

# OPERATING IN A SMALL BOARD (BORED?)

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2018 Association of Florida Conservation Districts





**Smaller Segments to  
Help Get the Work Done  
More Effectively**





# PURPOSES OF PARLIAMENTARY LAW

- ▶ Express the will of the majority!
- ▶ Protect the rights of the minority, absentees and individuals!
- ▶ Handle one item of business at a time!
- ▶ Handle business as efficiently as possible!



# EXPRESS THE WILL OF THE MAJORITY

- ▶ What is a deliberative assembly?
- ▶ *A deliberative assembly makes decisions!*
- ▶ How are decisions made in a deliberative assembly?
- ▶ *Generally by majority vote but some situations require a two-thirds or majority of the entire membership etc.!*
- ▶ What are the common vote thresholds?
- ▶ *They can be a plurality, one-fifth, a majority, a majority of the entire membership, a majority and notice, three-fifths or two-thirds.*



# HANDLE ONE ITEM OF BUSINESS AT A TIME

- ▶ How is business introduced?
- ▶ *New business is introduced via a main motion or Resolution.*
- ▶ What is the difference between a pending motion and the immediately pending motion.
- ▶ *If a secondary motion is made it is said to be the immediately pending motion, while the main motion it is applied to is a pending motion*



# CONDUCT BUSINESS AS EFFICIENTLY AND EXPEDIENTLY AS POSSIBLE.

- ▶ Debate should be confined to the merits of the immediately pending question.
- ▶ Time limits for debate
- ▶ An assembly is not asked to re-litigate an issue.
- ▶ There are motions for when an item of business is taking too long.



# PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF THE MINORITY, ABSENTEES AND INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS.

- ▶ A higher vote threshold is required to take away or limit some rights of members.
- ▶ Some rights such as notice or the basic rights of a member to vote cannot be taken away except through discipline.
- ▶ A member's disagreement with an issue does not otherwise restrain or limit their membership.



# ALL RULES GROW FROM FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

- ▶ All of the rules in Roberts Rules of Order are in some way a derivation of these principles
- ▶ Examples are Limiting Debate requires a two-thirds vote because it limits the rights of a vocal minority to express their position.
- ▶ Notice of a meeting protects both the minority and absentees.
- ▶ Every member's right to vote counts the same . . . .





