NCNW 59th National Convention
September 24-27, 2020
Parliamentary Procedure
The Art of Mastering Efficient and Effective Meetings

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Dr. Davis is an author and possesses skills as a writer, consultant, lecturer, leading educator, strategic planning, Professional Registered Parliamentarian (PRP), and public speaker. Dr. Davis served as the Manager of Education Policy and Professional Practice and Human & Civil Rights Division of the Alabama Education Association for 33 years. She is a renowned educator in the state and has been intricately involved in education policy decisions at the federal, state, and local levels. She served as a member of the State Superintendent’s Advisory Committee, Governor’s Congress on Quality Education, Southeast Comprehensive Center, and appointed by Secretary of Education, Rod Paige, and Consultant to many cadres and committees, including the committee that developed the Professional Education Personnel Evaluation (PEPE) system.

Dr. Davis has numerous accomplishments and is very involved in community, political and professional organizations and activities. She has many firsts in her personal, professional and political career. She was the first Black: to be elected President of the Alabama Education Association, to serve as the Chair of the Montgomery County Democratic Party, and to serve as the President of the Montgomery Botanical Gardens. She was the first to be awarded the Doctorate degree in Educational Leadership, Policy and Law at Alabama State University and the 2007 Recipient of the “National Best Dissertation Award” from the Council of Historically Black Graduate Schools and UMI/Proquest. She was on the 2007 List of Ten Women to Watch by the MOCA Magazine. Her other recent honors and awards include: “2019 Women Who Shape the State of Alabama”, 2012 Recipient of Alabama Democratic Conference Leadership Award for Education, 2012 Recipient of Dr. Martin Luther King Legacy Award for Education, 2011 Recipient of “Reach For Height” - Dorothy I Height Award for Citizenship, Montgomery Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Dr. Davis has written and published many articles and has developed over 30 workshops, presented on the state and national levels. She is married to Warren L. Davis III, two children, Dr. Wartyna Davis and Dr. Warren L. Davis IV, two grandchildren, Tyna and Tyler Davis.
Introduction

- Member, National Association of Parliamentarians (NAP)
- Member, Capital City (Montgomery, AL) Parliamentarians
- National Parliamentarian of The Links, Incorporated
- National Parliamentarian of the CARATS, Incorporated
- Parliamentarian of Montgomery (AL) Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated
- Served as the Parliamentarian for the Alabama Education Association
- Served as the Parliamentarian for the National Education Association (Retired Educators)
Objective

- This workshop will cover the basic rudiments of parliamentary procedure for participating in orderly, efficient and effective meetings. It prepares participants to be more active and confident participants, using the current edition of “Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised” as a vehicle in making their collective voices heard in decision making, planning, and problem-solving processes.

- Participants will develop knowledge and skills for achieving what they want without being rude, disruptive, and argumentative. It arms one with the tools, key structures, and processes, for presiding over and participating in more effective meetings.
#1: Understanding Parliamentary Procedure
- The Basic Rudiments of Parliamentary Procedure

#2: Leading Roles and Rights of Members
- Rights and Roles of Members
  - The Role of the Parliamentarian
  - The Role of the Presider
  - The Role of the Member

#3: Equipping Basic Tools
- Basic Tools for Effective Meeting
  - Agenda
  - Minutes
  - Committee Reports

#4: Conducting Effective Meetings
- Keys to Effective Meeting
THE REVIEW THE STATEMENTS BELOW TO DETERMINE “FACT” OR “MYTH.”

1. ____A majority is the same as “fifty percent plus one” (50% +1).
2. ____Abstentions count as ayes (or, as noes).
3. ____Chairs cannot make motions and cannot vote.
4. ____Minutes must be approved before actions are official.
5. ____A Motion is always necessary.
1. Myth - A majority is the same as “fifty percent plus one” (50% +1). The word majority means "more than half"; and when the term majority vote is used without qualification—as in the case of the basic requirement—it means more than half of the votes cast by persons entitled to vote, excluding blanks or abstentions, at a regular or properly called meeting. RONR (12th ed.), 44: 1

