

Parliamentary Procedure

The business of any meeting is conducted more efficiently and quickly with parliamentary procedure and gives members a sense of security in knowing what course of action may be taken.

As stated in "Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised," the rules of parliamentary law are built on a careful balance of the rights of persons and subgroups within an organization.

The rules are based on regard for the rights of:

- The majority – defined as more than half
- The minority
- Individual members
- Absentees
- All these together

Benefits of parliamentary procedure include the following:

- Justice and courtesy for all
- Maintenance of order
- Consideration of one item at a time
- All sides get heard
- Ability for each member to provide input
- Majority rule
- Protection of the rights of all members including the minority Basic Principles
- All members have equal rights, privileges and obligations
- No person can speak until recognized by the chair
- Personal remarks during debate are out of order
- Only one question at a time may be considered, and only one person may have the floor at any one time
- Members have a right to know what the immediately pending question is and to have it restated before a vote is taken
- Full and free discussion of every main motion is a basic right
- A quorum must be present for business to be conducted
- A majority decides a question except when basic rights of members are involved or a rule provides otherwise.
- A 2/3 vote is required for any motion that deprives a member of right in any way (e.g., cutting off debate)
- Silence gives consent. Those who do not vote allow the decision to be made by those who do vote

Chapter 13 – DIGEST OF LAWS CODE OF PARLIAMENTARY LAW

PREFACE

13.0.0 In all parliamentary matters, the Parliamentary Code shall be regarded as law; and all rulings of Masters of Junior, Subordinate, Pomona, State Granges, and the National Grange must conform thereto. Roberts Rules of Order (Newly Revised) is considered standard authority in this country, and is adopted as such on points not decided in the Parliamentary Code.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

13.1.1 When a committee is called upon for its report, the chairman or some other selected member shall rise in his/her place and read the report. The report of a committee is properly before the Grange for discussion and action without the necessity for a motion to adopt. The Master will announce, "The report of the committee is now properly before you. Are there any remarks?" At the termination of discussion the Master will call for the vote as follows: "All in favor of adopting the report of the committee will manifest it by the voting sign of the Order," etc.

13.1.2 If there is a minority report of the committee, it shall be read before the majority report is acted upon. In order to bring the minority report properly before the Grange, a motion must be made to substitute the minority report for the majority report. If the motion prevails, the minority report become the report of the committee and is then acted upon. If the motion to substitute is lost, the majority report will then be considered.

13.1.3 The report of any committee may be altered or amended, adopted or rejected, as determined by a majority of the Grange. If the report contains simple statements of facts, it may be considered as a whole. If it contains a preamble and resolutions, the resolutions may be considered separately in the same order as introduced by the committee, and the preamble voted upon subsequently, or the entire report may be recommitted to the committee reporting the same, or be referred to some other committee, with or without instructions.

MOTIONS

13.2.1 No motion can be made unless the mover rises and addresses the Chair.

13.2.2 All motions or resolutions shall be reduced to writing, when demanded by two or more members or by the Master. They must be read aloud by the mover or Secretary, seconded, and then repeated by the Master, before they can be debated; and when stated from the Chair they are in possession of the Grange, and cannot be withdrawn except by consent of a majority. At the request of the mover, and the second a motion may be withdrawn before it is in possession of the Grange, or if it is in possession of the Grange, the Master may announce; "Unless there is objection, the motion will be withdrawn." If there is objection, the Grange shall determine by vote. When properly stated, the Master should give the preference of the floor to the mover if he/she rises to speak.

13.2.3 A motion containing more than one subject may be divided when demanded by any members, and a vote shall be taken on each subject.

13.2.4 No dilatory, frivolous or absurd motion shall be entertained by the Master. A dilatory motion is one clearly designed to obstruct business.

TIMES OF SPEAKING

13.3.1 No member shall be allowed to speak more than once to the same question, unless by consent of the Grange, except the members introducing the question, who may speak twice; but this shall not prevent his/her speaking every time the same subject is presented in the form of a different question.

13.3.2 The length of time allowed each speaker shall be determined by the Grange.

DEBATE

13.4.1 A member, while speaking shall refer to the person to whom he/she makes allusions as Brother (or Sister); the Brother (or Sister) on my right or left; or the Brother (or Sister) from (mentioning the state, or county or Subordinate Grange).

13.4.2 No member shall interrupt another while speaking.

13.4.3 When two or more members rise at the same time, the Master shall allow the floor to the one farthest from the Chair; providing however, that the Master shall prevent the abuse of the rule. Every member shall rise from his/her seat to speak, and shall address the Master on rising.

13.4.4 All offensive language, personal allusions, or discourteous conduct must be scrupulously avoided, and any member

using exceptional words in debate must be at once called to order, and not permitted to proceed without consent of the Grange.

