

ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER CHEAT SHEET

Robert's Rules of Order is a manual of parliamentary procedures that governs most organizations with boards, including governmental bodies. City Council and the other city boards/commissions follow Robert's Rules of Order as a guideline, along with any applicable bylaws or similar, for meeting procedures to ensure meetings are conducted in an orderly and efficient manner.

TYPES OF MOTIONS

- **Main Motion:** Introduce a new item
- **Subsidiary Motion:** Change or affect how to handle a main motion (vote on this before main motion)
- **Privileged Motion:** Urgent or important matter unrelated to pending business
- **Incidental Motion:** Questions procedure of other motions (must consider before the other motion)
- **Motion to Table:** Stops a motion and deliberation
- **Motion to Postpone:** Delays a vote (can reopen debate on the main motion)

EVERY MOTION HAS 6 STEPS

1. **Motion:** A member rises or raises a hand to signal the chairperson.
2. **Second:** Another member seconds the motion.
3. **Restate motion:** The chairperson restates the motion.
4. **Deliberate:** The members deliberate the matter.
5. **Vote:** The chairperson restates the motion, and then first asks for affirmative votes, and then negative votes.
6. **Announce the vote:** The chairperson announces the result of the vote and any instructions.

TIP! If the board is in obvious agreement, the chairperson may save time by stating, "If there is no objection, we will adopt the motion to..." Then wait for any objections. Then say, "Hearing no objections, (state the motion) is adopted." And then state any instructions. If a member objects, first ask for debate, then vote and then announce the vote.

REQUESTING POINTS OF SOMETHING

Certain situations need attention during the meeting, but they don't require a motion, second, debate or voting. It's permissible to state a point during a meeting where the chairperson needs to handle a situation right away. Council members can declare a Point of Order, Point of Information, Point of Inquiry, or Point of Personal Privilege.

- **Point of Order:** Draws attention to a breach of rules, improper procedure, breaching of established practices, etc.
- **Point of Information:** A member may need to bring up an additional point or additional information (in the form of a statement) so that the other members can make fully informed votes.

- **Point of Inquiry:** A member may use point of inquiry to ask for clarification in a report to make better voting decisions.
- **Point of Personal Privilege:** A member may use point of personal privilege to address the physical comfort of the setting such as temperature or noise.

TIPS AND REMINDERS FOR CHAIRPERSONS

Robert's Rules of Order, which is also widely known as parliamentary procedure, was developed to ensure that meetings are fair, efficient, democratic and orderly. A skilled chairperson allows all members to voice their opinions in an orderly manner so that everyone in the meeting can hear and be heard. The following tips and reminders will help chairpersons to run a successful and productive meeting without being run over or running over others.

- Follow the agenda to keep the group moving toward its goals.
- Let the group do its own work; don't overcommand.
- Control the flow of the meeting by recognizing members who ask to speak.
- Let all members speak once before allowing anyone to speak a second time.
- When discussions get off-track, gently guide the group back to the agenda.
- Model courtesy and respect, and insist that others do the same.
- Help to develop the Council's skills in parliamentary procedure by properly using motions and points of order.
- Give each speaker your undivided attention.
- Keep an emotional pulse on the discussions.
- Allow a consensus to have the final authority of the group.

Charter Specific Rules

The City Charter specifies that a quorum of four members is required to meet. The vote of four Council members is required for any action, except where a larger majority is required by law. At regular Council meetings, only business on the agenda may be considered unless there is a vote of five members of Council. At a special meeting of Council, only matters on the agenda may be considered.

Action	What to say	Can speaker be interrupted?	Need a second?	Can this be deliberated?	Can this be amended?	Votes needed
Introduce main motion	"I move to..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Amend a motion	"I move to amend the motion by..."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Move item to committee	"I move that we refer the matter to committee."	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
Postpone item	"I move to postpone the matter until..."	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
End debate	"I move the previous question."	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
Object to procedure	"Point of order."	Yes	No	No	No	Chair's decision
Recess the meeting	"I move that we recess until..."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Adjourn the meeting	"I move to adjourn the meeting."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Request information	"Point of information."	No	Yes	No	No	No vote
Overrule the chair's ruling	"I move to overrule the chair's ruling."	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
Extend the allotted time	"I move to extend the time by _____ minutes."	No	Yes	No	Yes	2/3
Enforce the rules or point out incorrect procedure	"Point of order."	Yes	No	No	No	No vote
Table a motion	"I move to table..."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Verity voice vote with count	"I call for a division."	No	No	No	No	No vote
Object to considering some undiplomatic matter	"I object to consideration of this matter..."	Yes	No	No	No	2/3
Take up a previously tabled item	"I move to take from the table..."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
* Reconsider something already disposed of	"I move to reconsider our action to..."	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Consider something out of it scheduled order	"I move to suspend the rules and consider..."	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
Move the meeting into closed session	"I move to go into closed session."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority

*A member may make a motion to reconsider something that was already disposed; however, the reconsidered motion may not be subsequently reconsidered. A motion to reconsider must be made during the same meeting and can extend to a meeting that lasts for more than one day.