2. Myth - Abstentions count as ayes (or, as noes). To "abstain" means not to vote at all, and a member who makes no response if "abstentions" are called for abstains just as much as one who responds to that effect. RONR (12th ed.), 4:35.
3. Myth - Chairs cannot make motions and cannot vote.
   If the presiding officer is a member of the society, he has—as an individual—the same rights in debate as any other member; but the impartiality required of the chair in an assembly precludes his exercising these rights while he is presiding. To participate in debate, he must relinquish the chair; and in such a case he should turn the chair over…
   RONR (12th ed.), 4:56; 43:29

   If the presiding officer is a member of the assembly, he can vote as any other member when the vote is by ballot
4. Myth - Minutes must be approved before actions are official.  
   Actions are official when voted on. On the other hand, minutes do not become the minutes and assume their essential status as the official record of the proceedings of the society until they have been approved; and before this happens, the Secretary’s draft may be materially modified in the correction process.  
   RONR (12th ed.), 41:12.

5. Myth – A motion is always necessary.  
   The correction and approval of minutes (pp. 354-55) is an example of business that is normally handled by unanimous consent.  
   RONR (12th ed.), 41:10.  
   A formal motion to approve the minutes is not necessary, although such a motion is not out of order.  
   RONR (12th ed.), 41:10.
All parliamentary procedure is built on the principle that there must be a careful balance of the rights of the organization as a whole, the rights of subgroups, and the rights of individual members.

Parliamentary procedure should be used to *help* and not *hinder* decision making.
1. **What is Parliamentary Procedure?**
   - A Code of rules and ethics for working together in groups.
   - Proven rules and customs
   - Guidelines – not laws
   - A system used to conduct business fairly through a democratic process.
   - Provides the group with a structured, logical, consistent format under which to make decisions.

2. **Why use Parliamentary Procedure?**
   - To handle business orderly
   - To allow participation by all
   - To observe the **rule of the majority**
   - To protect the **rights of the minority**
3. **Why is Parliamentary Procedure Important?**

- A The application of Parliamentary law is the best method yet devised to enable assemblies of any size to arrive at the general will.
- You will get more done in less time by following orderly procedures.
- You will encourage greater participation by all members.
- You will ensure fair decision-making.
- You will protect the rights of all members (the majority and the minority).
- You will develop more effective leaders.
- You will help ensure the legal status of your meetings according to society and your own organization.
Who Should observe Parliamentary Law?

- **Large Deliberative Groups**
  - Should follow general parliamentary law when meeting to transact business
  - This excludes governmental bodies

- **Small Groups**
  - Should follow general parliamentary law when meeting to transact business
  - This would include state and local municipality boards
Basic Principles of Parliamentary Law (RONR xlix:1-8)

To ensure that meetings run smoothly, efficiently, and fairly.

As odd as it sounds, imposing regulation on the group is necessary to preserve its freedom to act. Parliamentary Procedure ensures:

- Civility
- Order
- Fairness
- Efficiency

Parliamentary Rules Protect:

1. The right of the majority to rule
2. The right of the minority to be heard
3. The rights of individual members
4. The rights of absentees

Note: The rights of the group supercede the rights of any one member.
Rights of Members (RONR 1:4)

- Right to attend meetings
- Right to make motions
- Right to speak in debate
- Right to vote
- Member rights may only be limited as a result of disciplinary procedures
  - (RONR 6:6-21)
Decorum In Debate

Confine debate to the merits of the pending question (RONR 43:20).

Refrain from attacking a member’s motives (RONR 43:21).

Address all remarks through the chair; maintain a courteous tone (RONR 43:22).

Speakers should refer to officers by title, not names (RONR 4:30).

Avoid the use of members’ names (RONR 43:23).

Refraining from Speaking Adversely on a Prior Action Not Pending. (RONR 43:24).
Hierarchy of Governing Documents

The Charter
The National Council of Negro Women

The Constitution and Bylaws

Manual of Procedures (MOP)*

Membership Manual
Protocol Manual
Ethics and Standards Manual
Nominating Procedures Manual
Election Procedures Manual

Local Chapter Bylaws

Current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised
The Parliamentarian

1. Calls the President’s attention to infractions of the rules as quietly and inconspicuously as possible
2. Keeps notes of the business of the meeting in order to help the chair know what the current parliamentary situation is and to help keep the business on track
3. Knows the bylaws and understands at least basic parliamentary procedure and the nominating/election process
4. Seeks advice from other sources when in doubt about parliamentary problems
The Parliamentarian Does not . . .

