiative.
2. FAIR
 - a. Must be non-bias in difficult decision making, recognition, and appointing committees, etc.
3. GOOD JUDGEMENT
 - a. Must have exceptional skills in planning, organizing, and management.
4. TACTFUL
 - a. Must present courteous treatment of all members.

5. POISE
 - a. Must be alert, erect in posture, calm, and reassuring.
6. STRONG CLEAR VOICE
 - a. Must evoke the image of a forceful presence with a strong clear voice.
7. REASONABLY DELIBERATE
 - a. Must be methodical, direct, and concise.
8. MASTERY OF THE RULES
 - a. Must understand and master the rules and theory of parliamentary procedure, as well as demonstrate the ability to defend it.

ANATOMY OF A CHAPTER MEETING

A. CALLING THE MEETING TO ORDER

Normally, simply waiting or signaling for quiet, and calling for the meeting to come to order is all that is necessary to call the meeting to order. All members must be seated except for the Chair. The Chair must introduce himself/herself and officially call the meeting to order followed with the time and date of the meetings initiation.

e.g. – “ Order! My name is _____, and as the presiding officer of this great Assembly, I call this meeting to order at 9:15 AM on July 9, 1979.”

After the meeting is called into order, the Chair must sit down.

B. USE OF THE GAVEL

Use of the gavel is at the discretion of the presiding officer, but its effective use must not be abused. It is the sacred symbol of order. Immediate silence from the Assembly must be given at the first sound of the gavel.

C. THE AGENDA

The call to order will be followed by the following stages in chronological order:

1. Opening Ceremony
2. Roll Call
3. Minutes of Previous Meeting
4. Officer Reports
5. Committee Reports
6. Special Features
7. Old or Unfinished Business
8. Committee Reports
9. New Business
10. Degree and Installation of Ceremonies
11. Adjournment

D. CALLING FOR BUSINESS

When the agenda has been processed to the stage of Old/Unfinished Business, the presiding officer will call upon the Secretary to introduce any Old Business.

e.g. – “Madame/Mister _____, as Secretary of this Assembly, please address the past issues of Old Business at hand.”

E. GAINING RECOGNITION

To gain recognition means obtaining the right to speak.

The President has the right to speak at any given point, but must be courteous in this right. Only the President or presiding officer has the right to call upon a member to speak in front of the Assembly.

In order for a member to gain recognition to speak, a member should raise their hand in silence until called upon. Once the presiding officer calls upon the member, the selected member must stand before speaking. Upon completion of comments, the selected member must seat to signify the end of comments. At this point, the floor reverts to the Chair.

When there is a choice of whom to recognize, the Chair recognizes the individual who has participated the least up to that point, and then recognizes the individual closest to the chair.

In the event of addressing a motion, it is preferred to recognize first the individual who has brought the motion to question.

F. SPEAKING ETIQUETTE

When speaking in front of the Assembly, a member must first gain recognition from the Chair.

There are several motions that may interrupt a speaker. When this is the case, the individual must seat immediately. However, it is common courtesy to allow all members to speak until completion.

Seconding a Motion (discussed later) can also be done without gaining the Presidents recognition.

Members who gain recognition may NOT speak as if addressing the Assembly. Members must speak to the Assembly through the presiding officer. This means eye contact, facing, and verbal communication must all be directed towards the Chair.

Before any verbal comments are made, all members must first address the Chair before commenting.

e.g. - Member Channee raises hand.

President: “ The Chair recognizes Mister Channee.”

Member Channee stands.

Member Channee: “Madam President. I would like to call upon a new motion.”

G. MAINTAINING ORDER

Occasionally, a member will intentionally or unintentionally violate accepted rules, such as speaking before gaining recognition. The proper course of action for the Chair is to:

1. Identify the individual
2. Identify the problem
3. State what the proper procedure is.

e.g. – President: “Mister Jeter, you are out of order. You failed to get recognition before participating in the debate.”

If a violation is made that is unnoticed by the Chair, a point of order may be made. This will be covered later.

PROCEDURES OF A MAIN MOTION

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of a main motion is to present the opinion or, or action proposed by, on members for the consideration of the ENTIRE organization and ultimately for their vote.

B. PHRASING THE MOTION

e.g. –

“Mister President, I move to motion for the selection of a chapter song.”

“Madam President, motion for a chapter song.”

“Mister President, move for a motion for a parliamentary procedure in chapter song selection.”

“Madam President, I propose a motion for a chapter song.”

