



2009-2011 Communications Committee
National Association of Parliamentarians
Lorenzo Cuesta, PRP
May 4, 2011

Subsidiary Motion to Postpone Indefinitely

A script to offer members a viable alternative to the incorrect application of the motion to lay on the table. The script contains 6 speaking parts.

The camera must be ready to capture the next speaker. The participants should be seated in a classroom arrangement. The topic should be handled with casual seriousness.

This script seeks to illustrate

1. That the subsidiary motion to postpone indefinitely may be debated, but may not be amended, postponed indefinitely, or referred;
2. That debate may go into the merits of the main motion; and
3. That a motion that is postponed indefinitely may not be renewed in the same wording until the next meeting.

We join the monthly meeting of the San Diego Bird Watchers Society, during the 'New Business' section of their agenda.

Ch: Is there any new business?

A: (Rises and is recognized) Mr. Chair.

A: I move that our society endorse the Clay Pigeon as the official county bird.

Z: Second

Ch: Mr. A, let me make sure I understand what your motion seeks to do. You want this society to go against its practice of never showing preference to any one species and instead support them all? This is a delicate issue.

A: Yes, Mr. Chair.

Ch: It is moved and seconded that this society shall endorse the Clay Pigeon as the official county bird.

Ch: Are you ready for the question?

B: (Rises and is recognized) Mr. Chair.

B: I move to table this motion.

Z: Second

Ch: Mr. B, are you saying that you want this motion set aside temporarily because of a temporary emergency?

B: What? No. I just want to kill the motion because it is ...



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Ch: I understand. You move to postpone the motion indefinitely, right?

B: Postpone? I do not want us to get into this as we did last year...

Z: Second

Ch: It is moved and seconded that the motion to endorse the Clay Pigeon as the official county bird be postponed indefinitely.

Ch: Are you ready for the question?

C: (Rises and is recognized) Mr. Chair.

C: Point of parliamentary doubt

Ch: You mean point of parliamentary inquiry.

C: That's what I said. Are we allowed to discuss the merits of the main motion, or are we limited to the merits of the motion to postpone indefinitely?

Ch: You may discuss the merits of the main motion.

C: Well the main motion has no merit and I am against it. I want to kill it.

Ch: Is there any further discussion?

D: (Rises and is recognized) Mr. Chair.

D: I have a few comments on this issue, and then I will move to refer the postpone-indefinitely motion to the Bird List Committee.

Z: Do what?

Ch: Mr. D. You can make your comments, but it would never be in order to refer or to postpone the postpone-indefinitely motion. Do you wish to comment at this time?

D: No. But I do move to amend the motion to postpone indefinitely by adding the phrase "for 30 minutes".

Z: Second

Ch: Mr. D. The motion to postpone indefinitely may be debate but it may not be amended.

Ch: Are you ready for the question?

A: (Rises and is recognized) Mr. Chair.

A: I have one closing comment. If the members postpone my motion indefinitely, I am going to move my motion again immediately after the speaker completes tonight's program. So you might as well pass my motion.

Ch: Mr. A. If the motion to postpone your motion indefinitely is adopted, the result is that your motion will be suppressed from being renewed until this society's next meeting.

A: Mr. Chair, if my motion is postponed indefinitely, I can still propose a motion that is different enough, right?

Ch: Yes. A motion that is different enough would be in order if your motion is postponed indefinitely.

A: Fine. I am ready. My next motion will be to make the Lawn Flamingo the official county bird.