- Make rulings, instead, advises President who makes rulings
- Keep order during the meeting
- Offer unsolicited advice unless a serious error is being made
- Make motions or engage in discussions or debate unless asked to by the presiding officer
- Vote unless the vote is taken by ballot

*The parliamentarian generally speaks very little during a meeting!*
The Presider

- Presides over the meeting
- Prepares the Agenda
- Enforces the rules
- Designates who is to speak at any given time
- Understands Parliamentary Procedure
  - Caucuses with Parliamentarian as appropriate
- Keeps order and uses the gavel to call the meeting to order
  - Restores order of the room
- Handles Motions
  - “States” the Question
- Demonstrates Impartiality
“What is the role of the member when it comes to parliamentary procedure?”
The Member

- Helps to maintain effective meeting structure - Participates in meetings
- Addresses comments and questions “to the chair”
- Knows the documents
- Be involved in the discussion!
  - Strong discussion leads to strong decisions
  - Be polite, courteous and engaged
  - Avoid the intimidation factor
Meetings should be a comfort zone:

1. Where members feel welcomed and look forward to attending
2. Where members are busy developing programs that serve the community
3. Where business is handled in a polite, orderly fashion

Respect officers and members at all times...
What bugs you the most about Meetings . . .
The Solution - Tools for an Effective Meeting

1. Minutes
2. Agenda
3. Committee Report
Sample Minutes Template

Minutes of [NAME OF Organization]

LOCATION

[DATE] AND [TIME]

Call to order: The [kind of meeting] meeting of the [name of organization] was held at [place, city, state] on [date], [time]. The meeting convened at [time]. [President], [Secretary] present.

Members in attendance: [Optional]

Members not in attendance: [Optional]

Guests in attendance: [Optional]

[President] confirmed the quorum.

Adoption of the Agenda: Without objection, the agenda was adopted as presented. [Or, if a motion was made: It was moved by [name], and seconded, to adopt the agenda. The motion was adopted (or adopted as amended).]

Approval of Minutes: [If adopted by general consent] Without objection, the minutes of the [date] meeting were adopted as presented [or as corrected]. [Or, if adopted by motion: Motion was made by [name], and seconded to approve the minutes of the [date] meeting. The minutes were adopted as presented [or as corrected].]

Officers’ Reports:

[President] - The report of the President, [name], was received and placed on file. [or, The president presented a verbal report.]

[Secretary] - The report of the Secretary, [name], was received and placed on file. [secretary presented a verbal report.]

[Vice President] - The report of the [Vice President], [name], was received and placed on file. [Vice President presented a verbal report.]

[Other Officers] - The report of the [Other Officers], [name], was received and placed on file. [Other Officers presented a verbal report.]

Motion - The motion to [describe motion] was moved by [name of member other than V.P.] and seconded. The motion was adopted [or not adopted].

[Other Business] - The [Other Business] was reported as follows: [include details as needed].
Minutes Template

Board and Committee Reports:

Executive Board – The report of the Executive Board, given by [name], was received and placed on file.

Fundraising Committee – The report of the Fundraising Committee, given by [name], was received and placed on file.

Arts Event – The report of the Arts Event, given by [name], was received and placed on file.

Reports of Special Committees:

Computer Purchase Committee – The interim report of the Computer Purchase Committee, given by [name], was received and placed on file.

Special Orders:

[Actions of the chapter on matters the bylaws indicate should take place at this month’s meeting]

Unfinished business:

Motion: Moved by [name] that [state motion]
Motion adopted; Motion filed [state only one of these]

New business:

Motion: Moved by [name] that [state motion]
Motion adopted; Motion filed [state only one of these]

Announcements [Optional]

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at [time]

Secretary [name] Date of approval: 

The [name], Incorporated

(This Minutes Template is a guide, and not a mandate. The Minutes Template follows the Order of Business according to Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised (11th ed.), p. 353, II. 10-15. The order of the other items is optional.)

Note: Report the full count of all ballot votes.)
An agenda is a standard order of business

- Usually developed by the Chair
- Distributed to all members in advance
  - Can be amended prior to the meeting
  - Can be adopted/approved by General Consensus
- Critical to a well run, organized meeting
Report Template

National Council of Negro Women
[Name of Committee]
[Committee Chair]
[Date of Report]

Committee’s Charge:

Background: (Committee Work)
Meetings
Attendance of members

Status of assignment: (Discussion of work accomplished or in progress)
The [Name of Committee] reports that...

