
**When You're
Chairman**

When You're Chairman



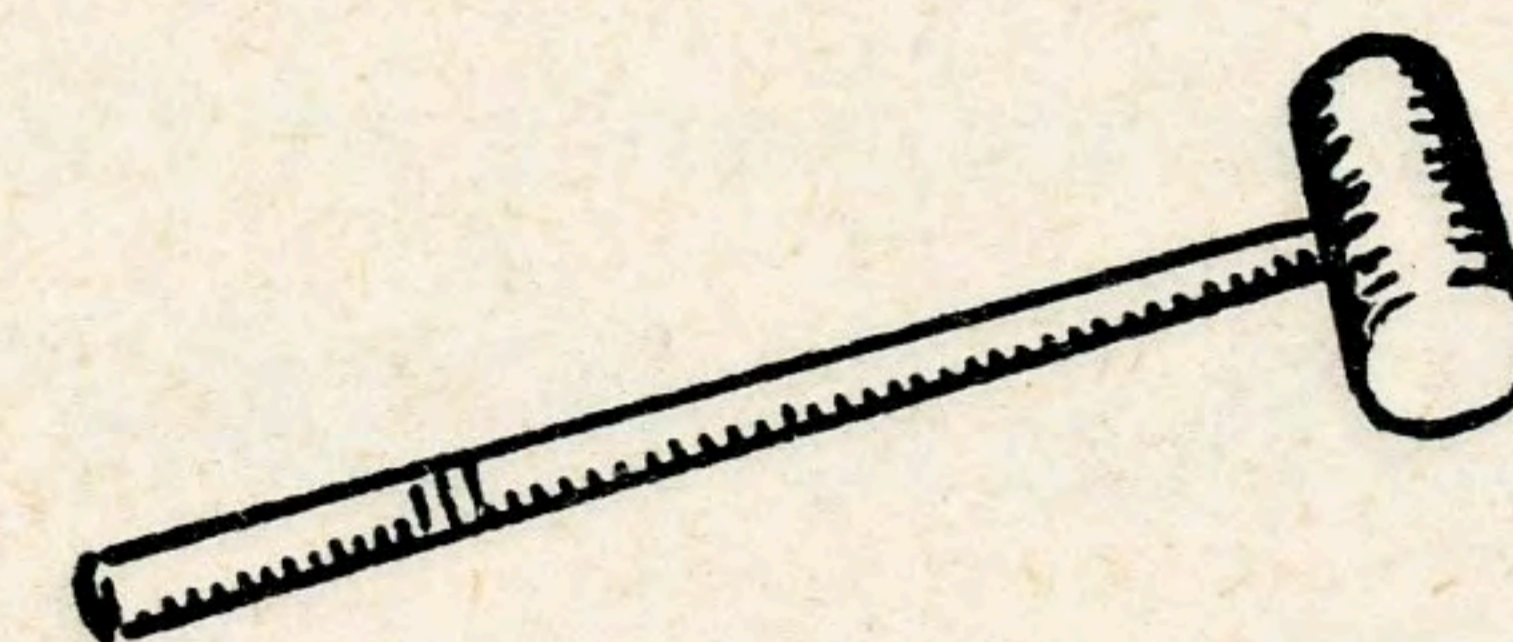
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THE WOMAN'S AUXILIARY TO THE NATIONAL COUNCIL
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PARLIAMENTARY USAGE has been called "the good manners of a meeting." Its rules are based on five cardinal principles — justice, courtesy, good order, the guarantee of the rule of the majority, and the protection of the rights of the minority. This booklet contains the simple rules that Churchwomen—both leaders and members of a group—should know for the conduct of an ordinary meeting. It is an outgrowth of a course on parliamentary procedure presented at the Sewanee Summer School by Mrs. James R. Cain.

For further study, see Parliamentary Usage by Emma A. Fox (New York, Doubleday).

