



Meeting Procedure 101

The rules of the road

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Background

- A board's meeting procedures drawn from three sources:
 - Provincial statute (*Local Government Act* and *Community Charter*)
 - Regional District's Procedure Bylaw
 - Parliamentary procedural authorities
- Sets out fundamental concepts:
 - Decisions are made by resolution or bylaw
 - Decisions (for the most part) are that of the majority of members present
 - Basic rules and customs

Background

- A motion
 - Is a proposal to take some action
 - The general form is: "I move that....."
- Steps in a motion:
 1. Member obtains the floor
 2. Member makes motion
 3. Another member seconds the motion
 4. Chair states the motion
 5. Members debate the motion
 6. Chair puts the question to a vote
 7. Chair announces the result of the vote

Other rules around motions: their rank, whether they're amendable and/or debatable.



Tip Number ①

Show up at the meetings

Three small, square images are arranged horizontally. The first image shows a group of people riding bicycles on a path. The second image shows a car involved in an accident, with its front end crumpled. The third image shows a woman with dark hair, wearing a black top, looking towards the camera while driving a car.

① Show up

- What's a meeting?
 - A gathering to which all members are invited, and is material to the board decision making process.
 - Different types: regular, special, emergency, closed
 - How to consider an item in a session closed to the public?
- Don't miss too many, or you may be disqualified
- Quorum matter...so show up!

Tip Number 2

Read your agenda



2 Read your agenda

- The agenda
 - Guides the meeting and informs the public
 - Sets out the order of the agenda
- Adding an item
- Read it and be prepared

Tip Number 3

Make clear motions



3 Make clear motions

- What's a motion?
- How are they made?
 - The seven steps!
- Only one motion under consideration
- Be clear (no negative wording)
- Write it down

Tip Number 4

Make a good motion better



4 Make a good motion better

- Amend the main motion
 - To modify the wording before the pending motion is acted upon
 - Make sure your amendment is germane
 - Amend by:
 - Inserting or adding
 - Striking out
 - Striking out and inserting
- Break up a long motion
 - Divide the question
 - Discuss/amend one part at a time (seriatim)
- Don't do "friendly" amendments

Tip Number **5**

Dispose of a motion



5 Dispose of a motion

- Vote on the main motion (as amended or not)
 - Are you ready for the question?
 - Recorded vote?
 - Weighted vote
 - No abstention
 - Tie vote?
- Withdraw it
- Refer it
- Defer it
 - Postpone it indefinitely
 - Postpone it definitely
 - Lay on the table

Tip Number **6**

Bring back a motion



6 Bring back a motion

Motions that bring a question again before the board:

- Take from the Table
 - to bring up a motion on the table
- Rescind
 - To repeal or cancel a prior action
- Amend something Previously Decided
 - To change a prior action
- Reconsider
 - To consider, debate and vote again

Usually these motions have limits or restrictions

Tip Number 7

Put forward a notice of motion



7 Put forward a notice of motion

- Puts your idea into motion
 - The process of advising a meeting in advance (in writing) that you intend to move a particular motion at the next meeting or a particular meeting

Tip Number 8

Be judicious



8 Be judicious

- Don't abuse rules to manipulate
- You risk gaining a reputation

Tip Number 9

Debate wisely



9 Debate wisely

- Get the chair's attention to be added to the speakers list
- Participate...but don't ramble
- Make insightful remarks at the right time, not every time!
- Confine your remarks to the merits of the pending question
- Speak once, and for ? minutes
- Point of order
- Point of privilege

Tip Number 10

Be polite



10 Be polite

- Speak in the third person - avoid using a member's name
- Address comments and questions through the chair
- The chair should avoid using "I". Instead, the "The Chair recognizes..."
- Don't interrupt a colleague (unless the rules require it)
- Listen
- Be tactful, diplomatic, patient (and even humorous)

The top 10

1. Show up
2. Read your agenda
3. Make clear motions
4. Make a good motion better
5. Dispose of a motion
6. Bring back a motion
7. Bring forward a notice of motion
8. Be judicious
9. Debate wisely
10. Be polite

Meeting procedure is not about the decisions made
but about the process used to make them.


