

Oak Harbor City Council Workshop
Parliamentary Procedures
May 30, 2012
City Council Chambers
6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

IN ATTENDANCE

Seven members of the City Council,
Danny Paggao, Mayor ProTem
Rick Almberg
James Campbell
Tara Hizon
Beth Munns
Joel Servatius
Bob Severns

Staff:
Interim City Administrator Powers
City Attorney Hawkins
Project Specialist Larry Cort
Senior Services Director McIntyre
Executive Assistant Recker

Mayor Dudley was excused due to recent surgery.

Interim City Administrator Powers called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Mr. Powers introduced Professional Registered Parliamentarian Ann Macfarlane.

Ms. Macfarlane gave a brief background of her accomplishments and advised the group the presentation would be given in three segments: presentation of content, interactive role play and a review of the City's Rules and Guidelines. She gave a brief overview of the history of parliamentary procedures, including Roberts Rules of Order.

Ms. Macfarlane distributed a handout entitled Making Council Meetings Effective and Productive to Council and staff. She discussed types of organizations and their differences. The two types discussed were accountability hierarchy and voluntary association. Ms. Macfarlane proceeded with a review and thorough discussion of the points contained in the handout, which is attached as Exhibit A.

The Council members participated in a role play exercise regarding the motion process from the origin of the motion to the final vote.

Discussion was held regarding ways to remove an item from the agenda, changing the order of items on the agenda, voting methods, points of order, withdrawing a motion and public comment.

Ms. Macfarlane made several recommendations for changes to the Administration and Personnel Council Rules which were noted by staff for a future Council discussion.

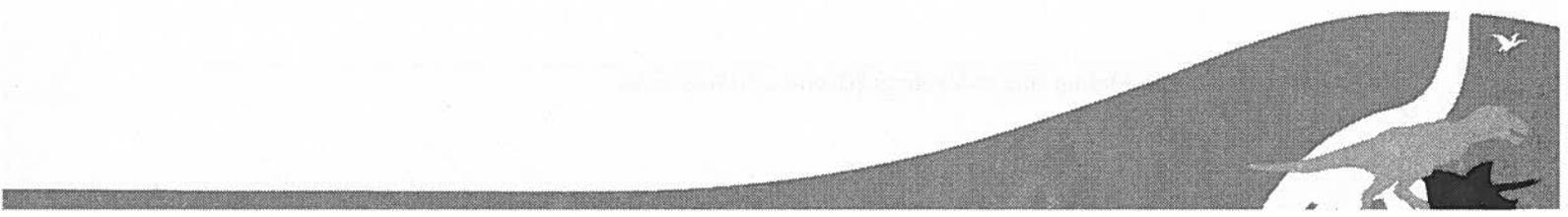
Ms. Macfarlane thanked the Council for their participation in the workshop.

There being no further business to come before the Council, the workshop was adjourned at 9:05.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Karen Crouch". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Karen Crouch, Executive Assistant

Making Council Meetings Effective and Productive



Making Council Meetings Effective and Productive
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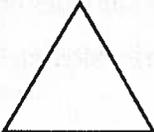
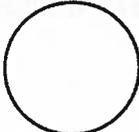
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Making Council Meetings Effective and Productive

I. INTRODUCTION

| | |
|---|---|
|  |  |
| Accountability hierarchy | Voluntary association |

Three duties of leader of a voluntary association

1. to manage or administer the association
2. to lead the association
3. to preside at the association's meetings

Three types of meetings

1. large assembly
2. Committee (workgroup)
3. small board

Nature of boards

All members of a governing board share in a joint and collective authority which exists and can be exercised only when the group is in session.

The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure

Perhaps the single most important attribute of an effective board is also its most intangible: an independent sense of itself. This sense of self is the board's identity as a BODY rather than, for instance, as a loose collection of individuals who each finds ways to support the organization.

Jan Masaoka, *Blue Avocado*



PRINCIPLES

Lochrie's six principles of a meeting

The fundamental essence of a meeting is the equal opportunity of members to initiate ideas, oppose ideas, and to do so without coercion. Six principles underlie the rules of any meeting.

James Lochrie, *Meeting Procedures*, p. 1
used with permission

ADVANCE QUIZ

Take a guess and fill in the blanks, using the words given below

1. The majority must be allowed to rule.
2. The minority have rights that must be respected.
3. Members have a right to information to help make decisions.
4. Respect and courtesy are required.
5. All members have equal rights, privileges and obligations.
6. Members have a right to an efficient meeting.

respect

efficient

minority

equal

courtesy

majority

information



Jurassic Parliament's six informal principles of a meeting

While these principles seem universally acceptable, it is not so easy to carry them out in practice. Sometimes one principle interferes with another. The following "informal" principles help balance the formal requirements listed on the opposite page.

