

# PARLIAMENTARY LAW MADE EASY PART II

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## MOTIONS

The primary purpose of the meeting that uses rules of order is for the group to make decisions. A motion is a formal proposal by a member in a meeting, that the group take certain action. A main motion is one in which its introduction brings business before the assembly. There should be no debate or discussion on a matter before a motion regarding the matter has been made. Only one main motion may be before the assembly for action at a time. After a motion has been made, a second is needed before any discussion can proceed. The reason for the second is that more than one person at the meeting feels that this proposal warrants further discussion.

**REMEMBER:** The main motion or proposal needs a second or it dies before discussion can take place. This is the place where the Chair can make sure the motion is clear and makes sense. This is the place where the Chair can help with the wording so the main motion makes sense before taking a second. This is not discussion on the motion but wording of the motion.

## HOW TO MAKE A MOTION

First of all, to make a motion you must be a voting member of the meeting, a delegate or voting member of the board or part of the staff meeting (not a visitor). How do you know if you are a voting member? The easiest way—was your name on the roll call? Only those whose name is on the roll call are allowed to vote at the BOT meetings.

**RAISE YOUR HAND TO BE RECOGNIZED** by the President, Speaker or Chair who is running the staff meeting.

**WAIT TO BE RECOGNIZED BY THE CHAIR** (if the Chair does not notice you it is proper to state out loud: Madame President or Speaker, or say excuse me at a staff meeting, then wait to be recognized.

**STAND, state your name** and your chapter or member at large so that the person who is taking the minutes is aware that business is about to be presented.

**STATE “I MOVE THAT...”**, then sit down.

**REMEMBER:** To make you motion clear the financial impact needs to be included. (where are the funds coming from—an existing budget item or from unallocated funds?). The motion needs to be in writing for the secretary and the Chair.

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT -- THE SECOND

**WATCH TO SEE IF THE CHAIR IS LOOKING FOR A SECOND.** Do not call out if the chair begins to speak to the person who has made the motion, as the Chair is making sure the motion is clear.



**REMEMBER:** A second does not necessarily mean you agree with the motion, only that you feel it warrants being brought up for discussion. A motion needs to be seconded in order to be considered or discussed or it dies and the Chair moves on to the next item on the agenda.

When a motion has been moved and seconded, the chair then “states the question” of the motion. To “state” a motion, the Chair simply says “It has been Moved and Seconded that...” and then repeats the exact words in which the motion was made so everyone knows what is before them for discussion.

Why does the Chair sometimes discuss with the parliamentarian before presenting the motion or stat the question? Another Duty of The Chair is to determine that the motion is in order. If the motion in some way violates the rules (Bylaws of WSSMA) the motion is not in order. Chair states “The Chair rules that the motion is not in Order because...”

If all is in order, the Chair asks if there is any discussion and will usually allow the person who made the motion to be the first person to discuss the motion.

Members raise their hands to be recognized.

Stand, state your name and chapter. The chair tries to have everyone address this motion before anyone speaks to it a second time unless the Chair has asked for clarification from the person who made the motion.

**REMEMBER :** The **MOTION OR THE QUESTION** is not pending or before the group until it has been stated by the Chair. It is then open for discussion, debate and decision.

Right after The Chair states the question and asks it there any discussion? Then will normally turn to the maker of the motion to see if they want to be recognized to present the reasons for the motion.

### **VOTE**

When the Chair sees that discussion is complete he/she will state “Are you ready for the Question?” and then says “All in favor say AYE, those against say NO.”

Or if a voting member can see that the discussion is just going round and round, he can say “I move the previous question”, then discussion stops and the Chair can ask “are you ready for the Question?”

REQUIRES A 2/3 VOTE. The members have the right to say NO and discussion may resume.

A VOTE OF 2/3 is figured by 2/3 of the voting members present. For example: if there are 58 voting members present – 2/3 of 58=39. (.666 x 58 = 38.628 rounded up to 39)

**EXCEPTIONS:** Of course there are exceptions to every rule. Remember only one item can be on the floor at a time but Point of Information can be put before the group.

MOVE THE PREVIOUS QUESTION (as above)

Another exception is **POINT OF ORDER**. A member may raise their hand and State “I RISE TO A POINT OF ORDER.” If that member is not a voting member they would ask to speak. The



Chair would look over Board and see agreement or even ask if okay for this member to speak to The POINT OF ORDER. The member would state the Point of Order no seconded is needed.

**POINT OF ORDER:** This is to correct a breach in the rules, such as the motion may conflict with a main motion previously adopted and still in force. In order for this motion to be valid, the previous adopted motion would have to be changed.

### **What is a POINT OF ORDER?**

The purpose of Point of Order is to correct a breach in the Rules.

1. An adopted main motion the conflicts with the Bylaws or legal laws, federal, state or local.
2. An adopted main motion that conflicts with a motion previously adopted and still in force. For this motion to be valid the previous adopted motion would have to be changed.
3. Any action that is in violation of basic parliamentary principles.
4. Any action that is in violation of rules that protect either the absent member or individual member.