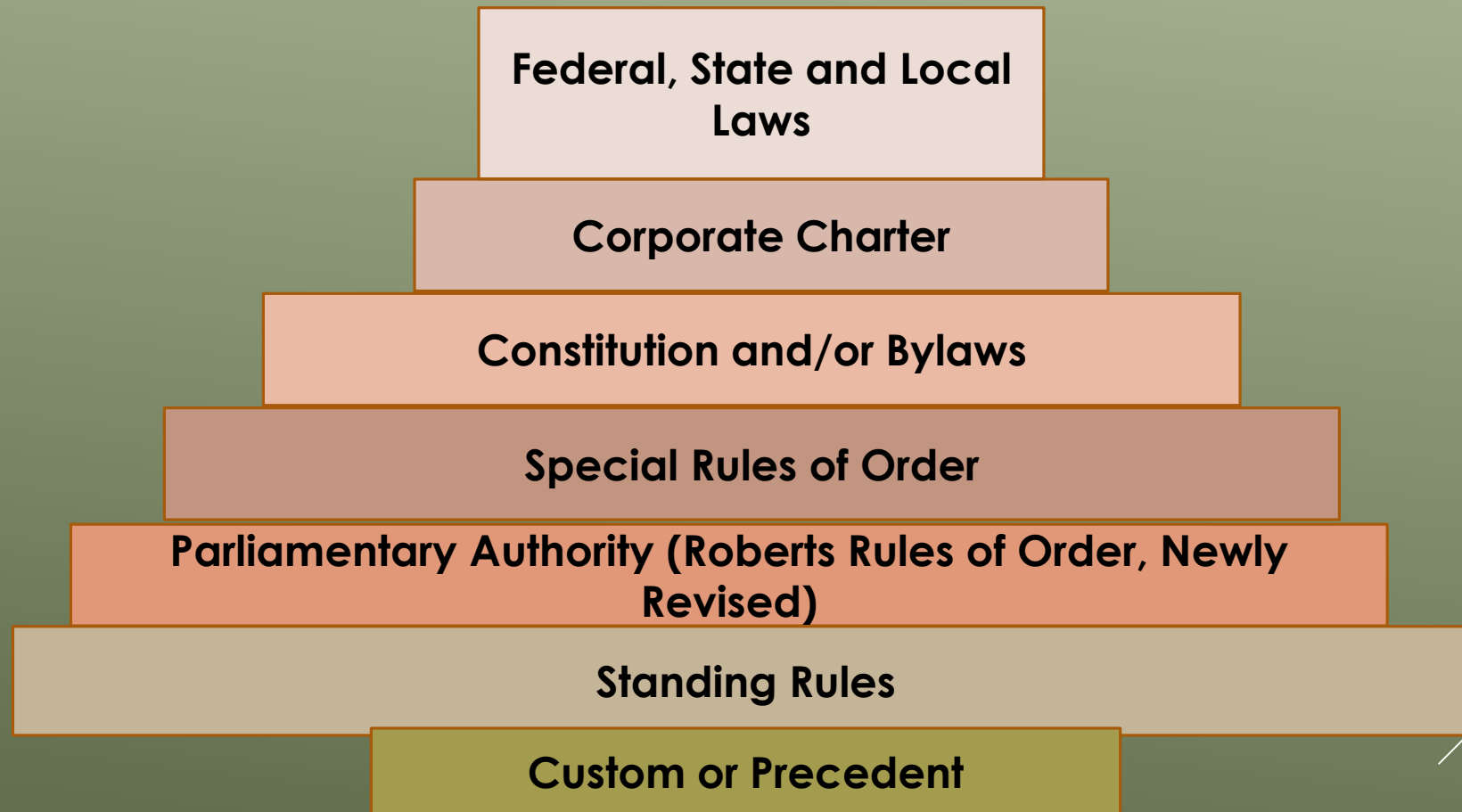


# FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF PARLIAMENTARY LAW

- ▶ Why use Roberts Rules of Order?
- ▶ If you don't use it, you will be judged based on the common parliamentary law!
- ▶ The common parliamentary law is essentially Roberts Rules of Order!



# THE HIERARCHY OF RULES





# VOTING THRESHOLDS

- Know what your voting thresholds are?
- Know what the voting threshold means?
- Generally based on the votes “cast”
- Votes based on the number present or the number of members should be avoided.



# VOTING THRESHOLDS UNDER RONR

Majority of the Quorum

Majority of the Votes Cast

Majority of those Present

Majority of the Entire Membership

Majority of the Membership Positions



# BOARD DEFINED



A board:

- 🍊 Is a form of deliberative assembly
- 🍊 Is an administrative, managerial, or quasi-judicial body of appointed or elected members

# BOARD DEFINED

## A Board:

- Has no minimum size
- Has only such powers as delegated to it by a higher authority such as the bylaws



# Conduct of Business in a Large Board or Committee

- 🍊 Consists of more than a dozen members
- 🍊 Transact business under general or formal parliamentary rules
- 🍊 Keep minutes, usually accessible only to board members



# SMALL BOARD VS LARGE BOARD

- A Small Board is defined as having less than 12 members!
- Can be stretched to about 16 members.
- Significant differences in procedure.
- A small board can always rise to a higher level of formality.



# Conduct of Business in a Small Board



- Members may speak while seated without obtaining the floor.
- Motions need not be seconded.

# Conduct of Business in a Small Board



- There is no limit to the number of times a member may speak to a question.
- Informal discussion is permitting while no motion is pending.



# Conduct of Business in a Small Board

- When a proposal is clear, a vote can be taken without a motion having been introduced. **Not Recommended!**
- The chair may stay seated while putting questions to a vote
- The chair may also speak in debate, make motions and vote without yielding the chair.



# Meeting Misconceptions Minutes

- Must minutes be read at the meeting?
- Do they require a motion to approve them?
- Must the names of the person making the second be included?
- The current trend is to adopt a rule that even the motion maker's name is not included in the minutes.



# Meeting Misconceptions Minutes

- Minutes of the Immediately Past as well as other unapproved minutes of previous meetings should be approved in order.
- Corrections are taken by the chair and unless these corrections are challenged, they stand.
- No limitation backward to correcting minutes.
- After all corrections have been taken the chair announces the minutes are approved as corrected without a motion.



# Meeting Misconceptions

## A Second is Always Required

- A second is for the chairs guidance and to prevent wasting the assemblies time.
- The name of the seconder is not included in the minutes.
- Some motions do not require a second!



# Meeting Misconceptions

## A Second is Always Required

- A second does not necessarily mean that a member is in favor of a motion.
- A motion that is debated and then it is discovered that there was no second or one that passed without a second is still valid because no member objected at the time.





