Fundamentals of Effective Meetings: Basic Principles and Protocol

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Still waiting for meeting to start.
Okay, finally starting.
Blah, blah, blah.
Are we done yet?
Why am I here?

I am so BORED!

Somebody put me out of my misery!

Do your meeting notes ever look like this?
Intuitive-Thinking
Sensing-Perceiving
Sensing-Judging
Intuitive-Feeling

ANALYTICAL
ORGANIZERS
ACTION
EXPRESSIVE
Analysts

• Exhaust all the options to make the best decision
• Focused on issues
• Clear purpose
• Justification for all actions—answers the question “why?”
Organizers

- On time
- Structured
- Well-planned
- Job assignments
- Detailed
Action

- Fast-paced
- Joking
- A lot of discussion by everyone
- Animated
- Limited time
- Ends early
- Decisions, action
Expressive

- Check in
- No combativeness
- Good participation from all
- Social
- Values expressed
- Amicable closure
The Sources of Procedural Rules

• State statutes
• Local rules
• Robert’s Rules of Order
Robert’s Rules of Order

- Motions should be clearly stated.
- Ownership of the motion
  - No “friendly amendments.”
  - No single-handed withdrawal of a motion.
- Unanimous consent.
Robert’s Rules of Order

• Only one MAIN motion can be pending at any given time.

• Other classes of motions take precedence over main motions.
  – Subsidiary, privileged, and incidental

• Body as a whole must agree to end debate.

• 2/3rds vote required to change rules and close debate.

• Chairperson may (should?) vote at any time.
Robert’s Rules of Order

• Decisions can be reviewed
  – Reconsider
    • Moved by a member who voted with prevailing side.
    • Must be moved in a timely manner.
    • Reopens debate; it does not change the decision.
  – Renew, rescind, amend.

• Contracts are still binding.
Robert’s Rules of Order

• Postpone to a definite date versus table.
• Role of the chair in clarifying the member’s intent.
Robert’s Rules of Order

• Public does not have participation rights in meetings of local government bodies.

• Local government body may suspend its own rules.
Chairperson’s Responsibilities

• Chairperson is responsible for the agenda.
• Members may place items on agenda.
• Chairperson has all the rights of participation, including making and seconding motions, and voting.
• Chairperson is responsible for administering the group’s deliberations.
Chairperson’s Responsibilities

• Announces issues and keeps members on track.
• Restates motions for clarity.
• Recognizes members.
• Seeks balance.
• Enforces group’s rules.
• Asks for votes on each side and announces outcome.
Chairperson’s Responsibilities

• Responds to requests.
• Rules on points of order.
Motions

• Required on substantive issues.
• Avoid negative motions, accepting informational reports, reaffirming existing policy.
• Should be stated fully and repeated by chairperson, once seconded.
• Must be seconded, unless incidental.
Additional Key Points

• Quorum must vote.
• Not required to vote.
• Conflicts of interest must be disclosed.
Resources


• *Wisconsin County Supervisor’s Handbook.* Wisconsin Counties Association. 2004

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