

Arlington County Civic Federation

Arlington County Civic Federation Parliamentary Procedures

Created By Board Resolution

Sections

Principles of ACCF Parliamentary Procedure

Common Parliamentary Motions

Purpose of The Motions

These procedures used concepts from the UBC Rules of Order, Robert's Rules of Order and ACCF experience

Revision	Document Status	(BR 2020-21-2)	Date
0	Approved – ACCF Board	(still needs Practical Examples)	4-26-2021

PRINCIPLES OF ACCF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

1. The purpose of parliamentary procedure is to make it easier for people to work together effectively and to help groups accomplish their purposes. Rules of procedure should assist a meeting, not inhibit it.
2. A meeting can deal with only one matter at a time.
3. All members have equal rights, privileges and obligations. One of the chairperson's main responsibilities is to use the authority of the chair to ensure that all people attending a meeting are treated equally.
4. A majority vote decides an issue. In any group, each member agrees to be governed by the vote of the majority. Parliamentary rules enable a meeting to determine the will of the majority of those attending a meeting.
5. Although the ultimate decision rests with a majority, all members have such basic rights as the right to be heard and the right to oppose. The rights of all members - majority and minority - should be the concern of every member.
6. Every matter presented for decision should be discussed fully within the time allotted. The right of every member to speak on any issue is as important as each member's right to vote.
7. Every member has the right to understand the meaning of any question presented to a meeting and to know what effect a decision will have. A member always has the right to request information on any motion he or she does not thoroughly understand.
8. All meetings must be characterized by fairness, good faith and civility between members and guests.
9. For any vote the total possible vote, consisting of Ayes, Nays and Abstentions, shall be recorded in the meeting minutes. For determining the results of the vote, whether majority or 2/3ds, only the Ayes and Nays will be counted.

COMMON ACCF PARLIAMENTARY MOTIONS

Motion ("I move")	Purpose	Second required?	Debatable?	Amendable?	Vote required?
Main Motion	Puts new business before the membership.	Y	Y	Y	Majority
Amend Motion	Revises or changes wording or elements of the main motion.	Y	Y	Y	Majority
Defer	Delays deliberation to a <u>stated</u> specific future time.	Y	N	N	Majority
Challenge decision of the Chair	Disagrees with chair and lets members decide. Must appeal immediately.	Y	N	N	Majority -sustains chair
Call the Question	Stops debate and vote on motion.	Y	N	N	None if no Objection / Majority if objection
Point of Order	Administrative - Must appeal immediately	N	N	N	N
Friendly Amendment	Change small item in motion or Modify a Whereas. Must be accepted by original author of Motion	N	N	N	N
Withdraw the Motion	For various reasons the Mover may choose to withdraw the motion.	Y	N	N	None if no Objection / Majority if objection
Adjourn	Ends meeting immediately.	Y	N	N	Majority

PURPOSE OF THE MOTIONS

The Main Motion

A main motion is a motion that brings business before a meeting. Because a meeting can consider only one subject at a time, a main motion can be made only when no other motion is pending.

When a main motion has been stated by one member, seconded by another member, and repeated for the meeting by the chair, the meeting cannot consider any other business until that motion has been disposed of.

Unless the main motion is very short and simple, the mover should hand it in writing to the Secretary. The Secretary will record it and give it to the President. If the motion is prepared before the meeting it should be shown to all the members for their review.

A main motion must not interrupt another speaker, requires a second, is debatable, can be amended, cannot be applied to any other motion and requires a majority vote.

Withdraw

The debate after a motion is introduced may become contentious in ways the original mover did not expect. The mover may choose to withdraw the motion.

However, when a motion has been made by a member and seconded by another, it becomes the property of the meeting. The mover and seconder cannot withdraw the motion unless the meeting agrees. The chair will ask if the meeting objects to the motion's being withdrawn. If no objection, the chair will announce: "The motion is withdrawn." If there is an objection a majority vote will be held.

A motion to Withdraw the original motion cannot interrupt another speaker, must be seconded, is not debatable and is not amendable.

Amend

An *amendment* is a motion to change, to add words to, or to omit words from, an original motion. The change is usually to clarify or improve the wording of the original motion and must, of course, be germane to that motion.

An amendment cannot interrupt another speaker, must be seconded, is debatable if the motion to be amended is debatable, may itself be amended by an amendment to the *amendment* and requires a majority vote.