# Meeting Misconceptions

## A Committee or Officer Report Requires Approval or a Motion

- No Action is required on these items unless it is an annual report or the Board member or Standing Committee Chair introduces a motion.
- Reports of Officers should simply be filed!



# Meeting Misconceptions

## A Committee or Officer Report Requires Approval or a Motion

- Committee Reports do not require a second.
- If the committee reports back on a motion referred to it, the motion is in the same state as when it was referred.



# Meeting Misconceptions

## The “So Moved” Phenomenon

- Can't happen unless you have discussion with no motion!
- Usually breeds confusion!
- The chair can assume a motion!
- The belief is that it saves time until it doesn't and it drives the secretary nuts!



# Meeting Misconceptions

## Tabling a Motion is Used to Kill it or Postpone It

- Lay on the table is used to set something aside for more important urgent business.
- Once the urgent matter is over, the group can then resume the matter that was tabled.
- Because it is not debatable, high ranking and only requires a majority vote it is often misused.
- Lay on the Table should be ruled out of order if the evident intent is to kill or avoid dealing with a measure.



# Meeting Misconceptions

When Someone calls for the “Question” debate is over

- “Question” is not necessarily a motion however, Previous Question may be used to stop debate and the making of secondary motions.
- Previous Question does require two-thirds vote making sure that that is the will of the assembly to stop debate.



# Meeting Misconceptions

## What it means to “approve” the Treasurer’s Report

- A common error is receiving or accepting the Treasurer’s Report by a vote. This in effect endorses and approves the treasurer’s report as being accurate and the assembly accepts all of the actions of the Treasurer.
- Again, if the treasurer reports, it is for informational purposes only.



# Meeting Misconceptions

Parliamentary Procedure wastes too much time

- One of the primary purposes of Parliamentary Procedure is to conduct business efficiently and effectively.
- Use of Parliamentary Procedure avoids redundancy and repeating procedures actually saves time.
- Even if slightly more time is used, ensuring that the will of the majority is expressed is important.



# Meeting Misconceptions

## Meetings and Minutes are Designed to Disseminate Information

- Meetings are designed for making decisions not passing out information. A member should attend a meeting to express their vote and try to sway their fellow members to their school of thought.
- Minutes are a record of what was DONE at a meeting not a record of what was said. If a member does not attend a meeting they certainly don't need a transcript of the meeting.





# THE STEPS IN PROCESSING A MOTION

- ▶ A member “makes” a motion.
- ▶ It is seconded.
- ▶ The Chair restates the motion.
- ▶ The assembly debates the motion if debatable.
- ▶ The Chair “puts” the motion to a vote.
- ▶ The Chair announces the results of the vote and its effect.



# 1) MOTION IS MADE!

- ▶ Member rises and addresses the chair
- ▶ Chair recognizes the member
- ▶ Member make motions starting with “I move”
- ▶ No short cuts such as “So moved”
- ▶ The chair can require the motion be in writing!



# SECONDING A MOTION

A second is not recorded in the minutes other than that it occurred and is not required in a committee.

A second is merely for the guidance of the chairman to ensure that more than one members wishes to bring the motion to the floor.

A second does not mean the member necessarily supports the issue.

The lack of a second does not invalidate business that is subsequently conducted.

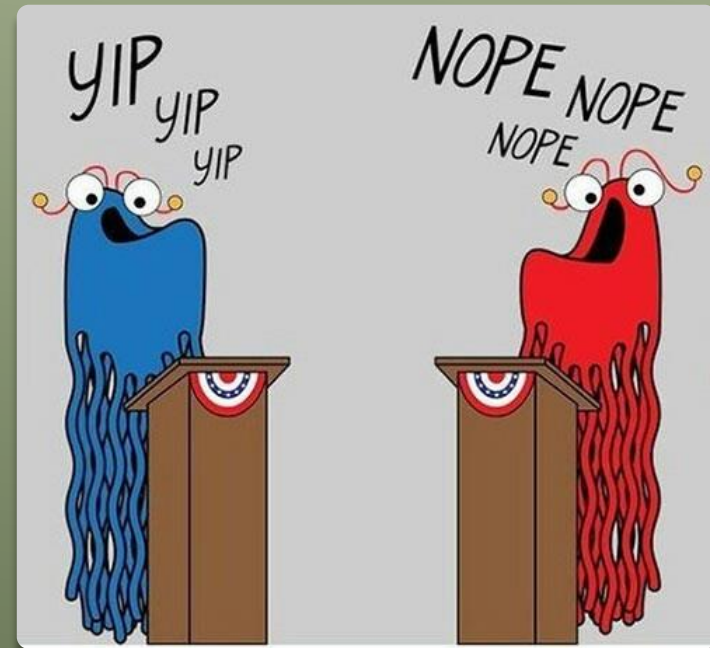
# 3) THE CHAIR STATES THE MOTION



- ▶ This is a ruling of the chair whether the motion is in order or not.
- ▶ The chair states the motion by saying “It is moved and seconded to” Note the present tense!
- ▶ Once the chair states the motion it is the property of the assembly.