___ This report is given for information only.

Or

___ Recommendations:
On behalf of the [Name of Committee], I recommend the following action:
1.
2.
3.

Submitted by:
[The committee chairman may sign the report indicating his title. Or, each member may sign the report indicating his chairman, vice chairman, or any other function.]

Submit a copy for the Recording Secretary and President.
Parliamentary Procedure in Action

- Prepare for the meeting
- Create an atmosphere for participation
- Importance of the Agenda
- The Quorum
- Duties of the Presiding Officer
  - Use of the Gavel
- Duties of the Member
- Handling Motions
- Methods of Voting
- End the meeting
- Follow-up after the meeting
Discussion with no pending motion

You can change your mind

Officer and Committee Reports
Officer and Committee Reports

“INFORMATION ONLY” REPORTS DO NOT REQUIRE ACTION/ADOPTION.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER REQUIRES NO ACTION (RONR 48:24).

MOTION TO ADOPT AN ENTIRE REPORT IS NOT WISE.* (RONR 51:13)
Golden Nuggets for an Efficient and Effective Meeting

Discussion with no pending motion
Handling Motions

Three steps by which a Motion is introduced (RONR) 4:2

1. A member makes a motion
2. Another member seconds the motion
3. The Chair states the question on the motion

Exceptions

1. A second is not required for motions submitted by a committee nor
2. For motions made in a committee or a small board
3. After debate has begun, the lack of a second is immaterial

Three steps in the Consideration of a Motion (RONR) 4:25

1. The members debate the motion
2. The Chair puts the question to vote
3. The Chair announces the results of the vote
Debate With No Pending Question

- Debate is the 4th step in handling a motion
- Debate should not happen prior to steps 1-3
- Presiding Officers should stop debate with no pending motion
- Remedy: Point of Order
The Meaning of “MOTION”

- Introduces business to the body
  - “I move that...”
- Requires a second to be considered
  - Recommendations from committee do not require a second
- Stated by the Chair for clarity
- Debated by the body for discussion
- Put forward for vote
- Avoid stating the motion in the “negative”
  - “I move that we not have a fundraiser next year...”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Main Motion</td>
<td>Provides method of bringing business before the body for consideration.</td>
<td>Main Motion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Subsidiary</td>
<td>Those that may be applied to another motion for the purpose of amending, delaying or disposing of it.</td>
<td>Amend, Lay on the Table, Refer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Privileged</td>
<td>Those that are urgent, or important; needing immediate consideration.</td>
<td>Adjourn, Recess, Point of Privilege</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Incidental</td>
<td>Those that arise out of a pending question; used to correct ill-advised actions.</td>
<td>Point of Order, Appeal, Inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Restorative</td>
<td>Those that bring a question back before the body.</td>
<td>Reconsider, Take from the Table</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Main Motion

- Are the most important and most frequently used
- Bring substantive proposals before the assembly for deliberation and decision
- Can be proposed only when no other motion is before the assembly

Rules Governing the Main Motion
- Requires a Second
- Is Debatable
- Can be Amended
- Requires a Majority Vote
The Main Motion

If you want to introduce a subject or business, make a motion:

1. Main Motion

- Are the most important and most frequently used
- Bring substantive proposals before the assembly for deliberation and decision
- Can be proposed only when no other motion is before the assembly
- Requires a Second
- Is Debatable
- Can be Amended
- Requires a Majority Vote

The lowest ranking motion is the main motion.

Original Main Motion

Introduces substantive question as a new subject
Definition of a Subsidiary Motion: Alters the main motion and may delay or hasten consideration of a main motion

Examples of Subsidiary Motions:

1. **Amend** – Modifies main motion
   - May Add, Delete, Strike Out or Substitute Wording
2. **Postpone Indefinitely** - Kills the main motion
3. **Commit or Refer** – Refers to a committee to investigate
4. **Postpone Definitely** – Delays question to a definite time
5. **Limit or Extend Debate** – Defines time to debate
6. **Previous Question** – Closes debate
7. **Lay on the Table** - Postpone temporarily
If you want to change a motion, move to:

