



# Robert's Rules of Order and Open Meeting Requirements

Agenda Item: 6

# Robert's Rules of Order

## Purpose:

- Encourage Debate
- Enable Deliberation
- Emphasize Courteousness and Respect

## History:

- Written in the 1870s.
- Used to help govern organizational boards.

# Robert's Rules

Provides a formal structure for holding meetings.

- Establishes procedure for:
  - Motions
  - Voting
  - Referrals to subordinate bodies

# Three Main Types of Motion

1. Principal or Main Motion

2. Secondary or Subsidiary Motion

3. Privileged Motion

# Principal or Main Motion

- A formal proposal made by a member of the board that the group take a certain action.
- Only one motion entertained at a time.
- Any voting member may make a motion.
- Member can only speak once, until all other members who wish to speak have spoken.
- Chair to restate the Motion – may interpret intent and reword for brevity and comprehension.

# Secondary or Subsidiary Motion

- Most Common: Motion to Amend
- Postpone to a Certain Day
- Commit, or Refer
- Postpone Indefinitely
- Lay on the Table
- Previous Question\*

# Privileged Motion

## Most Common: Adjournment

- Final Action of the Council – not further action allowed after adjournment
- Needs second but not debatable

## Point of Privilege

- Matter of personal comfort
- Bring attention to inaccuracy in report
- No second needed and not debatable

# Other Motions

- Reconsider
- Rescind
- Renewal of the Motion
- Withdrawal of a Motion
- Suspend the Rules\*



# How to Make a Motion

## 1. Obtain the Floor

- If no motion being debated, get the attention of the Chair, and wait for the Chair to recognize you

## 2. Make your Motion

- Say “I move to . . . .”

## 3. Wait for a Second to Your Motion

- Wait for another member to say “I second the motion”

## 4. Chair Restates Your Motion

# Steps to Debate a Motion

## 1. Chair States the Motion

- “ Motion, on the floor, is . . . .”

## 2. Expand on Your Motion

- As the proponent of the motion you may speak first

## 3. Chair to Directs Debate

- Each speak is identified by the Chair in turn

## 4. Make a Closing Statement

- After debate has finish, you may make a close

# Voting on a Motion

## 1. Chair Calls for Vote

- The Chair states “The question is on adoption of the motion to...” (restates the motion verbatim).

## 2. Members Vote

- Usually by voice vote with members stating “Aye/Yes” or “Nay/No”

## 3. Chair Announces Vote

- Chair determines and states which side “has it” (“motion carries” or “motion is defeated”)

# Robert's Rules and Open Meeting Requirements

- Both apply to the Workforce Council, its committees, subcommittees, and any meeting of its members that exercises the Council's powers.
- The open meeting requirements always apply when members conduct Council business.
- However, Robert's Rules can be waived.

# Open Meetings Act

## Purpose

- To allow members of the public to attend and participate as fully as possible in a state body's decision-making processes.

## History

- Bagley-Keene enacted in 1967 to implement article 1, section 3 of the Cal. Constitution

# Open Meeting Requirements

Any statute, rule, or other authority “shall be broadly construed if it furthers the people's right of access, and narrowly construed if it limits the right of access.”

# Review of Robert's Rules

1.Motion

2.Second

3.Restate the Motion

4.Debate

5.Vote

6.Announce the Vote

# Step in a Motion Under Open Meetings Requirements

## 1. ITEM IS ON THE AGENDA

2. Motion

3. Second

4. Restate the Motion

5. Debate

## 6. PUBLIC COMMENT

7. Vote

8. Announce the Vote



# Open Meetings Act

- The Act applies to “state bodies,” such as “every state board... that is created by statute...” (Gov. Code section 11121(a)).
  - Section 128215 of Health & Safety Code created the California Health Workforce Education and Training Council.
- **Committees:** The Act also applies to any advisory committee created if the committee consists of 3 or more persons (Gov. Code section 11121(c)).

# Application to Committees Sub-committees and Advisory Boards

- Physical Presence/Location
- Serial Communications
- Attendance at Subcommittee Meetings
- Notice and Agenda
- Public Attendance and Participation
- Meeting Documents
- Voting
- Penalties for Non-Compliance

# Meetings

Every “meeting” is subject to the Act’s requirements

**“Meeting” Definition:** A quorum of the Council/committee convening, at the same time and place, to hear, discuss, or deliberate on any item within the subject matter of the Council/committee.

Exceptions:

- **Public Contacts:** a member of the public contacting a majority of Council members if Council members do not solicit such contacts.
- **Social Gatherings:** a majority of the Council may attend a purely social event, if they do not discuss Council issues among themselves.
- **Conferences:** Conferences are exempt as long as they are open to the public and involve subject matter of general interest, and a majority of Council members do not discuss Council issues among themselves, other than as part of the scheduled program.

# Robert's Rules of Order and Open Meeting Act

- Robert's Rules promotes debate and deliberation.
- Open Meeting Act promotes public participation.
- Robert's Rules can be suspended.
- The Open Meetings Act applies whenever members undertake Council business.