PRIVILEGED QUESTIONS

13.5.1 While a subject is under consideration, certain motions may be submitted and claim precedence for decision, though themselves not all debatable. These are called privileged questions and are as follows, having precedence in the order in which they are arranged:

- A. Motion to take recess
- B. Raise question of privilege
- C. Call for orders of the day
- D. Motion to lay on the table
- E. Motion for previous question
- F. Motion to postpone to a day certain
- G. Motion to commit
- H. Motion to amend
- I. Motion to postpone indefinitely

13.5.2 A parliamentary inquiry, if pertinent to the pending business, is always in order.

TO ADJOURN

13.6.1 A motion to adjourn is never in order in the Grange. An order of business is prescribed, and when completed, or earlier if necessary, the Worthy Master proceeds to close in due form.

TAKE RECESS

13.7.1 A motion to take recess is privileged if the recess is to take effect immediately, and can be amended only as to length of time of recess. A motion to take a recess at a future time is not privileged by a main motion. If privileged, a two-thirds vote is required; otherwise a majority vote decides.

13.7.2 A Grange is at recess when the program, or order of business, or vote of the Grange provides for an intermission of less than 24 hours, with a definite time to reconvene. A Grange cannot vote to take a recess that will carry the session into the following day. No business can be transacted while a Grange is in recess.

13.7.3 The Master of a Grange may declare the Grange at ease when it becomes desirable to temporarily suspend regular Grange meeting procedure, to admit non-members, to await the report of a Committee, or for any purpose when it is deemed advisable to continue the Grange session. The salutation and voting sign of the Order shall not be used when a Grange is at ease. All officers remain at their stations of duty, unless otherwise directed by the Master.

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

13.8.1 A member raising a question of privilege need not wait to be recognized, but upon receiving the Master's attention will say, "Worthy Master, I rise on a question of privilege affecting the Grange." or "I rise on a question of personal privilege." The Master directs him/her to state the question and then decides whether it is one of privilege or not. Two members may appeal this decision. The Master may decide that the question is one of privilege, but not of sufficient importance to interrupt the speaker. In that event, the Master will assign the floor to the member raising the question immediately upon the conclusion of the speaker.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

13.9.1 A call for the orders of the day requires no second and is a demand that the Grange turn to the consideration of any special orders as outlined in this Code.

LAY ON THE TABLE

13.10.1 A motion to lay on the table may be made to temporarily postpone a pending question— that is to lay on the table until some other question is disposed of— after which the subject may be taken from the table again.

13.10.2 If a motion to lay on the table is decided in the affirmative, the main question, with all the motions pertaining thereto, is removed from before the Grange. To lay an amendment upon the table carries with it the question proposed to be amended. A majority vote decides.

THE PREVIOUS QUESTION

13.11.1 A motion for the previous question shall be put as follows: The Master shall say, "The previous question is called for. As many as favor ordering the previous question will manifest by the voting sign of the Order." A two-thirds vote is required for its adoption, and, if decided in the affirmative, the vote shall first be taken upon the question under immediate discussion, and then on the main question; if decided in the negative, the main question and pending amendments remain for discussion and action.

13.11.2 No debate should ever be allowed upon the previous Question after it is properly demanded.

POSTPONEMENT TO A DAY CERTAIN

13.12.1 When any subject is postponed to a day certain, it is called the special order for that day. There may be two or more

special orders for the same day.

13.12.2 If no hour is fixed, then subjects in the order named take precedence of all other business for every part of that day until disposed of. If an hour is fixed for each subject on the appointed day, each becomes a special order for its hour.

13.12.3 When a special order is called for, the regular business is postponed until the special order is disposed of.

TO COMMIT

13.13.1 A motion to commit may be amended by substituting a new committee; by increasing or reducing the number of members of the committee; or it may be accompanied by instructions to the committee to introduce some particular amendment. If this latter motion be carried in the affirmative, the main question and everything pertaining thereto is placed in the hands of the committee, who will report according to the direction given. In all other cases, the committee may make such report as it judges best.

AMENDMENTS

13.14.1 Amendments must be decided before the questions from which they arise, and may be proposed in three ways:

- (A) By inserting or adding a word, phrase, sentence, or section;
- (B) By striking out some particular word, phrase, sentence, or section, and
- (C) By striking out some particular part and inserting in its place some other word, phrase, sentence, or section.

13.14.2 An amendment once adopted cannot be further amended, except by reconsideration. But it is in order to

propose an amendment to an amendment while the first amendment is under consideration. A motion to amend an amendment to an amendment is not in order.

13.14.3 An amendment assumes the form of a substitute when it becomes a new proposition, though relating to the subject under consideration. A substitute may be submitted while an amendment is pending, but cannot be voted on until the original matter is perfected by amendment.

