



# Parliamentarian Information and Procedures

*Pointers for Presiding Officers  
Parliamentary Information  
Tip Sheet from National PTA*



## Parliamentary Pointers for Presiding Officers

1. Read the Unit Bylaws and Standing Rules. Have copies available for all Officers of members by request.
2. Be punctual – begin and end meetings at the announced time. Follow a written agenda. Make a copy for the Recording Secretary for Board and General Unit meetings.
3. When making an agenda, contact officers and chairmen to see if they have a report. It is not necessary to call on them if they don't have a report.
4. This is a membership organization. Only paid members have the privilege of making motions, debating and voting.
5. A "motion" brings an issue or action before the assembly (the Board or General Membership). After the motion is "moved" by a member it must be seconded (unless the motion comes from committee). The chair then restates the motion. At that point the motion is "before the assembly" and may be debated (if debatable).
6. After the discussion and vote the chair should announce the result of the vote and the action that will be taken.
7. Enforce the rules of debate – a member may speak twice to a motion only after any member who wishes has spoken once.
8. As presiding officer you do not have the privilege of debate and may vote only when there is a ballot or a tie vote.
9. The chair may assume a motion to approve the minutes ("if there is no objection, the minutes will stand approved "as read", "as printed" or "as corrected.")
10. No action is required on the Treasurer's report – the report is filed for audit. The chair should thank the Treasurer and ask if there are any questions. The audit report must be approved.
11. The President should be invited to attend all committee meetings (except the nominating committee) and has the same privileges in committee as any member of the committee.
12. The President is always in charge and makes all rulings (the Parliamentarian acts only as an advisor, the ruling is made by the chair). However, members have the right to appeal a decision by the chair.
13. If the President wishes to speak in debate on a motion, he must pass the gavel to the next officer in line. The President does not resume the gavel until that motion has been resolved.
14. Parliamentary procedure is simply common sense- a way to conduct business with:
  - ❖ Courtesy and fairness to everyone
  - ❖ Taking one thing at a time
  - ❖ Allowing the minority to be heard, the majority to rule
  - ❖ Protecting the rights of the absentee



## Parliamentary Information

**ALL PTA UNITS FOLLOW** (subject to applicable provisions in national, state & local laws and National and State PTA): **Your Bylaws\***, **ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER NEWLY REVISED\***, and **Your Standing Rules\***.

\* You should have a copy of all these documents at all PTA meetings

### The Parliamentarian:

- is chosen by the PTA President to serve during the President's term of office
- does not serve in any office or as a member of the Board of Managers while serving in this position
- does not have voting privileges
- may be consulted on any matter by the President/Chair, but, the decision is made by the President, not the Parliamentarian
- attends all Board of Manager meetings, Executive Committee meetings, and any other meetings at the request of the President

### Standing Rules and Quorums:

- Standing Rules cannot conflict with the bylaws. Standing Rules must be voted on and adopted by a majority vote of the body. Standing Rules may be amended by a two-thirds vote unless previous notice of change is given in advance (in which case only a majority vote is needed) or a vote of majority of the entire membership.
- A quorum is required in the standing rules of all Kansas PTA units. If one is not specified then per *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* it is "a majority of all the members." A quorum is the number of members that can be expected to attend regular meetings of the PTA. This **MUST** be a number and not a percentage. Once this number has been adopted there has to be that number present at a meeting for any business to be legally transacted. The only action that can legally be taken when a quorum is not present is to fix the time to which to adjourn, adjourn, recess, or take measures to obtain a quorum. The requirement of a quorum cannot be waived. Before any voting begins the President or Chairman **MUST** be assured a quorum is present.

### Voting:

- A majority vote requires one half of the total vote plus one.
- A 2/3 vote is taken by a rising vote- if questioned, a count is taken. It is needed when there is:
  - A vote to limit, extend or close the limits of debate.



- A motion to suspend or modify rules of order previously adopted.
  - A motion that close nominations or the polls (or limits the freedom of nominating or voting).
  - A motion that prevents the introduction of a question for consideration.
  - A motion that takes away membership or office.
- The presiding officer votes only in a ballot vote or in the case of a tie in either a majority vote or a 2/3 vote. The Chair always asks for the affirmative votes of a motion first (“all those in favor say aye”) . The Chair then asks for the negative votes (“all those opposed say “nay”/”no”).
  - Ballot votes – teller’s report: When voting is completed and the votes have been tallied, the chairman of the tellers stands, addresses the Chair, reads the teller’s report and hands it to the Chair. The reporting teller NEVER declares the result of a ballot vote. **The result is ALWAYS declared by the chair (after reading the teller’s report).** The teller’s report is entered into the minutes.

References: *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised*, 11<sup>th</sup> Edition and  
*Pointers on Parliamentary Procedure* by National Association of Parliamentarians, Sixth Edition, 2012



## Parliamentary Procedures Tip Sheet from National PTA

A parliamentary procedure outline for PTA leaders including steps to process a motion, amend motions, and more.

### **Steps to Process a Main Motion:**

1. Member rises and addresses the chair:  
*Madam President.*
2. Chair recognizes member.
3. Member makes motion.  
*I move that...*
4. Another member seconds the motion.  
*Second [or] I second the motion.*
5. The chair states the motion and opens debate.  
*It is moved and seconded that...Is there any discussion?*
6. Chair recognizes members wishing to speak.
7. After debate concludes. Chair puts the question to a vote.  
*The question is on the motion to...Those in favor of the motion say "aye." Those opposed say "no."*
8. Chair announces the result of the vote and what action will be taken.  
*The "ayes" have it, and the motion is adopted. We will [stating action to be taken].*
9. The chair continues with the next business in order.

### **General consent:**

*"If there is no objection, we will..." (Pause) "Since there is no objection, we will..."*

### **Voice vote:**

*"As many as are in favor, say "aye." As many opposed, say "no." The "ayes/noes" have it and the motion is adopted/defeated."*

### **Rising vote (not counted):**

*"Those in favor will rise. Thank you, be seated. Those opposed will rise. Thank you, be seated. They "ayes" have it and the motion is adopted."*

### **Tips on Counting a Vote**

Divide the meeting room into clearly defined "counting areas"

- Appoint and train tellers in advance
- Divide the meeting room into clearly defined "counting areas"
- Have an "only delegate" seating area
- Give clear voting instructions from the chair
- Voters stand and hold voter cards as they vote
- Count off when teller points to voter
- Voter sits down after voting
- Teller records number of votes in the section



- Head teller totals votes of all sections
- Repeat process for the negative vote
- Chair announces the result of the vote

#### **Methods of Amending**

**By striking out:** "I move to amend the motion by striking out the word "Denver."

**By inserting:** "I move to amend the motion by inserting the word 'Las Vegas' after the word 'Portland.'"

**By striking out and inserting:** "I move to amend the motion by striking out the word '\$35' and inserting the word '\$50.'"

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