1. Amend
   - by **Inserting** or **adding** words or a paragraph
     - Insert (within)
     - Add (at the end)
   - by **Striking out** words or a paragraph
   - **Strike Out and Insert** (words, in the same place) or
   - **Substituting** a paragraph. **Substitute** (a paragraph consisting of one or more sentences).
Subsidiary Motions

If you want to reject a main motion or “kill” it for the session, move to:

2. Postpone Indefinitely
If you want to send a pending question to a small group for further study and/or recommendation, move to:

3. Commit or Refer
Subsidiary Motions

If you want to delay action or a decision until later in the same or the next meeting, move to:

4. Postpone to a Certain Time (or Definitely)
Subsidiary Motions

If you want to change the rules of debate, move to:

5. Limit or Extend the Limits of Debate

If you want to close debate, move the:

6. Previous Question

If you want to temporarily delay debate on the motion, move to:

7. Lay on the Table
Privileged Motions

No direct connection with a main motion
Deal with matters of immediate and overriding importance
Do not relate to the pending business
Motions of urgency; immediately considered
Pertains to the rights and privileges of members

Given the privilege of precedence
Take precedence over the main motion, all subsidiary motions,
and lower ranking privileged motions
Examples of Privileged Motions

To require that the adopted program or agenda be followed:

8. **Call for the Orders of the Day**
To request any privilege (usually having to do with comfort level, or the ability to make an informed decision)

9. **Raise a Question of Privilege**
To take a short break in the meeting, move to:

10. **Recess**
To close a meeting, move to:

11. **Adjourn (sine die and meeting vs. session)**
To set a time to continue the business to another day without adjourning the present meeting, move to:

12. **Fix the Time to Which to Adjourn**
Incidental Motions

1. Answers questions of procedure
2. Arise only incidentally out of the business before the assembly - Relate to the pending business
3. Do not have rank - May interrupt the speaker
4. Must be decided immediately before business can proceed
5. Applicable only in its own type of special circumstance
6. May not necessarily relate to the main motion, but to the conduct of business
7. Take precedence over any pending motions
Examples of Incidental Motions continued...

To enforce the rules, rise to a Point of Order

**Point of Order** – requires a ruling from the chair when a member thinks the rules were broken

To reverse or question a decision of the chair, Appeal the Decision of the Chair

**Appeal** – takes a decision from the chair and gives it to the membership

To question a voice vote or vote by show of hands as announced by the chair and require a standing (or rising) vote, call for a: Division of the Assembly
Golden Nuggets for an Efficient and Effective Meeting

You can change your mind
Restorative Motions

1. Bring business back before the assembly - Sometimes called Bring Back motions
2. Do not have rank - Enable the assembly to change its mind or correct actions
3. Reopen a completed question by:
   • Taking up a motion temporarily disposed of
   • Changing something previously adopted
4. They are brought up when no business is pending
Examples of Restorative Motions

Reconsider - To rethink a “hasty” decision

A motion which enables a majority to bring back for further consideration a motion which was already voted.

Changed situation or new information - Correct hasty or ill-advised action - Correct erroneous action
Examples of Restorative Motions

Reconsider’s— Unique Characteristics

Provides Usefulness and Protects Against Abuse of the Motion

Member Voted on the *Prevailing* Side

Time Limits on Reconsider
Examples of Restorative Motions

If you no longer think a motion is a good idea, and it is not impossible to undo, move to:

1. Rescind or
2. Amend something previously adopted

2/3 Vote Required
No time limits
Any member can make the motion

To resume consideration of a main motion, move to
Take from the Table
Methods of Voting

There are 5 common methods of voting:

1. **Ballot**
   
   **BALLOT**
   
   1. □ YES
   2. □ YES
   3. □ YES

2. **Rising Vote**
   
   Hands in the air to vote.

3. **Roll Call**
   
   Calling names to vote.

4. **Voice Vote**
   
   Voting by shouting yes or no.

5. **Unanimous Consent**

**REMEMBER:**

Abstentions are not counted!
Putting it All Together

#1: Understanding Parliamentary Procedure

#2: Leading Roles and Rights of Members

#3: Equipping Basic Tools

#4: Conducting Effective Meetings
Questions and Answers


- National Association of Parliamentarians (NAP), [WWW.Parliamentarians.org](http://www.parliamentarians.org)