

OPERATING IN A SMALL BOARD (BORED?)

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2018 Arizona Association of Conservation Districts



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





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Help Get the Work Done
More Effectively**





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!





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.

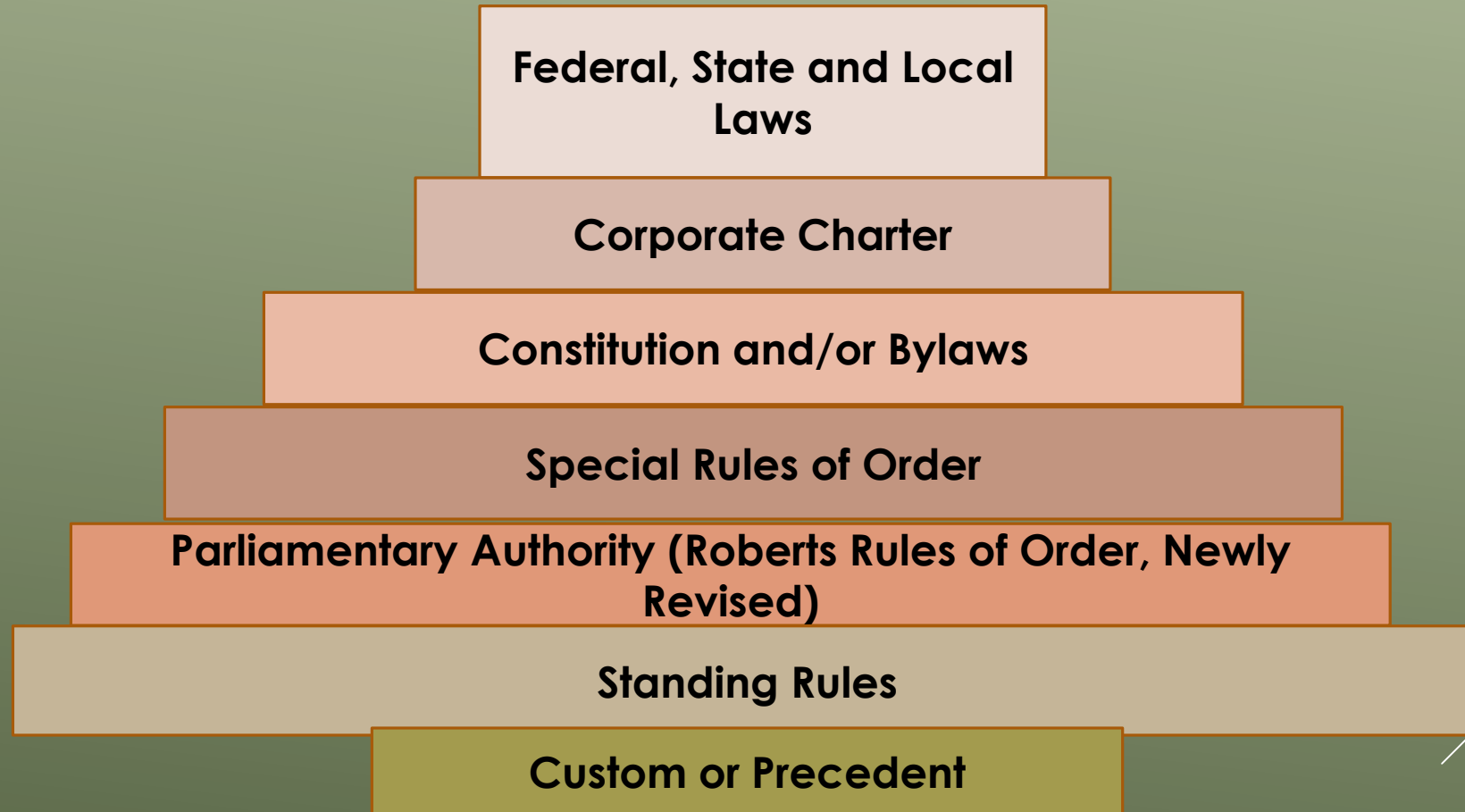


ALL RULES GROW FROM FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

- ▶ 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



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



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.





CHANGES IN BOARD MEMBERSHIP

When a set proportion or all of the board members are chosen periodically, the board becomes a new board each time there is a change in board membership.





CHANGES IN BOARD MEMBERSHIP

- ▶ All unfinished business falls to the ground
- ▶ New officers are elected
- ▶ New committees are appointed
- ▶ Individual replacements to fill vacancies do not cause these effects



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.



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?



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 the words “up to \$500” before “convention fees”



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!

