

## **Notes on Parliamentary Procedure**

### **Melinda Fredricks, TFRW Parliamentarian**



Knowing and following basic Robert's Rules helps you to run a meeting professionally. Well-run meetings help your club members to develop confidence in your leadership and make guests more interested in joining your club.

#### **How to Conduct a Well-Run Meeting**

Unless your club adopts its own particular order of business (which I don't recommend), then the club should follow the order of business specified in Robert's Rules.

#### **Beginning the Meeting**

To start the meeting, the president stands at the front of the group, waits (and/or asks) for quiet, and then says in a clear voice, "The meeting will come to order." Make one sharp rap with your gavel on the podium or table in front of you. (*Hint: While calling the meeting to order is the first thing to be done at a meeting, it is not part of the agenda and should not be included on the printed agenda.*)

#### **Order of Business**

- I. Opening Ceremonies – Optional
  - Prayer
  - Pledge
- II. Reading and Approval of Minutes
- III. Reports of Officers and Standing Committees
- IV. Reports of Special Committees
- V. Special Orders
- VI. Unfinished Business
- VII. New Business
- VIII. Announcements – Optional
- IX. Program (can be placed elsewhere in the agenda if that is what the club is accustomed to)

## **Order of Business including notations and explanations**

(same agenda with comments)

(Note the “Call to Order” is NOT included in the agenda)

- I. Opening Ceremonies – includes prayer, pledges, and anything else your club typically adds –  
Optional
- II. Reading and Approval of Minutes – it is recommended that the minutes be distributed ahead of time, perhaps in your club’s newsletter.  
President says, “Are there any corrections to the minutes?” *(Note – don’t ignore this because there can be times when the minutes are very important in settling a later dispute.)* Corrections, if any are made, are voted on, and then the approval of the minutes is voted on.
- III. Reports of Officers and Standing Committees (permanent committees established in bylaws)  
These reports are given in the order that officers and committees are listed in the club’s bylaws. The president should only call on those officers and committees that have a report to give, or if you are uncertain, you can state, “Does the \_\_\_\_ Committee have a report?”  
*(Note: The Treasurer’s report is given during this time. It is simply a report, and the club does not vote to accept it. After the report is given, the president states, “The treasurer’s report will be filed with the minutes.”)*  
  
If a motion comes up from one of the committee reports, the vote should be taken at during that report. Don’t wait for later in the agenda.
- IV. Reports of Special Committees (committees appointed to exist only until they have completed a specified task)  
Your club might not have any special committees. If that is the case, then leave this item off the agenda. If you have more than one special committee, then the reports should be given in the order that the committees were created.
- V. Special Orders (matters that have been given a special priority, such as election of officers or delegates).  
The only time this item will be on your agenda is when the bylaws require a specific vote to be taken at a specific meeting, i.e. officers are elected at the October meeting. Most of the time, you will leave this item off your agenda
- VI. Unfinished Business (matters previously introduced at the preceding meeting) –  
You’ve probably heard by now that “Old Business” is passé, and we now use the term “unfinished business”. Something only can be included in this section if it was started at a previous meeting but was not completed. Each item of unfinished business should be listed on the agenda. The president should not ask if there is any unfinished business. If there is no unfinished business, then simply state, “Since there is no unfinished business for this meeting, we will now proceed to new business.”
- VII. New Business (matters initiated at the present meeting) –  
This is different from unfinished business, obviously, because items not previously discussed are brought up here. But it’s also different because the president cannot control what might come up under new business. The president should state, “Is there any new business?” and cannot refuse to allow an item to come up under new business as long as the item has to do with the club’s purpose.
- VIII. Announcements – Optional  
The club can allow members to make brief announcements at this time.
- IX. Program (can be placed elsewhere in the agenda if that is what the club is accustomed to)