

# *Effective Meetings*

*City Council, Committees, Commissions*

Patricia Reymann, PRP



# Role of Chair

- ▶ Be a Facilitator
- ▶ Make it EASY for everyone to engage
- ▶ Be Patient and Professional
- ▶ Control the meeting process
- ▶ Enforce the Rules fairly and consistently
- ▶ Start and End on Time



# cont. Role of Chair

- ▶ Interrupt! Don't allow members to:
  - ▶ speak out of turn
  - ▶ question the motives or character of other members
  - ▶ drift off topic
- ▶ If needed to let off steam, take a recess or “stand at ease”



# cont. Role of Chair

- ▶ Use an Agenda to keep on track
- ▶ Always use time wisely
- ▶ Start/end on time



# Role of Member

- ▶ Attend all meetings; respond to mtg notices
- ▶ Arrive on Time and Stay to the End
- ▶ Be Prepared; do Homework
- ▶ Participate
- ▶ Follow the Rules





*What are the Rules?*



# Rules of Decorum

- ▶ Silence/put away Electronic Devices
- ▶ Be Courteous at all times
- ▶ Speak only after being recognized by Chair
- ▶ Address Remarks to the Chair only
- ▶ Refer to others by Title or Last Name



# 3 of Covey's Habits

- ▶ Think WIN-WIN by looking for mutual benefit
- ▶ Seek first to Understand, then to be Understood
- ▶ Synergize by valuing other points of view and reaching a solution that is greater than the sum of the parts



# Rules of Debate

- ▶ Obtain the floor (raise hand)
- ▶ Maker of Motion may speak first
- ▶ When formal, speakers may debate only 2x
- ▶ When in informal consideration, no limit on number of times members may speak (e.g., committees)



# cont. Rules of Debate

- ▶ Take turns
- ▶ Address remarks to the Chair only
- ▶ Do not question a member's character or motives
- ▶ Stay on the topic



# Robert's Rules

- ▶ “Parliamentary Authority,” so you don’t have to re-invent the wheel
- ▶ First edition in 1876; current edition is Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised, 11th edition in 2011
- ▶ Robert’s In Brief, For Dummies, Idiot’s Guide
- ▶ Outranked by Statute, Charter, Bylaws, Special Rules of Order



# Steps in Making Motion

- ▶ Obtain Floor; be Recognized by Chair
- ▶ “I MOVE that...”; another member, “Second.”
- ▶ Chair Repeats Motion and asks for Debate
- ▶ Debate pros and cons; make secondary motions
- ▶ Chair repeats motion and takes Vote
- ▶ Chair announces the Result of Vote



# More about Motions

- ▶ 3 C's: Clear, Complete, Concise
- ▶ Chair may request it to be in Writing
- ▶ Only one topic at a time
- ▶ Unanimous Consent: non-controversial items such as approval of Minutes or Adjournment



# Methods of Voting

- ▶ Voice Vote (viva voce): Aye or No
- ▶ Show of Hands
- ▶ Rising or Counted Rising
- ▶ Ballot
- ▶ Voting Cards, Electronic Keypads, etc. for conventions



# Voting Terms

- ▶ Majority = more than  $1/2$
- ▶  $2/3$  = twice as many in favor as against
- ▶ Avoid “ $2/3$  majority”; a contradiction
- ▶ Tie = motion is lost





# *Special Motions*



# Amend

- ▶ I MOVE TO AMEND BY...
- ▶ ... Striking out \_\_\_\_\_
- ▶ ... Inserting \_\_\_\_\_ between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
- ▶ ... Striking out \_\_\_\_\_ and Inserting \_\_\_\_\_
- ▶ ... Adding (at the end)
- ▶ ... Substituting



# Postpone VS Lay on Table

- ▶ 99.9% of time use POSTPONE, not Lay on Table
- ▶ L.O.T. is for urgent matter that comes up; must follow later with Take From Table or matter dies
- ▶ Ex: Postpone - until Treasurer arrives, to a certain time in this meeting or next, to next meeting; will automatically appear on Agenda



# Postpone Indefinitely

- ▶ Kills the original motion without voting on the original motion itself
- ▶ May be debated
- ▶ Requires a second and majority vote



# Previous Question

- ▶ Motion to Stop Debate
- ▶ Maker must be recognized by Chair
- ▶ Requires a Second and 2/3 Vote
- ▶ Not allowed in Committees





*Any Questions?*