

Rosenberg's Rules of Order

~ A simplified version of Robert's Rules of Order ~

Outline

Establishing a Quorum

- One more than half the body

The Role of the Chair

- Charged with applying the rules of conduct of the meeting
- All decisions by the chair are final unless overruled by the body itself
- Strives to be the last to speak at the discussion and debate stage.

The Basic Format for an Agenda Item Discussion

1. Announce the agenda item number and subject
2. Hear report on the item
3. Hear any technical questions of clarification from body
4. Invite public comments and announce when public input has concluded
5. Invite a motion
6. Determine if any member of the body wishes to second the motion
7. If the motion is seconded, the chair should make sure everyone understand the motion.
8. Invite discussion of the motion
9. Take a vote
10. Announce the result of the vote.

Motions in General

The chair usually initiates the motion in one of three ways:

- Invites a motion
- Suggests members make a motion
- Makes the motion

Three types of motions

- Basic motion – puts forward a decision for the body's consideration
- Motion to amend – moves to amend/change the basic motion
- Substitute motion – moves to do away with the basic motion and substitute another; there may be a "friendly amendment" to make a small change

Multiple Motions Before the Body

There can be up to three motions on the floor at the same time.

- A vote would be taken first on the third motion
- If the motion to amend passed, move to consider the main motion as amended.
- If the motion to amend failed, move to consider the main motion in its original format.

Provided by Chair Dieter
Re: B-B 2/5/18

To Debate or Not to Debate

The following motions are not debatable—after a motion is seconded, a vote is called

- Motion to adjourn
- Motion to recess
- Motion to fix the time to adjourn
- Motion to table – place on hold
- Motion to limit debate – “I move/call the question”: enough debate has taken place

Majority and Super Majority Votes

Simple majority determines outcome unless a super majority (two-thirds) is required for a specific action.

The Motion to Reconsider

- Must be made at the meeting where the item was first voted upon
- May be made only by member who voted in the majority on the original motion

If the motion to reconsider passes, then the original matter is back before the body and a new original motion is in order.

Courtesy and Decorum

Speakers to be first recognized; Chair has the right to cut off discussion that is too personal, loud, or crude; Chair may limit the time allotted to speakers, including members of the body. Speakers are generally not interrupted. Exceptions are:

- **Privilege** – relates to normal comfort of the meeting
- **Appeal** – a member of body may appeal the ruling of the chair; a simple majority may reverse ruling of chair
- **Call for orders of the day** – “return to the agenda” if discussion drifts off-topic
- **Withdraw a motion** – the maker of the motion, at any time, may withdraw motion

Additional clauses are needed in Resolution:

Counting Votes. The vote count on a motion will be determined by using the “present and voting” method. Under this method, abstentions will not be considered “No” votes.

Public Comment. Speakers shall limit comments to three (3) minutes, unless the chair has granted the speaker’s request for additional time. No speaker may cede time to another.

Oral Communications, Non-agenda. The public may comment on any item not on the agenda considered to be a municipal affair and within the purview of the body. Staff or body may briefly respond, but no action or discussion will follow at meeting.

Council Referrals. A written request by member(s) of the body to decide if an issue should be placed on a future agenda. No dispositive action is permitted unless and until it appears on a future agenda as a regular agenda item.

Consent Calendar. Items under the consent calendar are considered routine and will be enacted, approved, or adopted by one motion without discussion, unless a request for removal for discussion or explanation is received from the council or a member of the public.

Meeting hours. Meetings shall end by midnight unless the majority of the body votes to extend.

Appeals to the City Council. No member of the City Council shall discuss the evidence applicable to an appeal with non-council members while such matter is pending, except in open meeting of the council.

Leases and Land Sales. No real property of the City shall be leased for a period in excess of one year or sold, except upon the affirmative vote of four members of the Council.