## 4) DEBATE AND AMENDMENT OCCUR

- ▶ A member can only debate twice on any one motion.
- ▶ Each debate can only last 10 minutes.
- ▶ These lengths and times are commonly modified.
- ▶ The method of recognizing members should be uniform.



## 5) THE CHAIRMAN PUTS THE MOTION TO A VOTE.

- ▶ The chair completely restates the motion that is about to be voted on. No Shortcuts!
- ▶ The wording the chair uses immediately before taking the vote is what should appear in the minutes
- ▶ Always take both sides of the vote no matter how unanimous it seems.
- ▶ Don't use leading terms in taking a vote that destroy the chair's appearance of impartiality.



## 6) THE CHAIR ANNOUNCES THE OUTCOME OF THE VOTE

- ▶ The Chair has a responsibility to ascertain the true outcome of the vote!
- ▶ The first declaration is which side has it
- ▶ The second declaration is the motion is adopted or lost!
- ▶ If adopted, the chair states the result of the motion i.e. “we will \_\_\_\_\_”
- ▶ The chair moves on to the next item of business



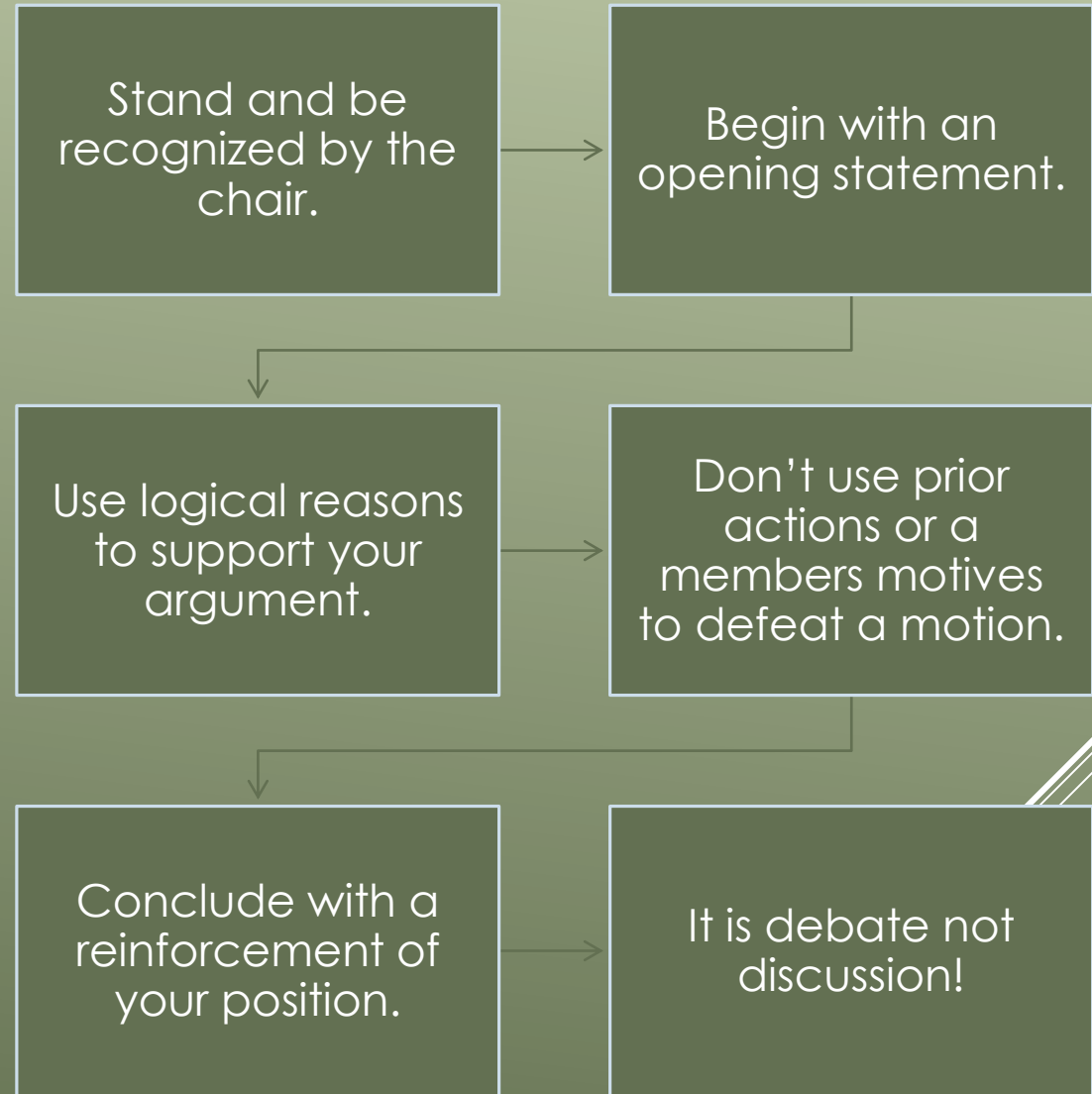
# EXAMPLES OF CHAIR BIAS (UNINTENTIONAL?)