1. The role of the presider is paradoxical. When running a meeting, you are both the most important person in the room and the least important person in the room.
2. The presider must be strict on process—a benevolent dictator.
3. The presider is not responsible for the decision the group makes.
4. The presider debates last and votes last.

Two reasons:

to remain as impartial as possible, and
to summarize the group's observations.

Note that this is a Jurassic Parliament suggestion.

5. Don't try to do it all yourself.
6. The presider must balance the procedure and the emotion aspects of every meeting.



not discussed

II. DISCUSSION

The key point to remember about discussion at a board or council meeting is that _____ is not a _____.

Large assemblies versus small boards

The rules for discussion differ in large assemblies and in small boards. In general, a group of up to about _____ people is considered to be a small board.

In a large group (assembly), there must be a main motion before _____.

Under *The Standard Code*, this rule does not apply. Groups may discuss a subject before they are ready to make a motion on it (“informal consideration”). However, the chair should request that someone provide a formal motion _____.

Essential rules for discussion

1. All members have an equal right to _____ and _____.
2. _____ do not have the right to speak or make motions.
3. _____ is discussed at a time.
4. _____ speaks at a time.
5. No _____ (except in certain special circumstances).
6. _____ are required at all times.
7. No one may speak _____ until everyone who wishes to do so has spoken once.
8. Discussion of other members' _____ is always out of order.



not discussed

Groupthink and how to avoid it

Round robin

Individual notes

The single best indicator of the health of a group is _____

Helpful Techniques

1. Use as much formality as you can get away with, or are personally comfortable with.

Refer to people by their title rather than their name (Mr. Chair, Ms. Director, the Treasurer)
or, refer to people by title and surname (Ms. Brown, Mr. Smith)
or, refer to people by first and last name (Mary Brown, John Smith)
or, refer to people by full name and position (Mary Brown, our Director of Administration)

AVOID referring to people as _____ or _____.

2. Don't say "you." Use the "third person" rather than the "second person" whenever possible.

Second person: "Hey you, you're out of order!"

Third person: "The member is reminded that it is out of order to make personal remarks."

3. Require everyone to _____ before speaking.

4. Require everyone to address all remarks to _____.

5. Avoid crosstalk _____

6. Avoid sidebar conversations _____

Most important

The most important things that the presider can do during the meeting are _____

_____ and

(For more on these topics, see our publications *Robert Has Special Rules for Small Boards*, *Using the Round Robin Method for Efficient Board/Council Meetings*, and *When Should You Interrupt a Speaker?*)



III. MAIN MOTIONS EXPEDITE YOUR PROCESS



Main Motion *Tyrannosaurus rex*

A motion is a proposal to do something. A main motion takes the general ether and distills it into a specific proposal. Most new ideas will be considered on the basis of a main motion.

How do you introduce a main motion? Three little words:

I move that

A main motion has these important characteristics:

- It should be in writing unless it is very short.
- It should be precise and unambiguous.
- It should be phrased in the grammatical positive.
- It must comply with the bylaws and the procedural law of the land.
- It is in order when no other business is pending.

A main motion has the “default setting.”

Default setting

1. Needs a second.
2. Can be debated.
3. Can be amended.
4. Takes a majority vote to pass.



EXAMPLE Main motion



Member A: *I move that we hold a cruise on Dino Bay.*

Member B: *I second the motion!*

Chair: It has been moved and seconded that we hold a cruise on Dino Bay. We will now debate the motion. [debate]

Chair: Are you ready to vote?

The motion is that we hold a cruise on Dino Bay. All those in favor say "aye." All those opposed say "no." The "ayes" have it, the motion passes, and we will hold a cruise on Dino Bay. The Social Committee will make the plans for this event. Our next item of business is...

Eight steps to process a motion

1. A member makes a motion.
2. Another member seconds the motion.
3. The presider states the motion.
4. Members debate the motion and amend it if desired.
5. The presider states the motion again and calls for the vote.
6. The members vote on the motion.
7. The presider states the results of the vote, whether the motion passes or fails, and what will happen as a result of the vote.
8. The presider moves on to the next item of business.

In taking the vote, the presider must call for the negative or the vote is not legitimate.

The presider has a duty to make things clear so that members understand what they are doing.





Amendment Dimetrodon

To amend a motion is to change it. You amend a motion to improve it—because you've come up with a better idea.

The amendment applies to the main motion.

The amendment must be germane.

The amendment has the default setting:

1. second
2. debated
3. amended
4. majority vote to pass

Four ways to amend

You can amend a motion in several different ways:

1. add or insert words
2. strike out words
3. strike out and add or insert
4. substitute

Note that we vote on amendments before we vote on the main motion, in order to make the main motion as good as possible—to perfect the motion.