The chair should allow full discussion of the amendment (being careful to restrict debate to the amendment, not the original motion) and should then have a vote taken on the amendment only, making sure the members know they are voting on the amendment, but not on the original motion.

If the amendment is defeated, another amendment may be proposed, or discussion will proceed on the original motion.

If the amendment carries, the meeting does not necessarily vote immediately on the “motion as amended.” Because the discussion of the principle of the original motion was not permitted during debate on the amendment, there may be members who want to speak now on the issue raised in the original motion.

Other amendments may also be proposed, provided that they do not alter or nullify the amendments already passed. Finally, the meeting will vote on the “motion as amended” or, if all amendments are defeated, on the original motion.

An amendment to an amendment is a motion to change, to add words to, or omit words from, the first amendment. The rules for an amendment (above) apply here, except that the amendment to an amendment is not itself amendable and that it takes precedence over the first amendment.

Debate proceeds and a vote is taken on the amendment to the amendment, then on the first amendment, and finally on the original motion (“as amended,” if the amendment has been carried). Only one amendment to an amendment is permissible.

Sometimes a main motion is worded poorly, and several amendments may be presented to improve the wording. In such cases it is sometimes better to withdraw the motion and rewrite it rather than to try to solve the wording problem with amendments.

If a main motion is prepared and shown to all the members before the meeting then a proposed amendment to it should be handed in writing to the Secretary. The Secretary will record it and give it to the President.

Friendly Amendment

This amendment is used to correct small items in the original Motion and it is not meant to change the original motion in any substantive way. It may also be used to modify the Whereas statements of a resolution. It must be accepted by the original author and must be made before any substantive amendments are proposed. Does not require a second, is not debatable, is not amendable and does not require a vote.

Defer

If a meeting prefers to consider a main motion at a subsequent meeting, it can move to defer the motion to a future meeting, which is specified in the motion to defer. Such a motion can be moved regardless of how much debate there has been on the motion it proposes to defer.

When the specified future meeting takes place and the motion still cannot be taken up, the Chair will explain why and give the new date when the motion will finally be taken up.

When the meeting to which a motion has been deferred has arrived, the chairperson should state the deferred motion to the meeting as the first item in Old Business. If the motion can still not be decided, it must be withdrawn.

A motion to defer to a definite future meeting may not interrupt another speaker, must be seconded, is not debatable (except as to the meeting selected), cannot be amended and requires a majority vote.

Call the Question

This is a tactic to close debate on a question. It is usually made at a time when the debate has been long and repetitious. A member rises and says: "I Call the Question."

A motion to Call the Question (that is, to vote immediately on the motion being debated) cannot interrupt another speaker, must be seconded, is not debatable and is not amendable. The chair will ask if the meeting objects to debate being closed on the question. If no objection, the chair will announce: "Debate is closed, the motion will be voted on." If there is an objection a majority vote will be held.

If the motion to Call the Question passes, the chair immediately proceeds to call a vote on the question that was being debated.

Challenge Decisions of the Chair

Any ruling of the chair can be challenged, but such appeals must be made immediately after the ruling. If debate has progressed, a challenge is not in order.

When a member wishes to appeal from the decision of the chair, the member rises as soon as the decision is made, even if another has the floor, and without waiting to be recognized by the chair, says, "I challenge the decision of the chair." The chair should state clearly the question at issue, and if necessary the reasons for the decision.

Such a motion is in order when another speaker has the floor, but it must be made at the time of the chair's ruling. If any debate or business has intervened, it is too late to challenge. The motion must be seconded and is not amendable. A majority or tie vote sustains the decision of the chair, on the principle that the chair's decision stands until reversed by a majority of the meeting.

It should be noted that members have no right to criticize a ruling of the chair unless they appeal it.

Point of Order

This motion permits a member to draw the chair's attention to what he/she believes to be an error in procedure. The member will rise and say: "Point of order." The chair should recognize the member, who will then state the point of order. The effect is to require the chair to make an immediate ruling on the question involved. The chair will usually give his/her reasons for making the ruling. If the ruling is thought to be wrong, the chair can be challenged.

A point of order can interrupt another speaker, does not require a second, is not debatable and is not amendable.

Adjourn

A member can propose to close the meeting entirely by moving to adjourn. This motion can be made and the meeting can adjourn even while business is pending, providing that the time for the next meeting is established by a rule of the association or has been set by the meeting. In such a case, unfinished business is carried over to the next meeting.

A motion to adjourn may not interrupt another speaker, must be seconded, is not debatable, is not amendable and requires a majority vote.