WHEN YOU'RE CHAIRMAN



How to Conduct a Meeting

The Meeting Place: Its Arrangement. The Presiding Officer should face the audience; the Secretary should occupy a place near her on the left, leaving the space at her right for those who are to speak; all who are in any way to take part in the proceedings should sit near the front in order not to waste time in coming forward.

The Meeting Comes to Order. The Presiding Officer should rise, give one firm stroke of the gavel, pause for a second or two, then announce clearly "*The meeting will come to order. The third annual convention of the Woman's Auxiliary in the Diocese of — is now in session*" or other similar words. To beat a tattoo with the gavel is bad form. The pause of a second or two after the group comes to order will be found of great help by a Presiding Officer who is unsure of herself or inclined to be nervous. It gives her a moment in which to become accustomed to facing her audience and serves to get the audience "in hand."

Order of Business. The usually accepted Order of Business is:

- Call to order.
- Devotions.
- Roll call.
- Minutes.
- Special order.
- Communications from the President.
- Reports of officers.
- Reports of standing committees.
- Reports of special committees.
- Unfinished business.
- New business.
- Program.
- Adjournment.

SPECIAL ORDER means any business which has been made a special order for that day; special guests may be introduced at this time; if so desired by the group the program may be given here instead of at the end of the business session.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PRESIDENT may be a formal report of activities, as at an annual meeting, in which case she should ask someone to take the Chair while such a report is made, and should not take the Chair again until action on the report is taken. Or the President may give a greeting or an address; anything which she may wish to present. It is the opportunity of the Presiding Officer to speak; at other times she is supposed to keep silent except for the necessary formalities. Nothing is so disastrous to group thinking or group action as is a Presiding Officer who talks too much.

The Conduct of Business. Business may be introduced only by means of a Motion.

A MOTION is made by a member who should rise, address the Chair, "*Madam Chairman,*" await recognition by a nod or the speaking of her name by the Chairman, state the motion, "*I move to—*" or "*I move that—*" and sit down.

A SECOND is made by a member who should rise, address the Chair, await recognition, say "*I second the Motion*" and sit down.

THE MOTION is stated by the Presiding Officer who says "*It is moved and seconded that—.*"

If the motion is not debatable the Presiding Officer should state that fact and immediately call for the vote; if it is debatable, she should, after stating the motion, say "*Is there any discussion?*"

DISCUSSION is carried on by members, one at a time, who rise, address the Chair, await recognition, state their opinion and the reasons therefor clearly, concisely, and sit down.

DEBATE is usually limited. Generally no person may speak more than twice to the same motion but an exception is made in favor of the maker of the motion who is given the right to close debate even though she may have already spoken twice. Any member has the right to move that debate be limited to speaking once or extended to three or more times; or she may at any time during discussion move that debate be closed; such motions must be put to vote and require a two-third majority to carry.

THE MOTION is put by the Presiding Officer when discussion is over "*The question before the House is: —* (whatever the motion may be); *those in favor please say Aye, those opposed No.*" The opposing vote must always be called for even

though the affirmative vote may have seemed to be unanimous.

VOTING is done by qualified members of the group. There are four methods in general use:

By Voice (*Aye* or *No*)

By Division (*"Those in favor please stand and remain standing until counted, those opposed the same"*)

By Roll Call (the roll is called, votes recorded and counted)

By Silent Consent (*"If there is no objection the report will be accepted and filed; there is no objection and the secretary is requested to file the report."* Should any member object the report must be voted upon in the usual way.)

A tie vote on a motion defeats the motion since a majority is necessary to carry it and a majority was not given. The Presiding Officer is entitled to vote on all questions; as a rule she refrains from doing so unless the vote is by ballot or by roll call.

THE RESULT is announced by the Presiding Officer. If the vote is by Voice she should say *"It seems to the Chair that the Ayes (or the Noes) have it"* and pause a moment; should any member feel that the Chair is mistaken she has the right to call for vote by Division and the question must then be put again and voted upon by Division. The vote having been completed the Presiding Officer says *"The motion is carried (or lost)"* and the next business is then in order.