EXAMPLE Making a motion, debating it, amending it, voting for the amendment, voting for the motion as amended



Member A: *I move that we hold a cruise on Dino Bay.*

Member B: *I second the motion!*

Chair: It has been moved and seconded that we hold a cruise on Dino Bay. We will now debate the motion. [debate]



Member C: *I move that we amend the motion by adding the words “to be organized by the Delta Cruise Company.”*

Member D: *I second the motion!*

Chair: It has been moved and seconded that we amend the motion by adding the words “to be organized by the Delta Cruise Company.” We will now debate the motion to amend. [debate]

Chair: Are you ready to vote?

The motion is that we amend the motion by adding the words “to be organized by the Delta Cruise Company.”

All those in favor say “aye.”

All those opposed say “no.”

The “ayes” have it, the motion passes, the words “to be organized by the Delta Cruise Company” are added. We will now return to debate on the main motion as amended. [more debate]



Chair: Are you ready to vote?

The motion is that we hold a cruise on Dino Bay, organized by the Delta Cruise Company.

All those in favor say “aye.”

All those opposed say “no.”

The “ayes” have it, the motion passes, and we will hold a cruise on Dino Bay, organized by the Delta Cruise Company. The Social Committee will make the plans for this event. Our next item of business is...



When?

When can amendments be made?

before the final motion has been voted on.

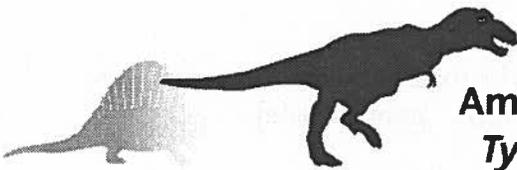
"Friendly" amendment

People frequently misunderstand and misuse the term "friendly amendment."

1. Before the motion has been stated by the chair, it is fine for other members to suggest changes to the text. The maker may accept them or not as he or she chooses.
2. Once the motion has been stated by the chair, if someone offers a "friendly amendment," it is handled

just like any other amendment

DO NOT ask the maker or seconder if they accept the amendment.



Amended main motion
Tyrannosaurus rex

Once a motion has been amended, it can be amended again if the amendment applies to

some aspect of the main motion

It takes special actions to go back and change something that's already been amended.

The only limit to the number of amendments is

the patience of the group



IV. WHO'S IN CHARGE HERE ANYWAY?

We are so accustomed to the role of the "boss" in everyday situations that we often fail to realize who is in charge of a voluntary board of directors or publicly elected body.

The chair of the meeting, or the president, or the mayor, is the servant of the group.

Every leader, and every member, should know that

the group is the final authority.

Everyone must know this principle and live this principle if the group is to carry out its tasks and fulfill its mission.

Even if your group has not adopted a specific authority, common parliamentary law is founded on this principle, and the courts have found that it applies.

Sometimes a new member of a board or council feels inadequate. She suspects that others know more about the history and responsibilities of the group. She may be reluctant to speak up lest she appear ignorant.

