

APPENDIX H – GUIDE TO MOTIONS

This is a simplified version of Robert’s Rules of Order and how to act on motions.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE:

- Everyone has the right to participate in discussion if they wish, before anyone may speak a second time.
- Everyone has the right to know what is going on at all times.
- Only urgent matters may interrupt a speaker.
- Only one thing (motion) can be discussed at a time.

A motion is the topic under discussion (e.g., “I move that we add a coffee break to this meeting”). After being recognized by the chairperson, any member can introduce a motion when no other motion is on the table. A motion requires a second to be considered. Each motion must be passed, defeated, tabled, referred to committee, or postponed indefinitely.

HOW TO DO THINGS:

BRING UP A NEW IDEA BEFORE THE GROUP.

After being recognized, present your motion. Another member must second the motion before discussion or consideration starts.

CHANGE SOME OF THE WORDING IN A MOTION UNDER DISCUSSION.

After being recognized, move to amend by

- Adding words
- Striking words
- Striking and inserting words

REWORD A MOTION BEYOND SIMPLE WORD CHANGES.

Move to substitute your motion for the original motion. If it is seconded, discussion will continue on both motions and eventually the body will vote on which motion they prefer.

ASK FOR MORE STUDY AND/OR INVESTIGATION OF AN IDEA BEING DISCUSSED.

Move to refer to a sub-committee. Try to be specific as to the charge to the sub-committee.



ASK FOR MORE TIME TO PERSONALLY STUDY AN IDEA BEING DISCUSSED.

Move to postpone to a definite time or date.

TIRED OF THE CURRENT DISCUSSION.

Move to limit debate to a set period of time or to a set number of speakers. Requires a two-thirds vote.

HEARD ENOUGH DISCUSSION.

Move to close the debate. Requires a two-thirds vote. Or move to previous question. This cuts off discussion and brings the assembly to a vote on the pending question only. Requires a two-thirds vote.

POSTPONE A MOTION UNTIL SOME LATER TIME.

Move to table the motion. The motion may be taken from the table after one item of business has been conducted. If the motion is not taken from the table by the end of the next meeting, it is dead. To kill a motion at the time it is tabled requires a two-thirds vote. A majority is required to table a motion without killing it.

TAKE A SHORT BREAK.

Move to recess for a set period of time.

END THE MEETING.

Move to adjourn.

NEED CLARIFICATION ON A PROCEDURE BEING USED.

Without recognition, call for "point of information" or "point of parliamentary inquiry." The chairperson will ask you to state your question and will attempt to clarify the situation.

RECONSIDER AN ACTION VOTED ON EARLIER IN THE MEETING FOR WHICH YOU WERE ON THE WINNING SIDE.

Move to reconsider. If the majority agrees, the motion comes back on the floor as though the vote had not occurred.

CHANGE AN ACTION VOTED ON AT AN EARLIER MEETING.

Move to rescind. If previous written notice is given, a simple majority is required. If no notice is given, a two-thirds vote is required.



INTERRUPT A SPEAKER FOR THESE REASONS ONLY:

- Point of information – to get information about business
- Parliamentary inquiry – to get information about rules
- Question of privilege – if you can't hear, safety reasons, comfort, etc.
- Point of order – if you see a breach of the rules Appeal – if you disagree with the chairperson's ruling