- ▶ “Those in Favor Say Aye! Are there any opposed?”
- ▶ “Surely, no one is opposed to this motion! Is there any objection?”





# DEBATING AT A MEETING



## DEBATING AT A MEETING RULES OF DECORUM IN DEBATE

Debate must be germane or pertinent to the immediately pending motion.

A member cannot speak against their own motion.

A member cannot attack another member's motives.

A member must refrain from disturbing the assembly.

Avoid the use of member's names.

## DEBATING AT A MEETING RULES OF DECORUM IN DEBATE

1

Address all remarks to the chair.

2

Refrain from speaking adversely on a prior action not currently pending.

3

Be seated during an interruption by the chair.

4

Refrain from reading from papers without permission.

5

**Chair, except in very small boards and committees, should not speak in debate unless they relinquish the chair.**

# VOTING AT A MEETING

- ▶ Most votes will be taken by either a voice vote or unanimous consent.
- ▶ Votes requiring a two-thirds vote will be taken by rising.
- ▶ The chair may order the vote counted at their discretion.
- ▶ Don't move for roll call votes or ballot votes unless absolutely necessary. *THE VOTE WILL MOST LIKELY STAY THE SAME.*



# VOTING AT A MEETING-MAJORITY VOTE

- ▶ A majority is defined as “more than half of the **votes cast!**”
- ▶ A majority is not 50% plus one or 51%.
- ▶ 50% plus one of 7 is 3.5 plus 1 is 4.5 so to make it a majority it would have to be actually 5.
- ▶ 51% of 1000 votes cast would be 510 not 501.
- ▶ If there are 90 voting members and only 40 cast a vote, what is a majority.



# VOTING AT A MEETING-TWO-THIRDS VOTE

- ▶ A two thirds vote is defined as “two thirds of the **votes cast!**
- ▶ It is not 66% of the votes cast or based on the number in the room.
- ▶ If 88 votes are cast and the votes are 58 to 30 is it two-thirds?
- ▶ If 87 votes are cast and it is 57 to 29?
- ▶ If there are 90 voting members and only 40 cast a vote, what is a majority.

*What is two-thirds and a majority of 6?*



# VOTING AT A MEETING

- ▶ Other voting thresholds include:
- ▶ Plurality-Whoever receives the most votes
- ▶ Majority of the Entire Membership-Exactly what is says!
- ▶ Unanimous consent-satisfies all voting requirements



# MAIN MOTIONS OR RESOLUTIONS

- ▶ The lowest ranking of all motions.
- ▶ Can only be introduced when no other business is pending.
- ▶ Introduces a new substantive topic to the assembly
- ▶ Should state a specific action to be taken and not conflict with the governing documents or a previous motion still in effect.





# SECONDARY MOTIONS

## 01

Privileged Motions-  
Unrelated to the business  
at hand but of  
overriding importance.  
The Highest Ranking  
Motions.

## 02

Subsidiary Motions-  
Motions or Tools to help  
you dispose of or modify  
a motion. Rank Below  
Privileged Motions but  
above Main or Bring  
Back Motions.

# SECONDARY MOTIONS

## 01

Incidental Motions- Motions that deal with procedure or conduct of the meeting. Generally arise out of pending business. Have not rank or take on the rank of the motion they are applied to.

## 02

Bring back motions- (Motions that bring a matter again before the assembly) not secondary motions but allow for you do undo something you have done.