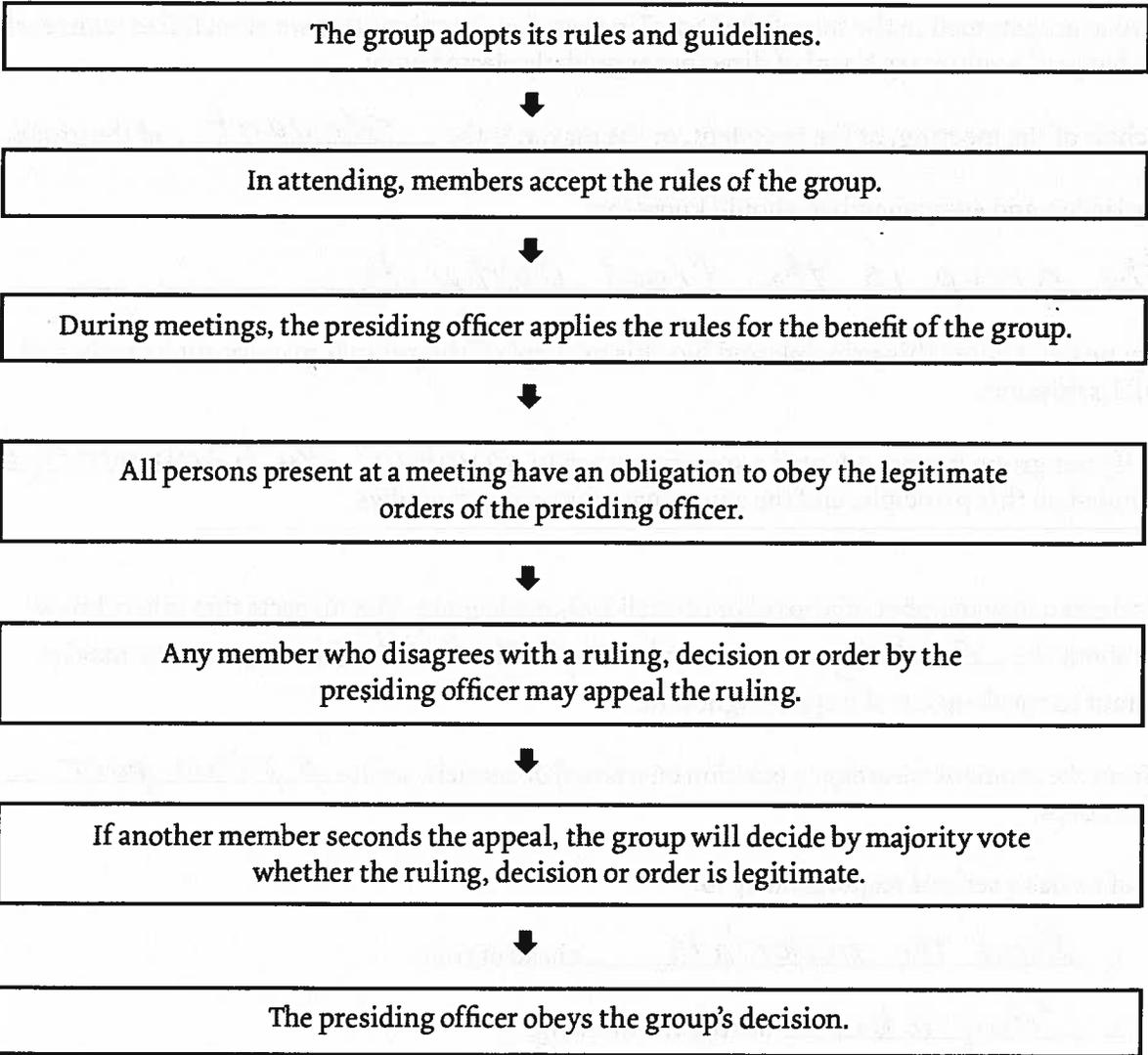
Yet from the moment we accept a position on a board or council, we are a vital part of that board.

Each of us has a serious responsibility to:

1. Read the materials ahead of time.
2. Stay alert during the meeting.
3. know the rules of procedure.
4. Speak up when the rules are broken.



These principles produce this flow of authority at a meeting:



V. TWO IMPORTANT MOTIONS

Point of Order *Pteranodon*

A point of order is a statement or claim that something is being done wrong procedurally.

It must be made in a timely manner—right after the offense. It may interrupt a speaker.

In essence it is a cry of "mistake".

How is it handled? The chair Rules.

No second no debate no amendment no vote.

This motion has special setting, not the default setting.

Always remember: if a member does not agree with the chair's ruling, the ruling can be appealed.
The group is the ultimate authority.

EXAMPLE Raising a point of order



Member A: *Madam Chair, I rise to a point of order.*

Chair: State your point.

Member A: *My esteemed colleague has used the term "cream-faced loon" in referring to the mayor of our fair city. Insults are not allowed in debate.*

Chair: The point is well taken. Members will refrain from using insulting language.





Parliamentary inquiry Pterodactyl

This is a request for information about procedure that is relevant to the debate, and about which there is some urgency.

The correct way to respond is to say: state your question.

Once the chair has heard the question, there are three ways to answer:

1. answer yourself.
2. ask someone else to answer.
3. say, "We will get back to you later."

No second no debate no amendment no vote.

This motion has special setting, not the default setting.

EXAMPLE Making a parliamentary inquiry



Member A: Madam Chair, I rise to make a parliamentary inquiry.

Chair: State your question.

Member A: Does the proposed rule that a special meeting may be called by a majority of council members conform to the requirements of the RCW?

Chair: The chair will research the matter and get back to you.

Chair: [after research] According to RCW 35A.12.110, any three members may call a special meeting. This proposed rule may not be taken up, because it is more restrictive than the law of our state.



VI. WHAT TO DO WHEN THE RULES ARE BROKEN

For the presider

When a member of the group breaks one of these rules, the presider should correct the offender. State the rule firmly and calmly while looking the offender in the eye:

- *Members are reminded that it is never in order to use insults in debate.*
- *Members are requested to refrain from offensive body language.*
- *Members will confine their remarks to the merits of the pending question.*

A presider may interrupt the speaker to do this, though restraint is advisable. With experience one learns when to wait, and when to leap right in.

In making corrections, and while presiding in general, do not use the words “I” and “you.” Speak in the “third person,” not the “second person.” This depersonalizes your speech and keeps people focused on the business at hand, rather than treating exchanges as a personal contest of wills. As an example, contrast these two sentences:

- *Hey you, you’re out of order!*
- *The member is reminded that it is never in order to make personal remarks.*

Note that it is fine for members to use the pronoun “I” when speaking. However, members should also avoid the use of the word “you” whenever possible, referring to the presider as “the chair” and fellow members as “my esteemed colleague” or “the treasurer” or “my fellow director,” if they have the stomach for this type of language. If they don’t, it’s not worth insisting on.

