

Rules, the Minority, and Effective Meeting Management

American River College Keynote

Rules, Rules, Rules everywhere: Rules protect rights, or update them

Drive a car, buy a home, transfer to a 4 yr. college, or participate in PTA/church/community organizations/sports club

Minority Voice

Definition of a Majority – anything greater than $\frac{1}{2}$ (...not 50% + 1 for odd numbers)

Board = 13: 50% = $6\frac{1}{2}$; Majority = $6\frac{1}{2} + 1 = 7\frac{1}{2} = 8$. WRONG

Majority of votes vs. Majority of members (abstains is the same as a negative vote)

Board = 20: If 10 vote, Majority = 6; If 20 vote, Majority = 11.

Majorities = 2 (fractional majority; tyranny of the 2/3 minority – 13 to 8);

Minorities = 4 (fractional minority; individual; absentee; organization)

Significance of 2/3 Requirement Vote:

- a. Suspend or modify something previously adopted
- b. Prevent the introduction of an embarrassing question into consideration
- c. Closes, limits, or extends debate
- d. Closes nominations or voting
- e. Takes away membership

Web of Rules:

- a. Customs – Unwritten rules
- b. Standing Rules/Policy Manuals – Very flexible
- c. Parliamentary Authority
- d. Bylaws – Moderately flexible
- e. Constitution – Very stable
- f. State – Educ. Code, Brown Act, Ca Public Recs Act
- g. Federal

Parliamentary Authorities - Procedural:

- a. US Organizations - Robert, Sturgis, Atwood, Rosenberg
- b. US Government – Jefferson (1812), Mason (2010)
- c. Canadian – Bourinot ('24), Beauchesne ('49), Marleau ('00)
- d. Study books – Demeter ('69), Riddick ('91)

Parliamentary Authorities??? - Statutes:

- a. Open Meetings Act: Brown, Gloria Romero, Bagley-Keene, Davis-Stirling
- b. Freedom of Information Act, (federal)
- c. Ca Public Records Act
- d. Special Districts Act

Debate Protocol (Similar to a trial in front of a judge.) (p. 487)

1. Only one person speaks at a time.
2. A speaker must be recognized before speaking.
3. All comments are made through the chair.
4. Comments are confined to the current issue.
5. Discussion should alternate between Pro and Con.
6. Have no right to complain; only have a right to make a motion.
7. Speak again only after others have spoken once.
8. No reading of lengthy papers or multiple points.
9. No cross conversations; no interruptions.
10. No verbal attacks of other members.
11. Enforce the debate time limits (bylaws or the parliamentary authority).
12. Decisions are null and void in the absence of a quorum or proper posting.
13. The vote required to adopt a motion should always be very clear – majority or 2/3.
14. All decisions are binding on all members regardless of how a member voted.
15. All rules must be respected and obeyed – who can move, debate, vote, serve as an officer, serve on committee, etc..

On behalf of the American River College Associated Student Body Senate I would like to invite you to be our Keynote Speaker during our End of Year Banquet on **May 11, 2015**. The banquet will be held on the American River College campus from 4:00 pm - 7:30 pm. Dinner will be provided.

This year's banquet will also be an opportunity to explain student advocacy, effective meetings, and the importance of Roberts Rules of Order and the Brown Act. Copies of Roberts Rules of Order will be given out to all incoming Board members.

We would like to have you give a speech/presentation lasting approximately 30 minutes on the importance of Roberts Rules of Order, and how they are valuable means of making sure the minority gets heard and that meetings run efficiently.