# PRIVILEGED MOTIONS

- ▶ Have an order or rank from high to low.
- ▶ Fix the Time to Which to Adjourn-Sets the time and place of a continuation of the current meeting.
- ▶ Generally not applicable in a convention.



# PRIVILEGED MOTIONS

- ▶ Adjourn- Ends a meeting or a session. If no time is set for the next meeting this motion may end the existence of the assembly.
- ▶ I have a video from the adjournment of the 2018 NACD Convention.



# PRIVILEGED MOTIONS

- ▶ Adjourn- Ends a meeting or a session. If no time is set for the next meeting this motion may end the existence of the assembly.



# PRIVILEGED MOTIONS



- ▶ Recess- A chance for adults to go to the playground-actually a short intermission to count ballots, obtain information, obtain a quorum or consult informally.

# PRIVILEGED MOTIONS

- ▶ Question of Privilege- A request for the chair to resolve an Issue with the comfort of the assembly or go into executive session.
- ▶ Call for the Orders of the Day- Demand of a single member which requires the assembly to conform to the agenda.



# RULES FOR PRIVILEGED MOTIONS

- ▶ Adjourn and Recess require a majority vote.
- ▶ Question of Privilege is a ruling by the chair
- ▶ Call for the Orders of the Day is a demand by a single member.





# RULES FOR MOTIONS

- ▶ There are seven standard descriptive characteristics for every motion. The first is included in the rank of the motions from top to bottom.
- ▶ The following rules are for the rank within the Subsidiary Motions not the overall rank.



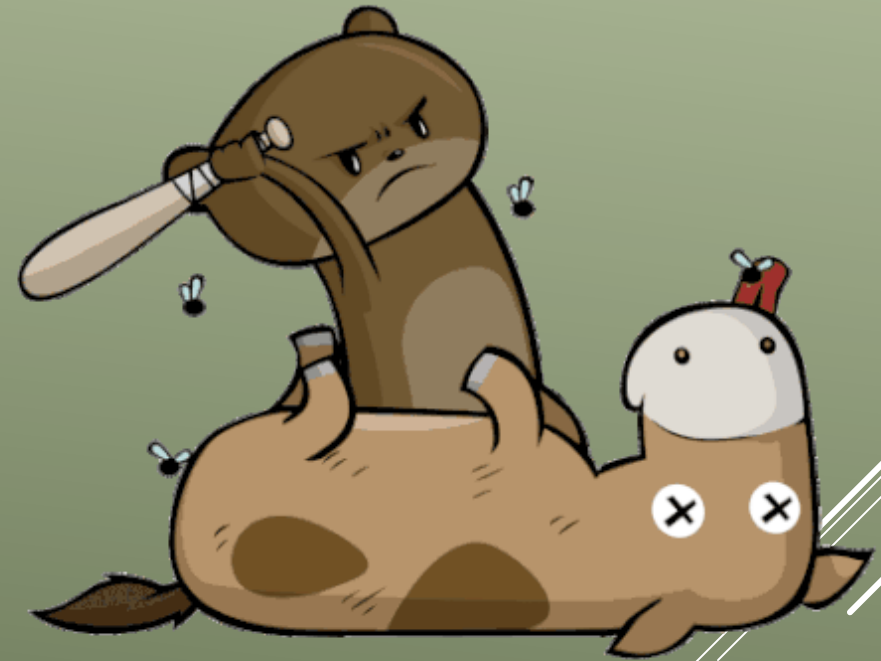
# SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS

- ▶ Have an order of precedence from high to low.
- ▶ Lay on the Table- Used to set aside a matter for more important or urgent business. Commonly misused in place of postpone to a certain time.



# SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS

- ▶ Previous Question- Immediately closes debate and amendments of the pending motion or a series of pending motions. Commonly referred to as calling the “Question”



# SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS

- ▶ Limit or Extend Debates- Alters the standard limits of debate, the total time for debate or at what hour debate should close.



# SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS

- ▶ Postpone to a Certain Time- Postpones a motion to later in the same meeting or the next meeting as long as the next meeting is within a quarterly interval.



# SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS

- ▶ Refer to a committee- Sends a motion to a smaller group to further study the motion or gather information.



# AMENDMENTS-METHODS OF AMENDING A MOTION

- ▶ Strike Words
- ▶ Strike Paragraphs
- ▶ Insert (or Add) Words
- ▶ Insert (or Add) Paragraphs
- ▶ Strike and Insert Words
- ▶ Substitute for a Motion or Paragraph



# MAKING AMENDMENTS-A WORD PROCESSOR

- ▶ When you highlight words and press enter they are gone or struck.
- ▶ When you move the cursor to a position and type they are inserted.
- ▶ When you highlight words and then type in the same place the words are struck and then the new words inserted.