For the members

If the presider fails to stop the offense, any member may speak up and say “point of order.” A point of order is a motion claiming that a mistake has been made. Only members, not any of the public in attendance, have the right to raise a point of order. It must be made in a timely manner—right after the offense. You may interrupt the speaker if necessary.



This is the way to process a point of order:

- A member says “point of order” (no second is needed).
- The presider responds, “State your point.”
- The member explains the breach (violation of the rules of procedure or speaking).
- The presider rules.
 - If she agrees, she says “The point is well taken” and then corrects the offender.
 - If she disagrees, she says “The point is not well taken” and moves on.

EXAMPLE

Member A: *Madam President, I rise to a point of order.*

Chair: State your point.

Member A: *My esteemed colleague from Dinopolis has used the term “cream-faced loon” in referring to the mayor of our fair city. According to our rules of order, insults are not allowed in debate.*

Chair: The point is well taken. Members will refrain from using improper language.

Note that if any two members disagree with the presider, they may appeal the ruling. In that case, the group itself will decide whether the point of order is correct or not.

In case of emergency

Note that under Robert’s Rules, only the group has the right to order one of its members from the room. If a member becomes belligerent or offensive, the chair may ask if one of the members would like to move that the member be directed to leave the meeting. It takes a majority vote in favor to do this. If a member is so ordered by the group and refuses to leave, the chair has the authority to direct the sergeant-at-arms to escort the member from the room. *The Standard Code has a different rule:* the presider has the authority to order an unruly member from the room, as does the assembly.

If the presider fails to take action

If the presider fails to take a proper action, such as responding to a point of order, a member may stand up and put the motion to the group herself. The group will make the final decision by voting on the motion.



VII. APPEALING A RULING OF THE CHAIR

Let's look at how a group might appeal the ruling of the chair in the previous example.

EXAMPLE

Member A: *Madam President, I rise to a point of order.*

Chair: State your point.

Member A: *My esteemed colleague from Dinopolis has used the term "cream-faced loon" in referring to the mayor of our fair city. According to Robert's Rules, insults are not allowed in debate.*

Chair: The point is well taken. Members will refrain from using improper language.

Member B: *I appeal from the decision of the chair on the grounds that "cream-faced loon" is a literary reference and not an insult.*

Member C: *Second!*

Chair: Very well, since the ruling of the chair has been appealed, the group will decide. Shall the decision of the chair be upheld? All those who believe that "cream-faced loon" is an insult, please say "aye." All those who believe that it is not an insult, please say "no."

[if the ayes have it] The ayes have it, the ruling of the chair is upheld, and members will refrain from using this term.

[if the noes have it] The noes have it, the ruling of the chair is not upheld, and members may use this term.



Appendix A.

What Are the Duties of the Person Running the Meeting?

Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 11th edition, lists the following on pp. 449-450 as the principal duties of the presiding officer of an assembly (group):

1. To open the meeting at the appointed time by taking the chair and calling the meeting to order, having ascertained that a quorum is present.
2. To announce in proper sequence the business that comes before the assembly or becomes in order in accordance with the prescribed order of business, agenda, or program, and with existing orders of the day.
3. To recognize members who are entitled to the floor.
4. To state and to put to vote all questions that legitimately come before the assembly as motions or that otherwise arise in the course of proceedings (except questions that relate to the presiding officer himself in the manner noted below), and to announce the result of each vote; or, if a motion that is not in order is made, to rule it out of order.
5. To protect the assembly from obviously dilatory motions by refusing to recognize them.
6. To enforce the rules relating to debate and those relating to order and decorum within the assembly.
7. To expedite business in every way compatible with the rights of members.
8. To decide all questions of order, subject to appeal – unless, when in doubt, the presiding officer prefers initially to submit such a question to the assembly for decision.
9. To respond to inquiries of members relating to parliamentary procedure or factual information bearing on the business of the assembly.
10. To authenticate by his or her signature, when necessary, all acts, orders, and proceedings of the assembly.
11. To declare the meeting adjourned when the assembly so votes or—where applicable—at the time prescribed in the program, or at any time in the event of a sudden emergency affecting the safety of those present.



Appendix B.

When Should You Interrupt a Speaker?

We see so many instances of rude behavior in public life today that it is not easy to keep our bearings about civility. Polite people who have been well brought up sometimes feel stymied when public discourse disintegrates. It might be helpful to review some circumstances in which people should be interrupted.

