Parliamentary Procedure

Only the experts or “parliamentarians” must know all the rules and technicalities. The fundamentals listed below can help you participate in practically any meeting in an intelligent, decisive way. It is important to keep in mind that every meeting should have an “order of business” or “agenda.” Usually included are:

1. Call to Order
2. Welcome
3. Roll call
4. Reading of Previous Minutes
   Approve as read or as corrected. Reading of minutes can be dispensed with by majority vote without debate. This means they are not read at the regular time. If dispensed with, reading can be ordered (by a majority vote without debate) any time later during the meeting when no other business is pending. If minutes are not read before adjournment, they must be read at the following meeting before reading any later minutes.
5. Report of Officers
   a. Corresponding Secretary
   b. Treasurer’s Financial Report
   c. Other Officers (only if they have report)
6. Reports of standing committees
   Standing committees listed in bylaws are usually called on in the order in which they are listed. A motion arising out of an officer’s report or committee’s report is taken up immediately.
7. Reports of Special Committees
   Only those special committees that are prepared or were instructed to report should be called on. Those that are to report should be called in the order in which they are listed on the agenda.
8. Unfinished Business
   A question postponed from the last meeting, or any unfinished business (secretary should inform president) can be covered at this point in the meeting.
9. New Business
   Correspondence that needs action; bills and any other new items members care to discuss can be introduced.
10. Announcements
   The chairperson may make or may call on others to make any necessary announcements. Members may also obtain the floor for such purpose.

11. Program
   Although the program is usually placed at the end of the order of business, it can, by special rule, be received at any time. Often, in courtesy to a guest speaker, the chairperson may ask for suspension of the rules so the talk can be located at an unscheduled point within the business portion of the meeting. Usually this is done by unanimous consent. The chairperson will announce, “if there is no objection we will hear our program at this time.”

12. Further Business
   The chairperson asks if there is further business before adjournment.

13. Adjournment
   May be done by general consent or by vote.

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