Which!



What?



11  
for answering purposes only.

000602  
Pavel Losensky | Dze

Where?



# MAKING AMENDMENTS-WITCH! (WHICH?) WHAT? WHERE?

- ▶ Which? (Witch?) form of amendment are you using?
- ▶ What words are you moving, deleting or inserting?
- ▶ Where do you want to place those words?

- ▶ I move to insert **Which?** s “up to \$ **What?** fore “convention fees” **Where?**



# PROPER AMENDMENTS

- ▶ Amendments **may change the intent** of the motion.
- ▶ Amendments may be friendly . . . . . But who decides?
- ▶ Amendments may be hostile to the intent or outcome of the motion.
- ▶ In any case, all amendments are handled the same. No exception for “friendly” amendments.



# PROPER AMENDMENTS-CASPER



- ▶ Casper the Friendly Ghost was still a Ghost
- ▶ He often unintentionally scared people so in their eyes he was not always “friendly”.
- ▶ His intention was always good but it often had unforeseen consequences.
- ▶ Robert’s Rules of Order recommends that all ghosts be treated equally although they can be allowed if no one objects!

# IMPROPER AMENDMENTS

- ▶ Amendments that are the negation of the main motion.
- ▶ Amendments that change one form of amendment to another.
- ▶ Amendments that change one parliamentary form to another.



# IMPROPER AMENDMENTS

- ▶ An amendment that, if adopted, makes the main motion out of order.
- ▶ An amendment that strikes enacting words such as “Resolved”
- ▶ Amendments that are not “germane”.



# TESTING FOR GERMANENESS

- ▶ In order for an amendment to be “germane” it must involve the underlying motion in some way.
- ▶ A secondary amendment must be germane to the primary amendment not the underlying motion.
- ▶ To be “germane” it must not introduce an independent question that can stand alone.
- ▶ Who decides if the amendment is “germane”?



# TESTING FOR GERMANENESS

- ▶ If the Chairman is unsure if the amendment is germane, they should allow the amendment.
- ▶ In important cases, the decision on whether an amendment is germane can be referred to the assembly.
- ▶ The assembly always is the final decision maker on whether an amendment is germane or not via Point of Order and Appeal.





# RESTATING AN AMENDMENT A.M.P.

- ▶ A. The **Amendment** that is proposed
- ▶ M. How the **Motion** would read if adopted
- ▶ P. The immediately **Pending** motion



# PUTTING AN AMENDMENT TO A VOTE A.M.P.P.

- ▶ A. The *Amendment* that is proposed
- ▶ M. How the *Motion* would read if adopted
- ▶ P. *Put* the *Pending* amendment to a vote.



# SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS

- ▶ Postpone Indefinitely-Kills a motion for the remainder of the session.



# INCIDENTAL MOTIONS

- ▶ No Rank or Precedence Among Themselves
- ▶ The motion generally takes on the rank of the motion to which it is applied.
- ▶ Most arise out of the business at hand.



# INCIDENTAL MOTIONS



- ▶ Point of Order- Calls the chair's attention to a breach of order
- ▶ Each member has an affirmative obligation to protect their own rights. The next four motions are the primary way that is accomplished.