1. **Stop a speaker who is rude and offensive.** Speakers who make personal and insulting remarks, question motives, or show discourtesy in other ways must be stopped. The chair of the meeting has the responsibility to do this, even when it means interrupting. The gavel can be helpful here—a single firm tap will often be effective.
2. **Stop a speaker who breaks the rules.** When someone breaks the rules that your group has in place for conducting meetings, stop him. If members of the public are allowed three minutes to make their points, don't let an angry citizen continue past the time. If members of the council are required to seek recognition from the chair, don't let a councilmember blurt something out of turn. If you have implemented that supremely useful rule that no one may speak a second time until everyone has spoken once, don't let an old-timer have a second chance to talk while the newly elected is waiting patiently for her turn.
3. **Interrupt to make a “point of order” when a procedural mistake has been made.** When a member notices that a significant procedural mistake has been made, he should call out loudly, “point of order.” The chair has the duty to ask what the point is, and then to rule as to whether it is correct (the jargon term for correct is “well taken,” the term for incorrect is “not well taken”). For example, if the chair has called for a vote without allowing any discussion, a member can bring this to everyone's attention. Since a “point of order” must be made in a timely manner, it can interrupt a speaker. If a chair fails to do anything in the situations listed above, an ordinary member of the group can use this motion to take action and stop the offense.
4. **Interrupt to call for a “division” when it seems that the chair may have made an error in announcing the result of a vote.** After a voice vote, the chair has the duty of announcing the results. If it seems that she may have made an error, any member may call out “division.” The chair is then obliged to retake the vote in such a way that everyone can ascertain the results. On a city council, requesting a “roll call vote” will achieve the same result.



Under Robert's Rules, these are the most significant instances in which a speaker should be interrupted. If your city council or other body has not adopted specific rules of procedure, it is still appropriate under common parliamentary law to use these techniques when things go awry. Sometimes we have to interrupt a speaker in order to preserve politeness and fairness for all.

And one final, and important, point. If you as a member, or as the presiding officer, decide to let some infraction of the rules go by and not raise a point of order to correct the error (or even if you don't realize that there was an error committed at all), it will most likely be too late to do anything about it later on. Most points of order must be raised very promptly right when the infraction occurs, or else it is just too late. There are a small number of very serious errors recognized by Robert's Rules that can be corrected well after the fact, but these are rather rarely encountered. So don't let a false sense of not wanting to be a "troublemaker" cause you to delay interrupting and making your point of order—it is your right and duty to do so.



Appendix C.

Using the Round Robin Method for Efficient Council Meetings

The simplest way to make city council meetings more efficient is to use the round robin method of discussion. In a round robin, each member of the body is given an opportunity to speak once before anyone may speak a second time, commonly by calling on the members around the table in turn. Sometimes, however, it's harder to employ this method than it seems. These are our tips for successful use of the round robin.

1. Somebody has to keep track and somebody has to be the enforcer. A person in authority, usually the presider, must track who is speaking, and who has yet to speak. That person must also intervene when someone speaks out of order. We have seen instances where the presider gets carried away in the press of business and makes errors, or finds it a challenge to keep the order straight. We recommend splitting the job. The number two person, vice-president or mayor pro tem, can track speakers. The presider must be alert and ready to get things back on track when necessary.

2. The maker of the motion starts the debate. Under Robert's Rules, the person who makes the motion has the right to speak first. The round robin would then move to left or right or alphabetically, depending on custom.

3. Everybody has to be patient. Sometimes members aren't sure what they think, or are slow to express themselves. Since council business often involves matters on which members have strong feelings, it can be a challenge to wait one's turn. Everybody involved needs to be patient for this method to succeed.

4. Members may pass. It is appropriate to allow members to pass when their turn arrives, and then to offer those who passed a chance to speak at the end of the round.

5. It helps to vary the order. Psychology has demonstrated the "order effect," under which those who come first in a listing often have undue influence over those who come later. If your council literally goes "around the table," we recommend alternating between moving to the left and moving to the right. If your council uses alphabetical order, start with A one time and Z the next.

6. You can use the popcorn style. Under this style, there is no set order. Each person raises his hand and speaks as the spirit moves him. However, the presider or the vice-presider still tracks who has spoken, to ensure that each person gets a fair turn. If your council members are very self-disciplined, and will hold back once they've spoken the first time, you can even allow people to speak up without being recognized by raising a hand.



7. Members must show restraint. One of the most common violations of the round robin occurs when a member is strongly moved by a colleague's comments, and bursts out with a strong reaction. While the temptation to shout "that's a lie!" is understandable, each member must hold back any comment until the second round.

8. The presider must show restraint. Another common violation of the round robin occurs when the presider, feeling that she possesses special information of relevance to the debate, responds to each speaker. This is patently unfair, since the presider then has five or seven chances to speak to each member's single chance. Like the members, the presider must gather her thoughts in silence, and then respond to the members when her turn arrives.

