

PARLIAMENTARY TERMS

AGENDA: an outlined plan of an entire business session; an order of business.

ACCEPT: adopt, approve, agree to.

ADOPT: approve, agree to, accept.

AMEND: modify or change the wording of a motion before action is taken upon the motion itself.

ANNOUNCING THE VOTE: declaration by the chair of the result of the vote.

ASSEMBLY: a body of people assembled for the transaction of business.

ARE YOU READY FOR THE QUESTION: debate (discussion) is in order.

BYLAWS: basic rules of a society which relate to itself as an organization.

CARRIED: adopted, approved.

CHAIR: the presiding officer; the place or station of the presiding officer.

DIVISION OF THE ASSEMBLY: a motion requiring that a vote taken by voice or by show of hands be retaken by rising.

EX OFFICIO: "from the office" or by virtue of the office or chairmanship. Bylaws frequently provide that the president shall be an ex-officio member of all committees except the nominating committee.

FLOOR, OBTAIN THE: securing recognition by the chair as having the right to speak in a meeting.

GENERAL CONSENT: unanimous consent; informal agreement of the assembly. The chair asks if there is any objection to a certain procedure; *silence gives consent*.

GERMANE: closely related; of the same subject matter. Example: an amendment must be germane to the motion to which it is applied.

IMMEDIATELY PENDING QUESTION: the latest question (motion) stated by the chair when more than one question is pending.

INCIDENTAL MOTIONS: motions which deal with questions of procedure arising out of other motions or items of business.

MAIN MOTION: A motion that introduces business to an assembly.

MAJORITY VOTE: over half of the votes *cast*.

MEETING: a single gathering of persons or members of an organization, usually for the purpose of transacting business. See *Session*.

MINUTES: the record of the proceedings of an assembly. Sometimes referred to as the *journal*.

MOTION: a formal proposal that certain action be taken, or that a certain statement express the sense, opinion, desire, or will of the assembly.

PARLIAMENTARY LAW: a consistent system of rules which govern procedure in all deliberative assemblies; founded upon certain fundamental principles originated in the unwritten customs of the House of Parliament in England; first compiled for use in this country by Thomas Jefferson, whose manual has been the foundation for rules used in the United States House of Representatives and Senate.

PENDING: before the assembly. A motion is "pending" after it has been stated by the chair and until it is disposed of temporarily or permanently.

PLURALITY VOTE: the largest number of votes received by a candidate or proposition when three or more choices are possible. A plurality vote never decides a question or election except by specific rule of the organization.

PRECEDENCE, TAKES: outranks; used in reference to the order in which motions can be introduced and must be considered by the assembly.

PREVIOUS NOTICE: announcement that a specific motion will be introduced at the next meeting; substance of the proposal should be described at least briefly; unless specified otherwise in the bylaws, must be made at the preceding meeting or included in the call of the meeting at which it is to be brought up.

PRIVILEGED MOTIONS: a class of motions which, although they are not directly concerned with the business before the assembly, are of such immediate importance that they have the privilege of interrupting the consideration of anything else. All motions of this class are *not debatable*.

PRO TEM: for the time being; most frequently applies to the office of secretary.

PUTTING THE QUESTION: putting the motion to a vote.

QUESTION: the business before the assembly; the motion as stated by the chair. (See "motion.")

QUORUM: the number of members who must be present in order that business can be transacted legally. The quorum is a majority of all members unless bylaws or rules of procedure state otherwise.

RECESS: an intermission taken by the assembly.

RESOLUTION: a main motion usually of such importance and length as to be written; may or may not have a preamble setting forth the reasons for the resolution.

REVISION OF THE BYLAWS: a complete set of bylaws submitted as a substitute for existing bylaws.

RONR: acronym for *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*.

SECONDARY MOTIONS: motions which can be made while a main motion is pending and which relate to business already before the assembly, to questions of order or procedure, or to matters of comfort or privilege. There are three classes of secondary motions: subsidiary, privileged, and incidental.

SECONDING MOTIONS: agreeing that a motion should come before a meeting.

SESSION: a meeting or a series of meetings with a single order of business, agenda, or program.

STANDING RULES: regulations for the guidance of an organization's meetings

STATING THE QUESTION: formally placing a motion before the assembly and indicating (where appropriate) that it is open to debate. Wording of a motion in the minutes should be exactly the same as when *stated* by the chair.

SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS: Motions that assist the assembly in treating or disposing of a main motion (and sometimes other motions).

TWO-THIRDS VOTE: two out of three of the votes *cast*. For two-thirds approval, the affirmative vote is at least twice as large as the negative.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: questions that have come over from the previous meeting because that meeting adjourned without completing its order of business.

VOTE: a formal expression of the will, opinion, or preference of the members of an assembly in regard to a matter submitted to it.

YIELD: give way to. A pending question yields to one of higher rank.