

A Quick Guide to AA Parliamentary Procedure

1) MOTION

- A motion can be made from the floor by any voting member of the Assembly so long as there is no other issue already being considered. The magic words are “I move”
- An Area Committee recommendation is considered seconded already. This is because committees consist of more than one voting member.

2) SECOND (If there is no second, the motion dies.)

3) CHAIR RESTATES MOTION “It has been moved and seconded that”

4) DISCUSSION BEGINS

- If all comments favor the motion, the Chair may ask “Is it the sense of the Assembly that the motion be adopted?” If there is no opposition, a vote should be taken. If there is opposition they need to speak to the motion.
- A reasonable opportunity is given for all to speak on the motion.
- As discussion dies, the Chair states: “There being no further discussion we will vote on the motion ... ”

CALLING THE QUESTION. After discussion has begun, any voting member may Call the Question. A second is required and there is no discussion. The Chair will ask for a vote on the Motion to Call the Question. If adopted, the Assembly will move to VOTE on the question, otherwise DISCUSSION resumes. Please remember that a reasonable opportunity should be given to all to speak before making a Motion to Call the Question.

Not all MOTIONS result in a VOTE. Subsidiary motions requiring a second include:

- (1) It can be AMENDED. The amendment is discussed and voted on, or accepted by the originator as a friendly amendment. Then discussion of the original motion resumes.
- (2) It can be TABLED, or postponed, either *definitely* to a set time or place, or *indefinitely* with no set time or place.
- (3) It can be REFERRED TO COMMITTEE with or without instruction.

5) VOTE Chair should restate the motion, then choose a verbal or hand roll call vote. If a verbal roll call is difficult to determine, a show of hands should be taken and counted. In general a majority (1/2) vote is required to adopt a motion. The Chair announces the outcome of the vote.

6) MINORITY OPINION The Chair asks, “Does anyone in the minority wish to speak?” Only those who voted in the minority may speak, defined by the following criteria:

- If a motion has passed, only those who voted against may speak.
- If a motion has failed, only those that voted in favor may speak.
- If a person abstained from voting, they do not speak at this time.

7) MOTION TO RECONSIDER The Chair asks, “After hearing from the minority, is there anyone who wishes to change their vote?” OR “Do I hear a Motion to Reconsider?”

- This motion must be seconded and is then discussed. After reasonable discussion, the Chair will call for a vote. Only a simple majority (over 50%) is necessary to reconsider.
- If a Motion to Reconsider is passed, resume DISCUSSION.
- A motion cannot be reconsidered twice.

Study and practice of the Twelve Steps, the Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Concepts for World Service provide useful tools to procedure. Practice of our basic principles helps us to function at our best. Parliamentary procedure ensures courteous and orderly exchange amongst voting members. It is here to serve, not stifle, the Assembly.