9. The presider speaks last. Because of the special position and weight of the presider's position, he speaks last, after all the members have spoken. This supports the neutrality of the presider's position, and also allows him to summarize the opinions expressed, a very important function—so long as it is a fair summary.

10. The members must be prepared to speak up. In the round robin, as in any gathering committed to fair use of procedure, members must be prepared to speak up when violations occur. A simple call of "point of order" should cause the presider to stop and ask, "State your point?" The member then voices her observation, and the presider either accepts the point or rules it invalid, or "not well taken." The point of order must be timely and may interrupt a speaker.

11. The members have the final say. If someone disagrees with the presider's decision on a point of order, any two members may appeal it. One says, "I appeal from the decision of the chair" and another says "second." The matter is then referred to the council as a whole for decision. The council itself has the final authority. Any debate on an appeal follows the same round robin pattern.

12. Amendments restart the round robin. If an amendment is offered, the round robin is restarted for any debate on the amendment. Once the amendment is disposed of, the debate on the main motion picks up where it left off in the original round robin sequence.

13. Guidelines have to be explicit. Each council has its own culture. It's important for everyone to agree on which guidelines will be observed. These suggestions can serve as a starting point for discussion.

While this method of conducting discussion at council meetings will lessen the amount of high drama and excitement so thrilling to observers and the press, it offers the fairest and most equitable way to discuss city business. It also has the virtue of being required by Robert's Rules of Order for meetings in general. We strongly recommend it to everyone who is committed to fair and judicious discussion of issues in which each member has an equal opportunity to participate.



Appendix D.

Addressing Disorder in the Council Chambers

Jurassic Parliament provides the following suggested language for the presider in dealing with disorder in the council chambers or at other public meetings. Key points to remember:

1. All persons present at a meeting must obey the legitimate orders of the presiding officer.
2. The presiding officer is the servant of the group and must obey the group's directives.
3. The presiding officer has the right to order non-members to leave the room.
4. Only the group has the right to order its members to leave the room.
5. Courtesy and respect are essential for good deliberation and must be enforced.
6. Don't use the words "I" and "you." Speak in the third person, as in the examples.

This material is based on *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, 11th edition. The underlying principles are taken from common parliamentary law and hold good for all public meetings. We strongly recommend that councils adopt additional rules of procedure for their specific circumstances.

| WHEN a councilmember says... | You can say... |
|---|--|
| Point of order! | State your point |
| Point of information | State your question |
| Question <i>or</i> I call the question | Is there a second to the call for the question? |
| I withdraw my motion | Is there any objection if the member withdraws the motion? |
| IF someone says... | You can say, "Everyone present is reminded that..." |
| I'm sick of all those bleeding-heart liberal dinosaurs. | ...courtesy is required at all times in our council meetings. |
| You're a jerk. | ...the rules of our council forbid the use of insults or personal attacks. |
| You only want to do that because you're in love with him. | ...under Robert's Rules of Order it is never in order to speak about the motives of other members. |
| All those flying dinosaurs are lazy bums who don't pull their weight. | ...our council code of procedure requires that we respect all the stakeholders in our community. |



| | |
|---|--|
| He's a liar! <i>or</i> fraud <i>or</i> embezzlement <i>or</i> baloney | ...inflammatory remarks are not allowed at our meetings. The member will phrase his comment in a neutral manner. |
| IF someone says... | You can say... |
| !*@*@! | Profanity is not allowed at our meetings. The speaker will kindly refrain from these improper expressions. |
| I think that our clerk/treasurer is on the take. | Members/citizens must refrain from making accusations of this type during a meeting, and will kindly follow our established personnel policies for dealing with concerns about possible criminal behavior. |
| Hiss hiss <i>or</i> hooray hooray | Attendees will refrain from improper expressions of sentiment. |
| We demand the right to speak before you vote on each motion! | [In Washington State] Under state law, RCW 35A.12.120, city councils have the right to determine rules for the orderly conduct of their business. We welcome citizen input during the "public comment period." |
| IF a citizen continues to offend despite your direction... | You can say... |
| | Our rules of procedure prohibit behavior of this type. The attendee will kindly leave the room. |
| And if he doesn't leave... | The sergeant-at-arms is directed to remove the attendee from council chambers. |
| If a councilmember continues to offend despite your direction... | You can say... |
| | The member is reminded that the rules of our council forbid offensive behavior. The chair will ask whether any member would care to move that the offending councilmember be directed to leave the meeting. |
| If such a motion is made and a majority of the councilmembers vote in favor... | The councilmember is directed to leave the room. |
| And if he refuses... | The sergeant-at-arms is directed to remove the councilmember from the chambers. |
| OR if the motion fails... | The motion fails, the meeting will continue. |
| IF a riot breaks out... | You can say, "This meeting is hereby adjourned." |



Appendix E. Running Successful Public Comment Sessions at Council Meetings

Would you like to run orderly, effective public meetings? Do you want to provide opportunities for the public to speak, without losing control? These suggestions create the structure for orderly and successful public comment sessions during council, commission or committee meetings.