Motions can be creative and unique depending on the individual member. However, if improper wording or procedure is used, it is the duty of the presiding officer to identify, correct, and suggest the proper wording or protocol.

C. PURPOSE OF A SECOND

The purpose of a second is to make certain the motion has the support of at least two members.

To save the Assembly’s time, it is not in order to consider the motion unless there is more than one person who will support it. Any member may freely say “I second the motion.” or “Second!” to show support of seconding the motion.

If there is no second, it is desirable for the Chair ask for a second. If there is no second, the member who originally motioned may ask for the floor to gain support for a second. If no second is obtained, then motion will be denied.

D. STATING THE MOTION

Once the motion has been seconded, the Chair must restate the motion to avoid any possibility of misunderstanding or confusion.

e.g. “The motion has been made to select our chapter song.”

After the Chair states the motion, he/she may open for discussion.

E. PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION

The purpose of discussion is to offer members the opportunity to express their opinions either in support of or in opposition to the motion.

Members may discuss verbally by obtaining recognition from the Chair.

Members may express opinions non-verbally by utilizing the Caduceus Snap or Aesculapian Hiss. This type of expression must be done with respect to the Assembly and Chair.

The presiding Chair may NOT participate in discussions, but is allowed (with the deference of the Assembly) to state matters of fact. The Chair is only there to maintain parliamentary procedure and speak on matters of order. The Chair shall not provide opinionated arguments.

The Assembly must follow proper etiquette in speaking before the Chair and Assembly as outlined previous.

F. CALLING FOR THE QUESTION

When no one else desires to speak during the discussion, the Chair may ask, “Are you ready for the question?” or “Would anyone like to move to vote?”

The proper response may vary. Support may be given with the Caduceus Snap. Or, a member may simply say (without asking for recognition), “Question!” or “Move to vote!”

NOTE: These responses may only come about if discussion has ended AND the Chair proposes the Call for Question. It is improper if other members are still waiting to speak during discussion.

If discussion is prolonged extensively, a member may move to close debate. A 2/3 vote will close the debate and allow the Chair to put the vote in to action.

However, the Chair has the discretion to continue the discussion if he/she feels that all sides have not been properly heard. All sides have the right to be heard with proper opportunity!!!

Before moving to vote, it is customary for the Chair to restate the motion.

It is important to review and note that a main motion MUST require a second. It is debatable, amendable, and can be reconsidered for a later date.

ANATOMY OF VOTING

The purpose of a vote is to secure the opinion of the majority with reference to the motion.

The decision as to what action the group will take is made on the basis of a majority vote, which will be more than half of the votes cast. The Chair is NOT permitted to vote.

However, in the event of a tie, the Chair may assume the right to break the tie by casting a vote. If this is the case, it is usually customary for a member to seek a motion for a recount, which only needs to be seconded to pass. No more than 2 recounts may be allowed per specified motion.

A. METHODS OF VOTING

- ORAL VOTING
 - Defined as a vote by “Ayes” and “Nays”
 - The Chair makes the ruling depending on which side sounds like they had the most votes.
 - If a member feels that the Chair has made an error in judging the number of vocal Ayes and Nays, a motion for division may be called (discussed later).
 - Votes are always taken by voice first unless it requires a 2/3 vote.
- STANDING OR SHOW OF HANDS
 - Defined by counting votes by those standing or raising hands in support of a motion.
 - Usually done after a member calls for a division of the Assembly.
 - Usually done if a specific number of votes need to be counted.
- VOTE BY BALLOT
 - Defined as providing members with a secret vote.
 - Mechanisms (such as using paper, electronic devices, etc) is up to the discretion of the Chair
 - Must be done for Officer Elections
- GENERAL CONSENT
 - Defined as passing a motion by having the Chair ask for objections.
 - If no objections are heard, motion is passed unanimously.
 - If objections are heard, the Chair has the discretion of choosing an alternative method of voting.

B. ANNOUNCING THE RESULTS

In announcing the results of an oral vote, the Chair may simply say, “the Ayes have it.” or “Motion is lost.”

If a procedural counting is used for voting, the Chair must announce the number of votes for each side. For example, “7 votes for, 3 votes against, and the motion is carried.”

THE AMENDMENT

An amendment is a commonly used subsidiary motion with a *purpose to change the intent of the original motion*.

