

ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER & Parliamentary Procedure

The following rules and principles are designed to expedite business, maintain order and ensure justice, courtesy, fairness and equal treatment for all members. The consistent application of these rules and principles will help the organization to achieve its meeting objectives.

10 basic rules and principles

1. The organization is first. Decisions of the organization supersede those of individuals. The power of any meeting is in the hands of the voting members.
2. All members have equal rights. Full participation in business meetings by making motions, debating, and voting is among these rights.
3. A minimum number of voting members (known as the quorum) must be present in order to transact business legally. The general rule is a majority of the entire membership, if the bylaws don't define the quorum.
4. Only one main proposal may be before the assembly at a time. Only one member may have the floor at a time.
5. There must be full debate before voting on any proposal unless this is suspended by a two-thirds vote.
6. A proposal is the item under discussion, never the person who introduced it. Personal remarks are always out of order.
7. A proposal once decided may not be presented in that same form in the same session. This is to avoid wasting time.
8. A majority vote decides a question except in cases where basic rights of members are involved. Then a larger vote is required. A majority vote is generally defined as more than half of the votes cast.
9. A two-thirds vote is necessary for any motion that deprives a member of rights ... such as changing the rules of debate, closing debate, closing nominations, or changing previous decisions without notice.
10. Silence gives consent. Those who do not vote agree, by their silence, to allow those who do vote to make the decision.

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