These, then, are the steps in putting through a motion. It must be:

Made by a member who has the floor. (A member is said to "have the floor" when she has risen, addressed the Chair and been recognized.)

Seconded by a member who has the floor.

Stated by the Presiding Officer.

Discussed by members who have the floor.

Put by the Presiding Officer.

Voted upon by the members.

Declared carried or lost by the Presiding Officer.

Handling a Motion. WORDING A MOTION. In speaking *"I move to—"* or *"I move that—"* In writing *"Be it resolved: That—"*

TO CHANGE THE FORM OF A MOTION which is before the House: if a member is not satisfied with the form of a motion she may seek to change it by:

AMENDING A MOTION. *"I move to amend by adding the words (or by inserting the words or by striking out the words)."* Or *"I move to amend by substituting the following motion for the one now before the House."* In this latter instance an entirely new wording is submitted. It must be clearly understood, however, that all amendments must pertain to the subject introduced in the first motion; new matter cannot be introduced under the guise of an amendment. Example:

Motion. *"I move that we buy new curtains for the club room."*

Amendment. *"I move to amend by inserting the word green between the words new and curtains."* Or

"I move to amend by adding the words provided we have sufficient funds in the treasury." Or

"I move to amend by substituting the following for the motion now before the House: I move that we redecorate the club rooms provided the expense of same does not exceed the funds now in hand."

As the last type of resolution is clumsy in form it is usual to omit the first phrase and say "*I move to substitute.*"

AMENDING THE AMENDMENT. The proceeding is the same as above; an amendment may be amended only one time.

REFERRING TO A COMMITTEE. "*I move that the motion be referred to a committee—*" for rewording or in order that a recommendation regarding it may be brought back to the House. The report of the committee may be accepted or rejected by the House; in either case the original motion is still before the House for action.

CONSIDERATION BY A COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE. "*I move that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider this matter.*" This motion should be seconded and voted upon; if carried the Presiding Officer calls someone else to act as chairman of the Committee and takes her place as a member of the assembly; the matter is then discussed, gotten into acceptable form and some one moves that the Committee rise and report back to the House. The Presiding Officer then resumes the Chair and the chairman of the Committee presents the report which is acted upon by the House. The advantage of this proceeding is that it gives opportunity for full and informal discussion, no proceedings of the Committee being included in the records except the final report.

TO POSTPONE ACTION. If a member wishes to hold over a motion she may move:

To postpone definitely—"*I move to postpone consideration of this motion until 10 o'clock tomorrow morning (or until the next meeting, etc.)*."

To lay on the table—"*I move that this motion be laid on the table.*" If carried the motion to take from the table is then

in order at any time except immediately after the motion to lay on the table has been carried.

To postpone indefinitely—"*I move to postpone consideration of this motion.*"

Objection to consideration—"*I object to the consideration of this motion.*" This must be done immediately after the motion has been seconded.

TO CHANGE A DECISION ALREADY MADE. If a member is dissatisfied she may move:

To reconsider. This motion may be made only by a voter on the winning side; it must be made at the same meeting at which the original vote was taken; its effect, if carried, is to bring the motion again before the House. If time is limited a motion may be made to "*Reconsider and spread upon the minutes*" which, if carried, makes the motion the first piece of unfinished business at the next meeting. It would not be fair to bring the motion back for consideration unless the same members who voted upon it the first time were either present or given due notice of its coming up.

To rescind. This motion may be made at any time provided that no contract resulting from the action has already been entered into. A motion to buy curtains could not be rescinded if the curtains had already been ordered. Its effect is to repeal former action.

Consideration of Motions by the House. Only one main motion, that is a motion introducing an item of business, may be under consideration at a given time.

