

## **GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING MEETINGS FAIRLY, SMOOTHLY AND EXPEDITIOUSLY**

*Parliamentary law is an accepted set of rules by which deliberative assemblies arrive at the majority opinion of those present -- accurately, impartially, and in the minimum amount of time. They should be observed in every meeting of the PTA. It is designed to maintain order, to ensure justice and equality, to expedite business and to enable an organization to accomplish the objectives for which it was formed.*

*Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised is the parliamentary authority adopted by the National PTA. Its use by units and councils is required. It is essential that every president be familiar with its basic rules.*

- 1. Power of the organization is vested in its members.*
- 2. All members have equal rights and privileges: to introduce business, participate in discussion, vote, etc.*
- 3. The presiding officer must be fair and impartial, versed in parliamentary procedure, tactful and courteous.*
- 4. The vote of the majority decides except where the basic rights of members are involved, in which case a 2/3 vote is required.*
- 5. Every member is entitled to speak once on a debatable motion unless the pending motion is un-debatable or unless the body has voted to terminate debate.*
- 6. Only one main motion or question may be considered at a time. It must be disposed of in some fashion before another main motion may be entertained.*
- 7. The member who makes the motion is entitled to speak first and may not speak against the motion.*
- 8. One who spoke on a motion may also speak on amendments and other motions that may be moved since the question is in a different stage.*
- 9. Only one person at a time may have the floor.*
- 10. Debate should be confined to the merits of the pending question.*
- 11. When speaking in debate, personalities should be avoided. The motion can be denounced or attacked, but never the person.*
- 12. Speakers must address their remarks to the chair.*
- 13. No one may speak a second time in debate until everyone choosing to speak has had an opportunity to address the issue.*
- 14. A member has the right to know what question (motion) is before the assembly at all times and what its effect would be.*

15. *Care must be exercised to prevent abuse of such motions as point of order, point of personal privilege, point of information.*
16. *The use of general (unanimous) consent is a great time-saver where everyone seems to be in agreement.*
17. *If there is no quorum and action cannot wait until the next meeting, a vote can be taken and ratified at the next meeting. Otherwise, wait until there is a quorum before voting.*
18. *Refer complex questions to committees for further information.*
19. *Limit debate on the pending question (the number of speakers, the amount of time or call the question) if necessary.*
20. *Be sure a motion is made before discussion starts on an issue. This is after someone brings up an issue, which you feel will require action. As presiding officer you can ask someone to make the issue into a motion.*
21. *Silence implies consent or at least acquiescence.*

*Adapted from Ohio PTA.*