

From Local Ag Teachers:



Thoughts in Passing



This is Part I of a two-part series prepared by Charles Ackley, Young Farmer advisor at Ephrata Area High School. Part II will be presented next week.

Parliamentary Procedure and Meetings

Meetings, like birth, death, and taxes, are the common lot of man. Perhaps more clearly put by one farmer, "it's the nature of the beast."

Meetings have become a more and more important necessity in our modern society. Rural leadership has become especially essential during these times of technological change and crisis.

However, the actual conduct of these necessary and important meetings may cause additional crisis for the organization if an efficient and democratic system is not followed. Everyone in a meeting should have a basic knowledge of parliamentary procedure.

The chairman should be especially knowledgeable so that

he can lead the group properly. However, it is equally as important for everyone else in the group to know how to participate effectively and democratically.

Perhaps you have questions concerning certain business meeting procedures. What is a typical agenda? How is it conducted? What motions are in order? How are they handled?

The chairman is responsible for employing these techniques so that the business of the meeting is disposed of smoothly and democratically. Parliamentary law is not difficult and should always be considered as your servant. Remember that the rules were made for man and not man for the rules.

The agenda or order of business outlines the meeting and establishes a logical sequence of events. When an organization does not have its own adopted order of business, according to Robert's Rules, the following is the order:

- (1) Reading the minutes of the previous meeting and their approval



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- (2) Reports of boards and standing committees.
- (3) Reports of special committees
- (4) Special orders.
- (5) Unfinished business and general orders.
- (6) New business.

The official parliamentary law reference in most circles is Robert's Rules of Order by Henry M. Robert. However, there are many other excellent references that come in the form of charts, cards, leaflets and books. One of these handy references should be available to the organizations parliamentarian so that he can make immediate decisions concerning any one of the 44 motions as the meeting progresses smoothly.

The big question is, how is parliamentary procedure employed as our servant to keep the

meeting moving smoothly. The following order of business and sample forms in parliamentary procedure may be helpful:

I. CALL TO ORDER

The president stands and calls the meeting to order at the designated time. One tap of the gavel.

"The meeting will please come to order."

Waits for perfect order. Ascertains if a quorum is present.

II. READING AND APPROVAL OR MINUTES

"The Secretary will read the minutes of the preceding meeting."

The secretary stands to read the minutes.

"Are there any corrections?"
"There being none, the minutes stand approved as read."

If any corrections have been made: "If there are no further corrections, the minutes stand approved as corrected."

III. STATEMENT OF TREASURER

"Are there any questions? This report was read for your information and will be placed on file."

No action is taken on the unaudited report of the treasurer.

IV. CORRESPONDENCE
Bills - action is taken on their payment.

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