

Words and/or Phrases commonly used to implement proper  
Parliamentary procedure.

Main Motion

Incidental Main Motion

Quorum

Parliamentary Inquiry

Point of Information

Unanimous Consent

Abstention

Ready for the Question

Reconsider

Ratify

Amend

Standing Committee

Ad Hoc Committee

Commit/Refer

Rescind

Amend Something Previously Adopted

Previous Question

Adjourn

Notes:

## **Definitions of Words and/or Phrases commonly used to implement proper Parliamentary procedure**

**Main Motion: a formal proposal by a member in a meeting which brings business before the assembly; made only while no other motion is pending.**

**Incidental Main Motion: a main motion that is incidental to or relates to the business of the assembly, or its past or future action.**

**Quorum: the minimum number of members who must be present at the meetings of a deliberative assembly for business to be legally transacted.**

**Parliamentary Inquiry: a request for the chair's opinion on a matter of parliamentary procedure as it relates to the business at hand - not involving a ruling.**

**Point of Information: a request directed to the chair, or through the chair to another or member, for information relevant to the business at hand but not related to parliamentary procedure.**

**Unanimous Consent: the method to adopt a motion or action without the steps of stating the question and putting the motion to a formal vote; sometimes even taking action without the formality of a motion itself.**

**Abstention: to voluntarily withhold one's vote.**

**Ready for the Question: a phrase used by the chair when debate appears to have closed. (There should be no response when the statement is asked unless there is some unreadiness.)**

**Reconsider: a motion which enables a majority in an assembly, within a limited time and without notice, to bring back for further consideration a motion which has already been voted on.**

**Ratify: an incidental main motion that is used to confirm or make valid an action already taken that cannot become legally valid until approved by the assembly.**

**Amend: a motion to modify the wording, and within certain limits the meaning, of a pending motion before the pending motion itself is acted upon.**

**Standing Committee: a body of one or more persons, elected or appointed by an assembly or society, to consider, investigate, or take action on certain matters or subjects, or to do all of these things which is constituted to perform as a continuing function and remain in existence permanently or for the life of the assembly that establishes it.**

**Ad Hoc Committee:** a committee appointed, as the need arises, to carry out a specified task, at the completion of which, that is, on presentation of its final report to the assembly, it automatically ceases to exist.

**Commit/Refer:** a subsidiary motion used to send a pending question to a relatively small group of selected persons, usually a specific committee, so that the question may be carefully investigated and put into better condition for the assembly to consider.

**Rescind:** an incidental main motion by which a previous action or order can be canceled or countermanded by striking out an entire main motion, resolution, rule, bylaw, section, or paragraph that has been adopted at some previous time.

**Amend Something Previous Adopted:** an incidental main motion used if it is desired to change only a part of the text, or to substitute a different version of a previously adopted motion.

**Previous Question:** a motion used to bring the assembly to an immediate vote on one or more pending questions.

**Adjourn:** a motion to close a meeting immediately.



## **A Lesson in Presiding Skills and Handling Motions**



### **Ms. Chairman I Move ...**

1. ... that the next meeting be open to the public.  
Primary Amendment
  
2. ...that the union sponsor a youth group.  
Primary Amendment  
Refer to Committee
  
3. ... books about women and labor rights be purchased by the club and given to the public library.  
Primary Amendment  
Postpone to a Definite Time  
Recess
  
4. ... that the union sell baked goods as a fundraiser for funds for members on strike.  
Primary Amendment  
Secondary Amendment or Create a blank  
Postpone Indefinitely
  
5. ... that a committee be appointed to find a new meeting location.  
Primary Amendment  
Secondary Amendment  
Lay on the Table  
Adjourn
  
6. ... that each member be required to give a two (2) minute talk on effective negotiation tactics at the next meeting.  
Postpone Indefinitely  
Amend  
Postpone Definitely  
Limit Debate
  
7. ... that a committee of three (3) be appointed to recruit new members.  
Primary Amendment  
Refer to Committee  
Previous Question  
Question of Privilege  
Adjourn

**Minding the Minutes**

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**What are the minutes?**

- › The minutes are a record of proceedings of the assembly
- › Should tell a story of what was done during the meeting

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**Content of the Minutes**

- › Typically have 3 parts:
  - First paragraph
  - Body
  - Final paragraph

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### Content of the Minutes cont.

- ▶ Body of the minutes:
  - separate paragraph for each subject matter
  - Names of persons making motions
  - Main motions & motions to bring a main question again before the assembly
  - Wording of motions as adopted
  - Whether motion was debated or amended

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### Content of the Minutes cont.

- ▶ Body of the minutes:
  - Any temporarily disposed of primary/secondary amendments
  - Secondary motions that were not lost or withdrawn
  - All notices of motions
  - All points of order and appeals with outcome and reasons for ruling

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### Content of the Minutes cont.

- ▶ Body of the minutes:
  - Name & subject of guest speaker
  - Handouts/Attachments mentioned to the body
  - Announcements
- ▶ Last paragraph:
  - Time adjourned
- ▶ Minutes should also be signed & dated by both secretary & president

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### What not to include

- › Debate
- › Motions not stated by the chair
- › Name of person that seconds
- › Movers of Subsidiary or Incidental motions
- › Prose & opinion
- › Full reports
- › "Remarks for the Record"

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### Additional Resources

- › Robert's Rules of Order (10<sup>th</sup> ed)
- › What was done at the meeting: A guide to minutes, NAP, 1<sup>st</sup> Ed July 2009

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