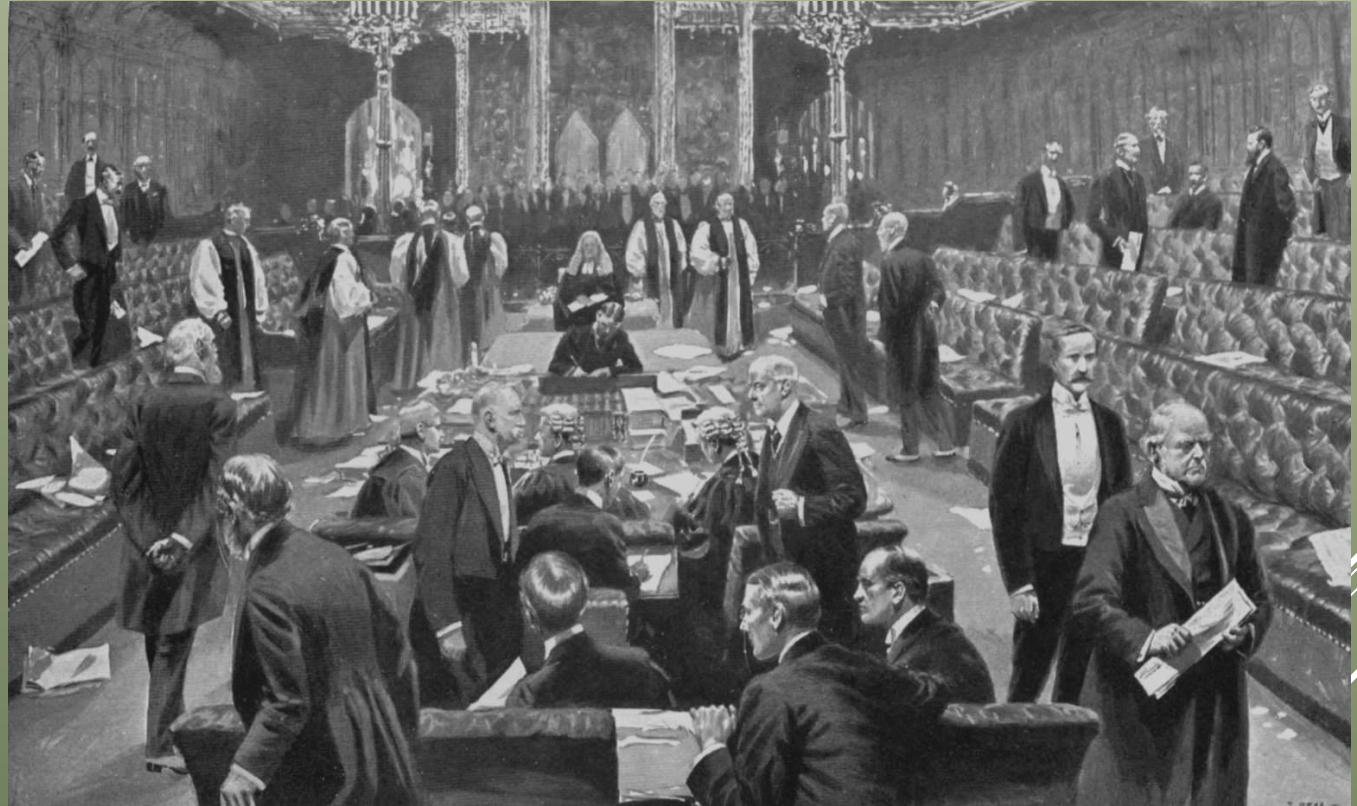
# INCIDENTAL MOTIONS



- ▶ Appeal- Disagreement with a ruling made by chair.

# INCIDENTAL MOTIONS

- ▶ Division of the Assembly- Demands a more accurate vote after a voice vote.



# INCIDENTAL MOTIONS



- ▶ Parliamentary Inquiry- Asks a parliamentary question of the chair.



# INCIDENTAL MOTIONS



- ▶ Suspend the Rules- Allows the assembly to deviate from some of its rules of order or standing rules.
- ▶ Rules protecting individual rights, absentees or for a purpose outside the meeting cannot be suspended.

# INCIDENTAL MOTIONS

- ▶ Division of the Question- Divides a motion with two or more independent parts to be considered independently.
- ▶ Withdraw a Motion- Removes a motion from the floor by the motion maker.
- ▶ Object to the Consideration of Question-Eliminates consideration of the motion without debate or amendment.
- ▶ Other requests- Request to speak when no motion is pending or read from papers.



# INCIDENTAL MOTIONS

- ▶ Request for Information- Asks a non-parliamentary question-must be directed to the chair. This is NOT an opportunity to give information.



# MOTIONS THAT BRING A MATTER AGAIN BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY (BRING BACK MOTIONS)

- ▶ Take from the Table- Makes pending again a motion that has been laid on the table.
- ▶ Discharge a Committee- Removes consideration of a motion from a committee.



# MOTIONS THAT BRING A MATTER AGAIN BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY (BRING BACK MOTIONS)

- ▶ Reconsider-Makes pending again a motion that has been adopted or lost
- ▶ Rescind or Amend Something Previously Adopted-Also called repealed or annul. Undoes an action that has been taken by the assembly at a previous meeting.



# PRECEDENCE OF MOTIONS

- ▶ There is a definitive rank or order of motions.
- ▶ Motions of a higher precedence can be made while a lower ranking motion is pending.
- ▶ Motions of lower rank cannot be made while a higher or equal ranking motion is pending.
- ▶ Most Incidental motions have no inherent rank and take on the rank of the motion they are applied to.