A number of subsidiary motions, that is, motions relating to the main motion under consideration, may be brought before the House successively and all be under consideration at

the same time before a single vote is taken. The ones in ordinary use are:

To amend.

To amend the amendment.

To commit or refer to a committee.

To postpone definitely.

For the previous question.

To lay on the table.

To adjourn.

To fix the time and place to which to adjourn.

A main motion and any or all these motions may be pending (that is under consideration preceding a vote) at the same time; but they may be made only in the order given and therefore the list should be memorized. A motion "*to postpone*" cannot be made after "*to lay on the table*" has been moved; to "*amend*" cannot follow "*to commit or refer*"; none of the motions are in order after "*to adjourn*" has been moved except one fixing the time and place to which to adjourn; etc. The first four of the above are debatable; the last four are not.

"*I move the previous question*" is one means of ending debate; it simply means "*Stop talking and take the vote*"; it should be handled like any other motion, requires a two-thirds majority to carry and, if carried, has the effect of starting the voting on the last motion made; voting must then proceed on the motions before the House, beginning with the last one made and ending with the first.

There are only two special subsidiary motions which are apt to be brought up in an ordinary meeting. A Question of Privilege which usually involves some matter pertaining to the comfort or welfare of the individual or of the group; and a Point of Order which pertains to the parliamentary proce-

cedure of an individual or of the group. The procedure in both is the same; the member rises and without waiting for recognition says, "*Madame Chairman, I rise to a question of privilege (or a point of order).*" "*Please state your point of order.*"

The point of order (or the question of privilege) is then stated.

On an ordinary question of privilege or point of order the Chair may rule; but any member has the right to appeal from the decision of the Chair, in which event the question must be submitted to the vote of the House.

Motions in ordinary use requiring no second are a question of privilege, a point of order, objection to consideration, and a call for division.

Motions in ordinary use requiring a two-thirds majority to carry are the previous question, objection to consideration, to suspend a rule, to extend, limit or close debate, to make a special order. The two-thirds requirement has as its object the protection of the rights of the minority.

Handling Reports. A motion to receive may be made only before the report has been read.

A motion to accept, reject, or to refer is in order after the report has been read.

If the report contains recommendations the proper motion is "*I move that the report be accepted and the recommendations acted upon at the proper time (or be referred to the proper committee).*" This motion does not in any way affect the recommendations which are still to be acted upon singly or all together as the House may desire.

A motion to adopt is in order with regard to recommendations.

Minority reports should be sent through a member of the minority elected for that purpose; when the Chairman of the committee makes her report she should conclude it with the announcement "*Madame Chairman, there is a minority report.*" The Presiding Officer asks the will of the House; if it is moved, seconded, and carried that the report be received, the report is read by the member who has it in charge. It should be signed by every member of the minority. The report of the minority, offered as an amendment, is considered first; if it is rejected the report of the majority is considered; both may be rejected.

Undebatable Motions. Fix the time to adjourn when a privileged question; that is, when such a motion interrupts business before the house.

Adjourn, when unqualified in an assembly which provides for future meetings.

Take a Recess, when provided.

Call for the order of the day.

Suspension of Recess.

Objection to consideration of a question.

Lay on the Table.

The previous question.

Reconsider an undebatable motion.

Elections. Nominations may be made from the floor, by voice or by ballot; or by a committee appointed for the purpose. Every name offered is a nominee, requiring no second though the members may second if they wish to do so. If nominations are brought in by a committee opportunity should be given for additional nominations from the floor.

Tellers is the name given to those who are in charge of the election. It is their duty to have ballots in readiness, to distribute, collect, count, and preserve the same; at the close of the elections the ballots should be turned over to the Recording Secretary.

The result of the balloting should be announced by the chairman of the tellers.

The successful candidate should be declared elected by the Presiding Officer, when the election has been completed. If the Presiding Officer is among the nominees there is no reason why she should resign the Chair during the election nor should foolish modesty make her unwilling to announce her own name as the successful candidate.