Basics of an Amendment:

- Requires a second
- Debatable if needed
- Amendable in itself if needed
- Can be reconsidered
- Requires a majority ($\frac{1}{2}+$ of Assembly) vote for passage

How to utilize the amendment option upon a motion:

- Add words
- Strike out words
- Strike out and then add words
- Substitute a new motion on the same subject
e.g. – Instead of the motion, Lets buy a banner,
substitute with Lets raise money for a banner

Important Points:

- Usually proposed during discussion of main motion
- Maximum of two amendments on the floor at one time
 - This is amendment and the amendment to the amendment
 - However, the main motion may be amended infinitely
- All amendments must stay on the subject of the original main motion
- Amendment cannot be changed from a negative to a positive.
 - Vote on negative, then pass on positive
- Amendment must be voted on before voting on main motion

COMMITTEES

A committee is a body of one or more persons appointed or elected by an Assembly or Chair to investigate or take action in regard to certain matters or subjects.

A. MOTION FOR COMMITTEE

The purpose of this motion is to make it possible to secure more detailed information as a basis for action and to put the question into better shape for the assembly to consider.

The typical procedure involves receiving a main motion. Then, with or without discussion, some member will recognize that:

- Further information is necessary
- A large group will find it awkward to study the question at hand and reach a satisfied decision
- Carrying out the group's desires for additional investigation and possible decision will only require a few members.
- Fixing a committee is necessary
- Time will be saved utilizing the committee

An example of proposing such a motion is as follows: "Madam President, I move that we refer this motion to a committee and that the chair appoint that committee."

If a committee already exists, a member may state, "Madam President, I move that we refer this motion to our recreational committee."

Decisions by the committee are usually reported back on the next Chapter meeting. It is generally accepted that members must adhere to the authority of the committee's decision. Such is the investment associated with referring to a committee for a final decision.

Under extreme circumstances, a 2/3+ vote may discharge a committee. Since a committee's decision may not be reversed, a motion to nullify the committee's decision may only occur if the committee is discharged. If nullification occurs, a new motion relative to the issue at hand may be presented to the Assembly.

Requirements:

- This is a subsidiary motion
- Debatable
- Amendable
- Requires a second
- Requires more than half of the Assembly's votes for passage
- Committees must have a committee chairman appointed.

Important points of committees and the motion for committees:

- Phrasing of the motion must **SPECIFICALLY** tailor the needs of intent
- Must specify
 - Chairman of committee (who may decline)
 - Committee members (may be appointed or volunteered)
 - Exact responsibilities
 - Date of report
 - Committee reports are given to the Assembly by the committee chair
 - Committee meetings are not obliged to be formal
 - If a committee chair is unable to perform after being appointed, the remaining committee members must complete the purpose at hand.
- Whoever has the authority to appoint a committee also has the authority to appoint a chairman of the committee.

COMMON MOTIONS

A. MOTION TO LAY ON THE TABLE

The *purpose* of this motion is to enable the Assembly to lay a motion on the table to:

- Attend to more urgent business
- To lay aside the pending question
 - This allows way for consideration to be resumed at a time determined by the will of the assembly, and present it as if it were a new question
- Consider items of business in preference to it that are competing with it for consideration
- Allow time to think or consider motion before voting

Important Points:

- This motion **CANNOT** be used to suppress consideration of a question.
- This is a subsidiary motion that is
 - Not debatable
 - Not amendable
 - Cannot be reconsidered
 - A Chair should state this on occasion to remind the Assembly
- This motion takes top precedence over all subsidiary motions and all incidental motions pending at the time
- This motion lays on the table the main motion and all other motions pertaining to it.

Examples of use:

“I move to lay the question on the table.”

“I move the question be laid on the table.”

“I move the motion lay on the table.”

B. POINT OF ORDER (AKA – QUESTION OF ORDER)

The purpose of this motion is to avoid breaking any parliamentary rules AND to insist upon reinforcing all rules.

When a member feels an error in procedure or a violation of the rules has been made, this member may rise to a point of order.

This is an incidental motion that takes precedence over the question out of which it arises.

It is in order even if another member has the floor and is speaking.

This motion does NOT require a second.

This motion is NOT amendable and cannot have subsidiary motions applied to it.

It is the Chair's responsibility to acknowledge this account and must correct the error of the individual.

If the Chair is in doubt, possible options include:

- Consulting a knowledgeable member (judicial committee member)
- Submit the question to the Assembly for a vote
 - This will allow for it to be open for debate

If the point of order is brought to the Chair and the Chair disagrees, an appeal (discussed later) should immediately be taken.