INDEFINITE POSTPONEMENT

13.15.1 A motion to indefinitely postpone cannot be amended. Its passage suppresses a question without coming to a direct vote thereon in a way that it cannot be renewed during the same session of the Grange without reconsideration.

SUSPENSION OF RULES

13.16.1 A Grange may suspend any rules adopted to govern its procedure by a two-thirds vote provided that such suspension does not conflict with its Constitution or By-Laws, or those of the State or National Grange, and provided that such rule is not designed to protect absentees or minorities. A motion to elect by acclamation, or to instruct the Secretary to cast the ballot is not in order because it suspends the rule protecting the minority of one from exposing his/her vote.

DIVISION OF THE GRANGE

13.17.1 Whenever a member doubts the correctness of the decision of the Master upon any question, the member may call for a division.

13.17.2 The result of the vote in this case will be arrived at by those voting in the affirmative rising and standing until they shall be counted by the Assistant Steward and Lady Assistant Steward as tellers, then resuming their seats, then those voting in the negative will rise to be counted. The tellers will report each count to the Master, who will announce the results.

YEAS AND NAYS

13.18.1 State Granges and the National Grange are delegate bodies. In such bodies, a call for the "Yeas and Nays" is permissible. Should a member call for the "yeas and nays," the Master will say: "There is a call for the yeas and nays; those in favor of the call will rise." If five members rise, he/she will say: "The yeas and nays are ordered." He/she will then state the question and say: "Those voting in the affirmative will say 'yes' when their names are called, and those of a contrary opinion 'no' when their names are called; the Secretary will call the roll." The roll having been called, the Secretary reads aloud the names of those voting in the affirmative and then those voting in the negative, that corrections may be made, then adds up the members on either side and hands the result to the Master, who announces it to the Grange.

THE QUESTION

13.19.1 Any subject submitted by any member for the consideration of the Grange is called a motion or resolution, and when it is stated by the Master, it is called the question.

13.19.2 Whenever deliberation upon any question appears to be closed, the Master shall rise and say, "Is the Grange ready

for the question?" Unless interrupted, he/she will then proceed to state the question and take the vote upon it.

13.19.3 Whenever the Master can reasonably suppose there will be no objection to his/her decision. He/she may economize time and dispatch business by dispensing with a formal vote, and saying, "If no objection be offered, the report will be received," "The petition will be granted," "The Secretary will read the paper," "The member has leave to withdraw the motion," etc.

DIVISION OF THE QUESTION

13.20.1 Any member may call for a division of the question when it contains two or more distinct points.

QUESTION OF ORDER

13.21.1 When a question of order arises, it suspends the proceedings and should be decided without debate, after which the proceedings are resumed at the point of suspension.

13.21.2 Such questions are decided by the Master; if, however, the decision is not satisfactory, any member may object to it, and have the question decided by the Grange. This is called appealing from the decision of the Chair, and is placed in the possession of the Grange by the following words, from the Master; "Shall the decision of the Chair stand as the decision of the Grange?" This question is debatable, and may be participated in by the Master.

RECONSIDERATION

13.22.1 When any question has been decided, either affirmatively or negatively, it is permitted for any member who

voted with the majority to move a reconsideration at the same meeting. A majority decides. It is debatable only if the question to be reconsidered is debatable. If, however, the subject upon which the vote was taken shall have been announced by authority and gone out of possession of the Grange, a motion to reconsider will not be in order.

RESCINDING AND EXPUNGING

13.23.1 Any action taken by the Grange, except those noted further on in this section, may be rescinded by a majority vote, provided notice has been given at a previous meeting (or in the call if a special meeting), or it may be rescinded without notice by a two-thirds vote, or by a vote of the majority of the entire membership. To rescind is a main motion without any privilege. It cannot be made if a motion to reconsider is in order. The motion to rescind may be applied to the vote on all motions except that: votes cannot be rescinded after something has been done as a result of that vote that the Grange cannot undo; or when it is in the nature of a contract agreed to by another party; or when it has otherwise passed out of possession of the Grange. The Grange may expunge from the record any action which has been rescinded. This is done by crossing out the expunged portion and noting, "Expunged by order of the Grange" - to be dated and signed by the Secretary. The words must be left legible, otherwise it would be impossible to determine if more was expunged than ordered.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

13.24.1 In deliberative assemblies, matters of vital moment are usually referred to as a committee of the whole house.

13.24.2 Such a procedure is not applicable to a Grange, and must never be resorted to. No question can arise in a Grange that the Grange may not fully discuss in its organized capacity; and should the Master be required to vacate his/her chair, a successor is already appointed by the ritual.