

FRIENDS OF THE BROADWAY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Parliamentary Procedure

All formal action of the board takes place through the structure of board meetings. They are the vehicle used by the board for effecting change. The time spent in meetings can be used more efficiently and more effectively if board members have a basic understanding of the principles of parliamentary procedure.

Parliamentary procedure is a codified collection of rules and ethics for working together in groups. It is a tool for individuals working together for a common purpose. It also is a vehicle for translating ideas into effective group action. The purpose of parliamentary procedure is as follows:

Principle: To facilitate the transaction of business and promote cooperation and harmony.

Practice: To assure that the simplest and most direct procedure for accomplishing a purpose is observed: (a) Motions have a definite order of precedence, each motion having a fixed rank for its introduction and consideration; (b) Only one motion may be considered at a time.

Principle: To insure all members have equal rights, privileges, obligations.

Practice: Every member has an equal right or privilege to propose motions, speak, ask questions, nominate, be a candidate for office, vote, or any other right or privilege of a member. Every member also has equal obligations.

Principle: To determine the will of the majority and see that it is carried out.

Practice: The fundamental concept of democracy is that the ultimate authority of an organization is vested in a majority of its members.

Principle: To protect the rights of the minority.

Practice: In democratic organizations, the right to present proposals, to be heard, and to oppose are valued rights of all members. The members who are in the minority on a question are entitled to the same consideration and respect as members who are in the majority.

Principle: To provide for full and free discussion of every proposition presented for discussion.

Practice: Each member of the assembly has the right to express one's point of view without interruption or interference, provided that individuals remain within the rules.

Principle: To enable every member to know the meaning of each question before the assembly and what its effect will be.

Practice: A member always has the right to request information on any motion, procedural or otherwise, that is not understood so that each individual may vote intelligently.

Principle: To guarantee that all meetings are characterized by fairness and by good faith.

Practice: Trickery, overemphasis on minor technicalities, dilatory tactics, indulgence in personalities and railroading threaten the spirit and practice of fairness and good faith. The effectiveness and often the existence of an organization are destroyed if its officers and members condone unfairness.

Whether a board chooses to use the standard structure and guidelines for meetings found in Robert's Rules of Order or a less formal structure, meetings must follow a predictable format in order to save time and do its work.