



# Parliamentary Procedure

Parliamentary Procedure refers to rules that exist so that business meetings are organized and orderly. The rules ensure that everyone has a chance to participate, be heard, and help the group reach decisions.

Only one person may speak at a time. The president of the organization announces the order of business and calls on people to speak. When a person wants the group to take action, he/she makes a motion suggesting that action, and the membership takes a vote to decide.



## Order of Business for a 4-H Meeting

1. **Call to order** - *(President stands, strikes gavel)* "This meeting of the \_\_\_\_\_ 4-H Club will come to order. Please stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance led by \_\_\_\_\_ and the 4-H Pledge led by \_\_\_\_\_."

Generally the president stands when talking and sits when someone else is delivering a report.

2. **Roll Call** - "The secretary will call the roll." (The president or secretary will announce the preferred way to answer roll call. Probably the year's program booklet will list the roll call subject for each meeting.)

3. **Reading of the minutes** - "The secretary will read the minutes of the last meeting." (Secretary stands, reads minutes, and then sits.) The president stands and asks, "Are there any additions or corrections? If not, they stand approved as read."

If there are corrections, the president asks them to be made and then says, "The minutes stand approved as corrected."

4. **Treasurer's Report** - "We will now have the treasurer's report." The president sits, and the treasurer reports on the following: money received, money spent and the present balance. The president stands and says, "Are there any questions about the treasurer's report? If not, the report is received as read." (The treasurer's report is approved once a year after an audit.)

5. **Other Reports** - The president asks for the following reports:

Leaders' reports  
 Additional Officers' reports  
 Committee reports

Put someone in charge of reporting on the newsletter published by the county Extension office. Encourage members to bring their copy!

(If any of the reports calls for an action of the club, usually the person making the report makes a motion for the action to be taken, and it is usually seconded by another person on the committee. The president then repeats the motion and asks for discussion. (See below for "Motions.")

6. **Unfinished Business** - (Something discussed but not decided at a previous meeting)  
 "Secretary, were there any motions postponed until this meeting?"

"Is there any other unfinished business? If not, we will proceed to new business."

7. **New Business** - (Business not previously discussed)  
 "Is there new business to be brought before the club?"

Member 1: Mr. President, I move that \_\_\_\_\_.

Member 2: I second the motion.

President: It has been moved and seconded that \_\_\_\_\_. Is there any discussion?

After discussion is over . . .

President: All those in favor of (repeat motion), signify by raising your hand. All those opposed, raise your hand. Motion carries (or fails).

See more information about motions and voting in sections below.

8. **Announcements**- "Are there any announcements?"

Always announce dates of upcoming activities and meetings.

9. **Adjournment** - The business portion of the meeting can be adjourned before the program and group building. "Is there a motion to adjourn?" Receive motion and second. "It has been moved and seconded the meeting be adjourned. All in favor, say 'Aye.' All opposed, say 'No.' Meeting adjourned." (Use gavel.)

10. **Program** - "We will now ask our Vice President to announce the program." The president allows the Vice President/Program chairperson to take charge during this part of the meeting.

11. **Group Building** - During this part of the meeting, there can be team building activities, recreation, refreshments, and/or celebrating.



## Conducting Business Using Motions

**Main motion** - Beginning of an idea for an action to be taken by the club.

A member rises and asks for the floor:

Member 1: Mr./Madame President

President: Member 1

(When the president recognizes a member, we say he/she has the floor.)

Member 1: I move that we donate \$25.00 from our treasury to the 4-H Foundation.

Member 2: I second the motion. (sometimes shortened to simply "Second.")

(A member doesn't have to be recognized to second a motion.)

President: It has been moved and seconded that we donate \$25 to the 4-H Foundation. Is there any discussion?

Member 3: Since we learned today that we have only \$35 dollars in our treasury, I don't think we can afford to give \$25 this year.

**Amendment motion** - Changing the main motion

Member 4: I move that we amend the motion by substituting the words "\$25" with "\$15."

Member 3: Second

President: It has been moved and seconded to amend the motion by substituting "\$25" with "\$15." Is there any discussion? Hearing none, we will vote on the amendment. All in favor, raise your hand. All opposed, raise your hand. The motion is amended.

Is there other discussion on the main motion? Hearing none, we will vote on the motion to donate \$15 from our treasury to the 4-H Foundation. All in favor, raise your hand. All opposed, raise your hand. The motion passes. Treasurer, please write and mail a check for \$15 to the 4-H Foundation.

Is there other business?

**Voting on motions** - The President decides on the method of voting:

1. Voice vote: All those in favor, say "Aye." Those opposed, say "Nay/No."
2. By standing
3. By raising of hand
4. By ballot (distributing paper on which each member writes yes or no.)
5. By calling roll and asking each person to say "aye" or "no."

The president votes only to break a tie vote.

**Amending a Motion** - An amendment can be amended in the following ways:

1. Inserting or adding a phrase.  
"I move to amend the motion by adding the words "Crawford County" before 4-H Foundation."
2. By striking out a word or phrase.  
"I move to strike the phrase 'from our treasury' from the motion."
3. By substituting a word, phrase, or entire statement  
"I move that we amend the motion by substituting the words '\$25' with '\$15.'"

After an amendment has been offered, seconded, and discussed, **only the amendment is voted on**. After it passes, the main motion must be voted on as amended. If the amendment fails, the main motion must be voted on as originally stated.

### Other Pertinent Rules about Motions

1. Only one main motion may be on the floor at one time. It must be postponed, sent to committee, or voted on before another main motion can be made. A motion to postpone or to send to committee is not a main motion and can be offered to clear a main motion from the floor. Motions to postpone or to send to a committee require a majority vote to pass.
2. With the approval of the members who made and seconded a motion, it can be withdrawn from the floor without a vote.
3. If a motion doesn't receive a second, it dies (is no longer considered).
4. If debate on a main motion drags on and on, any member may call for the vote:

Member 1: Mr./Madame President, I move (or call) the previous question.  
Member 2: Second

The motion to call the previous question may not be debated and requires a 2/3 majority to pass. If it passes, a vote is taken immediately on the main motion.



## Electing Officers

Some clubs will have special rules for eligibility to be an officer; for example, some clubs may require that officers be starting their third year in the club. Also, it is important that everyone knows the duties of officers. For the club to have a successful year, the people elected must be willing to carry out those duties! Perhaps current officers can give a short report about the work they've done.

In some clubs, each eligible member is asked what office he/she would like to be nominated for.

As nominations for officers open, the members need to know who is eligible to be nominated, and also they need to consider who will work conscientiously in each office.

President: Nominations are now open for President.

Member 1: I nominate Bill.

Member 2: I nominate Sue.

Member 3: I move nominations be closed.

Member 4: Second

President: It has been moved and seconded that nominations be closed. All in favor, raise your hand.

All opposed, raise your hand. The motion passes.\* Will the chair of the Nomination Committee please pass out the ballots?

\* Note: after the nominations are closed, it is appropriate for those nominated to give speeches telling why they want to be elected.

All members should write either Bill's or Sue's name on the ballot.

The nomination committee can collect and count the ballots.

The president should announce the results of the election for president and then announce that nominations are now open for Vice President.



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provides equal opportunities in  
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