We explain the background to these suggestions on the next page. Please note that different guidelines apply to public hearings, which have the sole purpose of gathering public input, and to quasi-judicial hearings.

TIME CONSIDERATIONS

1. Establish one or two specific periods for public comment during your meetings, in a way that is consistent with your community's expectations and customs.
2. Set a length of time by which each period will conclude, unless the council votes to extend it.
3. Set a time limit for each individual to speak.

WRITTEN GUIDELINES

4. Provide printed copies of the guidelines and expectations.
5. Review the guidelines at the beginning of each comment period if necessary, and explain that this is a time for citizens or residents to express their views in order to inform the council.

DURING PUBLIC COMMENT

6. Require all speakers to address their remarks to the president.
7. The president should thank each speaker, whether positive or negative.
8. Authorize the president to provide brief factual information, if she judges it appropriate, in response to public comments, or to ask the staff to provide such information.
9. The president must not under any circumstances enter into back-and-forth exchanges with the public.
10. Councilmembers refrain from speaking during this portion of the meeting.
11. When feasible, have staff ready to note input or questions from the public and to provide responses at a later date.



BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

12. Model courtesy and respect and require members of the public to do the same.
13. Personal attacks, insults or profanity are not allowed.
14. Booing or hissing is not allowed.
15. During public comment, the presider should correct members of the public who fail to observe the guidelines. If the presider does not do this, a councilmember should raise a point of order. It is important for presider and members to speak in a firm, matter-of-fact manner, but not to sound overly harsh or critical.
16. If members of the public become abusive, disruptive or violent, the presider has the authority to order them from the room.

OTHER SUGGESTIONS

17. Provide clearly marked paper inviting individuals who are not heard during the public comment period due to time constraints to provide written comment for the council.
18. Do not invite or allow public comment or questions during council discussion of its own agenda items.
19. Be consistent in enforcing all the rules that you establish.
20. Recognize that a governmental body must craft its requirements with care in order not to unduly limit free speech by citizens, and obtain legal review of your guidelines.

Background: These guidelines are based on *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 11th edition*. One fundamental principle of Robert's Rules of Order is that discussion among the members of a governing body, followed by voting, is the way that the body does its work. All members have an equal right to speak during discussion. Non-members do not have the right to speak during discussion; however, the body may seek the input of non-members in order to increase its understanding of the issues and make better decisions. It is important, both for the public and for councilmembers, not to confuse input from non-members with the council's discussion of its own issues.

The guidelines are excerpted from our Mastery Lesson, Master Your Council Meetings.



Epilogue: Thoughts on Leadership

By Jerry Harvey

When I speak of leadership, I am describing what Elliot Jaques and Steve Clement call

“that process in which one person sets the purpose or direction for one or more others and gets them to move along with him or her and with each other in that direction with competence and full commitment.”

Leadership, so defined, is expressed in a wide array of organization roles – managerial leadership, pastoral leadership, professorial leadership, parental leadership, political leadership, military leadership, anarchic leadership and an infinite variety of other types of leadership, depending on your role in a particular organization....

This definition of leadership, I hope you realize, requires that

you, the leader, be emotionally bonded, attached, connected or linked with those whom you lead. It also requires that those whom you lead be emotionally bonded, attached, connected, or linked with you and with one another. That's what shared purpose and commitment are all about.

In the absence of those emotional bonds, individuals in leadership roles are unable to exert the type of influence that is required for them to lead. They may coerce potential followers to comply with their desired by employing a wide range of organizational rewards and sanctions that go with the authority of their offices, but such actions have nothing to do with leadership. True leadership manifests itself only in volitional relationships between and among leaders and followers.

Jerry B. Harvey, *How Come Every Time I Get Stabbed in the Back My Fingerprints Are on the Knife?*
pp. 111–112. Used with permission.



Resources

BOOKS

The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure, 4th Edition.

McGraw Hill. New York, 2001.

ISBN 0-07-136513-3. Paperback \$14.95

www.dacapopress.com

Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 11th Edition.

DaCapo Press, Perseus Books Group. Cambridge, MA. 2011.

ISBN 978-0-306-82020-5. Paperback \$18.95

(We recommend purchasing the spiral-bound version offered by the National Association of Parliamentarians, which lies flat and is easier to work with.)

WEBSITES

Jurassic Parliament

www.jurassicparliament.com

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603 Stewart Street, Suite 610, Seattle, WA 98101

TEL 206.542.8422 | FAX 206.626.0392

info@jurassicparliament.com | www.jurassicparliament.com