When there is a motion on the floor the easiest way to dispose of a motion is to Vote for it or Vote it down.

In this way the Chair would state are you ready for the question, State the Question, (the Motion) and say All those in favor say Yes and those against say No.

### **WHAT CAN HAPPEN TO A MOTION**

**MAIN MOTION** after discussion it becomes clear that the motion needs a lot of change, too many changes by amendments. Sometime it is just better to

**VOTE THE MAIN MOTION DOWN BY VOTING AGAINST—VOTE NO**

**THE PERSON WHO MADE THE MAIN MOTION CAN WITHDRAW IT.**

**LAY ON THE TABLE** (sets it aside temporarily).

**TAKE FROM THE TABLE**

**PREVIOUS QUESTION** (as stated- debate or discussion stops) **REQUIRES 2/3 VOTE** – used when no progress is being made, discussion is just seems to be going round and round

**POSTPONE TO A CERTAIN TIME** (put off to another time later in day or at next meeting)

**REFER TO COMMITTEE** (the Chair or a voting member sees that more information is needed and more work may need to be done)

**AMEND** (change a motion by amendment)

**POSTPONE INDEFINITELY** (kills the motion)



## HOW TO BE A PRODUCTIVE DELEGATE

1. Read the delegate's packet
  - A. Review bylaws report
  - B. Review treasurer's report and budget and finance report
  - C. Watch for recommendations in the report
2. Read WSSMA bylaws
3. Dress appropriately (the HOD is a business meeting)
4. Use the restroom before checking in for HOD
5. Be on time for the House and voting
6. Attend the references committees
7. Listen attentively
8. Use good manners
9. TURN OFF CELL PHONE

## PROXY VOTES

WSSMA Bylaws (Article XV) provides that Proxy votes may be used in the event an affiliated chapter is unable to be represented by a full complement of Delegates, it may assign proxy votes only to its Delegate(s) in attendance.

Roberts rules indicated that to use the proxy votes there should be a delegate seated and in attendance in order to use proxy vote or votes. This means proxy votes cannot be given to another chapter.

This helps because the one delegate is voting per what their chapter wishes (delegate packets are given out at the March BOT meeting and should be taken back and discussed with their chapter). It may be that a delegate gets ill or is a state officer and is not eligible to serve as a delegate. It insures that each chapter gets their full number of votes per the rules in the WSSMA bylaws.

Also many chapters hold their elections in January or February. The House meets in May and as we know, lives can change and you one of the delegates may not be able to attend the conference. Should the chapter be denied their full number of delegates? Why don't chapters just elect more alternate delegates? The chapter can elect as many alternate delegates as delegates. Have a way to decide the order of alternate delegates (example: if there are e or more nominees – vote for 2—the one with most votes is 1<sup>st</sup> alternate, next most votes is 2<sup>nd</sup> alternate, etc. or the alternates can decide who will serve in the House.)

Usually this is not a problem at chapter level. Is this correct?

Another question regarding the proxy is does a name have to be on the proxy for the proxy to be in order? The answer is NO. The proxy form is to be signed by the president and secretary of the chapter. If an elected delegate is unable to attend the HOD and the elected alternate is also unavailable to serve as delegate, then the proxy would come into effect.

Therefore, the Speaker of the House sends to each chapter president or vice president delegate cards and proxy forms.

**REMEMBER:** Before Conference have the chapter secretary sign the proxy forms that are sent to the chapter president or vice president. Sometimes the chapter secretary is not at conference.





## DELEGATES

In WSSMA bylaws Article XV Section 4 states each affiliated chapter and the members-at-large shall be entitled to three (3) delegates for the first fifty (50) active or associate members or fraction thereof, plus one (1) additional delegate for each additional active or associate members or fraction thereof. The number of delegates shall be determined by the total number of active and associate members as established by the AAMA Executive office on or before December 31.

How does your chapter decide how many delegates your chapter should be electing? Start with the membership report at the November BOT meeting. If you are close to 51, 101, 150 or 200 then have either the chapter president or membership chair check with AAMA to see if there are any new members since November.

Usually the Speaker of the House and Vice Speaker of the House verify that each delegate is in good standing (which means their dues were paid by December 31) and are an active or associate member. They also verify that each chapter has the correct number of delegates.

## REFERENCES

Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised 10<sup>th</sup> edition, Henry M. Robert, III, William Evans, Daniel H. Honemann, Thomas J. Balch

Parliamentary Law at a Glance by E. C. Utter (out of print sometime available on Amazon)

Webster's New World Robert's Rules of Order Simplified and Applied, Second Edition, by Robert McConnell Productions

The Complete Idiot's Guide to Robert's Rules by Nancy Sylvester, PRP, CPP-T

Washington State Society Of Medical Assistants BY-LAWS 2008-2009

Washington State Society of Medical Assistants STANDING RULES 2008-2009

