



American Legion Auxiliary

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Parliamentarians!!! Now is the time to prepare for your Unit annual meeting or District Convention. Units do not have a convention, but they should have an annual meeting where their governing rules are reviewed and updated according to their needs. That may be held in the fall so Unit Parliamentarians may have a little more time to prepare. District Conventions are coming right up though.

As your Unit or District Parliamentarian, it is your obligation to assure the meeting/convention runs in accordance with your Standing Rules, Bylaws (when applicable) and Constitution. Become familiar with these documents.

Do you have an appointed committee to review the governing rules or do you consider them at the meeting/convention? Do you require a resolution to offer changes? Majority vote or 2/3 majority vote? Members, you also need to be familiar with your standing rules. They are there to help you. Here are some tidbits I found regarding parliamentary procedures.

- 1. Standing Rules should contain only such rules as may be adopted without previous notice by a majority vote at any business meeting. The vote on their adoption, or their amendment, before or after their adoption, may be considered. At any meeting they may be suspended by a majority vote, or they may be amended or rescinded by a two-thirds vote. If notice of the proposed action was given at a previous meeting or in the call for the meeting, they may be amended or rescinded by a majority vote. As a majority may suspend any of them for that meeting these rules do not interfere with the freedom of any meeting and therefore require no notice in order to adopt them. Generally they are not adopted at the organization of an organization, but from time to time as they are needed. Sometimes the bylaws of an organization are called standing rules, but it better to follow the usual classification of rules as given in this section. No standing rule, or resolution, or motion is in order that conflicts with the constitution, or bylaws, or rules of order, or standing rules.*
- 2. The following summary will help you determine when to use the actions described in Robert's Rules. These tips are meant to help the members. They will give you some direction on what is available to you.*

A main motion must be moved, seconded, and stated by the chair before it can be discussed.

 - If you want to move, second, or speak to a motion, stand and address the chair.*
 - If you approve the motion as is, vote for it. If you disapprove the motion, vote against it. If you approve the idea of the motion but want to change it, amend it or submit a substitute for it.*
 - If you want advice or information to help you make your decision, move to refer the motion to an appropriate quorum or committee with instructions to report back.*
 - If you feel they can handle it better than the assembly, move to refer the motion to a quorum or committee with power to act. If you feel that the pending question(s) should be delayed so more urgent business can be considered, move to lay the motion on the table.*
 - If you want time to think the motion over, move that consideration be deferred to a certain time.*
 - If you think that further discussion is unnecessary, move the previous question.*

- *If you think that the assembly should give further consideration to a motion referred to a quorum or committee, move the motion be recalled. ·*
- *If you think that the assembly should give further consideration to a matter already voted upon, move that it be reconsidered. ·*
- *If you do not agree with a decision rendered by the chair, appeal the decision to the assembly. ·*
- *If you think that a matter introduced is not germane to the matter at hand, a point of order may be raised. ·*
- *If you think that too much time is being consumed by speakers, you can move a time limit on such speeches. ·*
- *If a motion has several parts, and you wish to vote differently on these parts, move to divide the motion.*

Just a few more:

Parliamentary Opinions

Parliamentarians are often asked by organizations, “given our current bylaws and rules of order, how do we do this, or, what is the proper procedure to accomplish this objective?” The Parliamentarian will review the organization’s governing documents and provide an opinion as to how to proceed within the rules.

Meeting and Convention Planning

Parliamentarians are often called upon to assist organizations in planning meetings or conventions. Most of the items that must be considered are listed on a checklist under the “Meeting Checklist” tab. In the planning for the meeting, the agenda will specify the proper sequence of events, but consideration must also be given to such things as proper protocol, say in the presentation or introduction of various attendees, opening ceremonies, seating, etc. The parliamentarian is of special use in the preparation of scripts for the chair, credentials reports and considerations, election forms and reports, and the processes in the consideration of motions and bylaw amendments.

Serving as Parliamentarian at Meetings

The role of the parliamentarian at a meeting is to be a resource to the chair, to assist the chair in the conduct of the meeting. The parliamentarian sits adjacent to the chair and unobtrusively gives the chair help, guidance and support during the meeting. The chair can and should consult with the parliamentarian when not certain on how to rule on a question or proceed in the circumstances.

Hopefully this will answer questions the Parliamentarians may have, and also some our members may have on the “how do I” side of the story.

Have a great convention (or annual meeting),
Carol Kottom, Department Parliamentarian

(Keep your friends close, your enemies closer – but never lose track of your angel!!)