A majority vote requires one or more above half of the number voting; a plurality vote requires only the largest number of votes received by one person. If 100 votes are cast, 51 or more are necessary for a majority; but 98 might receive one vote each and the one receiving the remaining 2 votes would have the plurality.

Closing the Meeting. A motion to adjourn must be made, seconded, voted upon, the result announced, and the meeting declared adjourned before the members are at liberty to leave their seats. Only the Presiding Officer has the authority to dismiss the group, and she has it only after it has been conferred upon her by the vote of the group. She may, however, secure that vote by silent consent; "*If there is no objection the meeting is adjourned.*"

Duties of Officers

The Presiding Officer's chief duty is to establish and maintain order. She should be thoroughly familiar with the routine of the meeting and carry it through with dispatch; should be courteous but firm in her rulings; should maintain absolute impartiality in speech and demeanor; should take no part in discussions while occupying the Chair. She has not the right to use her position to give weight to her opinions; should it seem necessary to make her contribution to the discussion she should call some one else to the Chair and take her place, while speaking, as a member of the assembly.

The Secretary's chief duty is to assist the Presiding Officer in the meeting and to keep an accurate record of the proceedings. She should keep closely in touch with the routine; prompt the Presiding Officer if necessary; have ready a written copy of the motion under discussion; write clear, concise, accurate minutes. Some rules for the writing of minutes are given on page 15.

The Treasurer's chief duty is to keep the organization financially sound. She should give prompt attention to all obligations; should keep clear and accurate accounts; should present statements of the finances of the organization to the President at regular intervals; and should be prepared at all times to furnish information as to the exact financial status of the organization.

The Secretary's Minutes

MINUTES comprise both a history and a reference record of the organization; therefore write legibly, express yourself clearly, and arrange your minutes in such form that items and details are readily found.

Begin the minutes of each meeting at the top of a new page, stating date and place of meeting.

In the first paragraph state the place, the date, and the type of meeting (whether regular or called); the name and office of the Presiding Officer; the number of members present. If recording a called meeting state the object of the meeting and the method and time of issuing the call.

All motions should be recorded but discussion should not be. Make a separate paragraph for the recording of each motion, giving the names of the persons who made and seconded it; record with the words Carried or Lost the result of each vote.

In recording an election state the name of each nominee and of the persons making the nomination (unless it is made by ballot or by committee). Make a separate paragraph for the record of each vote taken. When the election is complete, record in a separate paragraph the names and offices of the successful candidates.

Use correct wording: minutes are *approved*; reports are *accepted, rejected, recommitted, or referred* (a motion to re-

ceive may be made only *before* a report has been made); motions or resolutions are *carried* or *lost*; reports may be *corrected* or *changed* by the originators by means of a substitute report; motions, resolutions, or recommendations may be *amended*; recommendations are *adopted* or *rejected*.

Remember that a Secretary is neither a critic nor a publicity man, but a recorder of facts.

Hints to Members

THE successful conduct of a meeting depends as much upon the individual member as upon the Presiding Officer. Absolute stillness and silence should follow the first stroke of the gavel; courteous attention should be given each speaker; do not talk with your neighbor—if you have anything to say, rise and give the entire group the benefit of your discussion; make motions, second motions, carry on discussions, promptly; to have a meeting drag is a waste of time and is extremely hard on the Presiding Officer; train yourself to respect your own opinions; to express them concisely and to offer them for what they are worth in the general discussion.

Woman's Auxiliary Publications

When You Organize. Basic pamphlet for clergy and women leaders eager to organize the women most effectively. 32 pages. 10 cents.

When You're Treasurer is a guide to the keeping of accurate financial records. 24 pages. 10 cents.

When You're U.T.O. Treasurer. Many suggestions for parish and diocesan U.T.O. treasurers on how the Offering may be brought effectively to the attention of the women of parish and diocese. 10 cents a copy.

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