C. DIVISION

After an oral vote or a vote by a show of hands, any member has the right to say:

“I call for division of the house.”

“Division!”

“I doubt the vote. Division.”

After this call, the Chair must acknowledge the motion, repeat the process by having members stand to vote, announce numbers, and calculate the percentage for and against.

“A division of the house has been called for. All who object to the original motion stand (count). 12 are against. All who are for the motion stand (count). 8 are for the motion. 2/3 of the Assembly is against so the motion is lost.”

This motion does NOT require a second and may interrupt anyone.

D. APPEAL FOR A DECISION OF THE CHAIR

At time, elected presiding officers may attempt to force their will upon the group using rulings to support their wishes.

The purpose of this appeal is to safeguard majority rule and to prevent the Chair from controlling the action of the body.

e.g. – “ Mr. President, I appeal from the decision of the Chair.”

NOTE: Usually, it is best to give the Chair the benefit of the doubt. It is usually customary to state a point of order. However, if this is sustained and a member feels a clear violation of the rules has occurred, it is in every right of any member to appeal.

Important Points:

- The appeal may be made from any decision of the Chair except another appeal.
- It can only be done at the time the ruling is made.
 - Appeals become void once discussion of the next motion commences.
- It is in order when another member has the floor.

This motion is:

- Incidental motion
- Requires a second
- Normally debatable
- Can be reconsidered
- Can NOT be amended

The Chair has the right to vote on this count. If a tie occurs, the decision falls in favor of the Chair.

E. MOTION TO SUSPEND THE RULES

The purpose of this motion is to suspend the rules so that it enables the Assembly to do something it wishes to do that it cannot do w/o suspending the rules.

This motion is:

- NOT debatable
- NOT amendable
- CANNOT be reconsidered

This motion requires a 2/3 vote for passage. This vote cannot be done vocally.

Important Points:

- Rules CANNOT be suspended without 24 hour prior notice to ALL members. Suspending the rules w/o notice would deprive the absent members of their right to participate in this particular (and important) decision.
- Rule suspension supersedes the Constitutional By-Laws. Therefore, it must only be executed under extreme situations and NOT for convenience.

F. MOTION TO LEAVE THE CHAIRMAN'S STATION

The greatest sin in parliamentary procedure is commonly seen when the Chair speaks to a question. An individual who intends to actively participate in discussion on the floor should not accept the position as presiding officer, since the reason for being chosen as Chair is due to their ability to *preside*.

Although strongly discouraged, on occasion the chair will feel obligated to participate in a discussion. If this is the case, the officer must leave the Chair and request the Vice President to chair the meeting. The original presiding officer will return to the Chair only after the question has been completely disposed of.

If no Vice President is present, the Chair is obligated to appoint a Chairman pro tem. The Chair must first consider other officers, then members of the Assembly in making this decision.

In some sessions, feelings might be strong on either side for a question at hand. The potential replacement for the Chair might have difficulty preserving proper order. The Chair's first obligation would be to then maintain his/her position and forgo speaking to the question.

Any officers or members replacing the President must be addressed as Mister/Madam Chair pro tem. However, if the Archon presides as the Chair, the correct formality would be Mister/Madam Archon.

G. MOTION TO TAKE FROM THE TABLE

The purpose of this motion to take from the table is to provide renewed consideration of a motion that was previously laid on the table for whatever reason. All precedent actions have been disposed of, or enough time has passed for consideration.

This is an unclassified motion that takes precedence of no pending question, but has precedence over the main motions.

It is:

- NOT debatable
- NOT amendable
- CANNOT be reconsidered
- NO subsidiary motions are allowed to be applied

Important notes:

- Usually the member who is first to phrase this motion has the floor first.
- Once it is taken from the table, any attached resolutions become immediate for consideration in the same order as they were prior to being laid on the table.
- The maximum amount of time allotted for taking a motion from the table is 2 succeeding sessions, but no later.

Ways to phrase:

“Madam President, I move the motion to have a party be taken from the table.”

“Madam President, I move to take from the table the motion to have a party.”

H. MOTION TO ADJOURN

The purpose of this motion is to simply terminate the meeting.

This is a great example of a privileged motion that is first in order of all precedence except for the motion to fix the time to adjourn.

This motion is:

- NOT debatable
- NOT amendable
- CANNOT be reconsidered
- This motion must have recognition from Chair to check that no important matters have been overlooked.

Adjournment puts an end to all pending business.