


South Central Library System
Helping Libraries Serve the Public



Meade Parliamentary Service

Running an Effective Board Meeting

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Objectives

- Basic knowledge, skills, and tools to run an effective meeting
- Introduction to parliamentary procedure
- Resources for learning more

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Before you start: Quorum


- Usually a majority of the members – more than half
- If you don't have a quorum – F A R M
 - **F**ix the time to which to adjourn – set a time to continue this meeting
 - **A**djourn
 - **R**ecess – wait for people to arrive
 - **M**easures – take measures to get a quorum – call, text, etc.

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The Roadmap:

- Standard order of business
- Agendas
- Consent agenda
- Public input



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Standard Order of Business

- **M**inutes approval
- **R**eports of officers and standing committees
- **S**pecial committee reports
- **S**pecial orders (items for a specific time)
- **U**nfinished business (not Old business — just motions postponed from previous meeting)
- **N**ew Business

Too general for public bodies.
Use as a framework.

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Sample Agenda

**CITY LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MEETING AGENDA FOR
JULY 3, 2025**

Library Board President – Name

A. Call to Order

B. Consent Agenda – Action

1. Minutes: June 5, 2025
2. Special Event Application

C. Public Comments and Communications

D. Foundation Report – Name

E. Friends of the Library Report – Name

F. Board Education: Strategic Plan – Name

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G. Library Board Committee Reports

1. Advocacy Committee – Name, Committee Chair
No Action
2. Building Committee – Name, Committee Chair
• No Action
3. Finance Committee – Name, Committee Chair
• No Action
4. Nominating Committee – Name, Committee Chair
• Action: State of Officers
5. Personnel and Policy Committee – Name, Committee Chair
 - Action: Policy 1.00 Mission Statement
 - Action: Policy 2.00 Collection Development
 - Action: Policy 2.05 Programming and Partnerships
 - Action: Policy 3.01 Library Cards and Customer Privileges
 - Action: Policy 3.05 Internet and Computer Usage
 - Action: Policy 4.00 Library as Place

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H. Library Director's Report

~~I. Old Business~~ **Unfinished Business**

J. New Business

1. FY26 Calendar
2. Action: MLN Memorandum Of Understanding FY26-30
3. Action: Purchase Order and Payment Approval – cost of Microsoft license for staff and patron computers. \$52,307.94 total for three years to IT Outlet.

K. Adjournment

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Adopting an Agenda

- Majority vote to adopt
- To amend after it's adopted =
 - 2/3 vote (present and voting), or
 - majority of entire membership (of the board), or
 - unanimous consent
- Public bodies can't add to an agenda, but they can change the order if they need to.



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Minutes approval

- Ask for corrections
- If no corrections, the minutes are approved.
- If there are corrections, they're approved as corrected.
- If there is a disagreement about a correction, then the members vote on the correction.
- The minutes have to be approved – you can't vote no.

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Consent Agenda

- 21.18. Before taking action, the presiding officer allows time for the members to read the consent agenda to determine if it includes any matters on which a member may have a question, or which they would like to discuss or vote against.
- A single member has the right to remove any item from the consent agenda with no explanation required, in which case it is transferred to the regular agenda for separate consideration.

AIPSC, 2nd ed., 21.18

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Consent agenda continued

- General consent to approve all remaining items is assumed when no one else rises to remove an item from the list.
- The presiding officer then announces that the remaining items are approved en bloc, saving the time that would be required for individual consideration and votes.

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Presiding Officer:

“The next business in order is the consideration of the consent agenda. Please review the consent agenda, and let the chair know if there are any items you would like removed for separate consideration, or any items for which you have a clarifying question. *(pause)*

There being no items to be removed from the consent agenda, the items on the consent agenda are adopted.”

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Consent agenda – other uses

Additionally, if the presiding officer or any member senses that the assembly could dispose of many items en bloc, such as multiple recommendations from a committee, the presiding officer or the member can propose that they be considered as a consent agenda. When this is proposed, any member may remove any item from the group of items for individual consideration, and the remainder are approved en bloc as outlined above.

Be careful!

AIPSC, 2nd ed. 21. xxx

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Public Input

- Your meeting is a meeting of the board being held in a public place.
- It is not a meeting of the public.
- The board can adopt rules to manage public input
 - Sign in sheet
 - Limits to length of speech
 - First time speakers go before second time speakers
 - Board members usually do not interact with the public, but just listen or maybe ask questions
 - (The board has to do only what was on the published agenda)



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Reports

- Reports with information only can be done in writing ahead of time
- If there is action from a report it should be in the form of a motion
- You do not vote to “accept” a report. You do not vote on any reports. Doing so means you agree to everything in the report.



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AGENDA ITEM AND DESCRIPTION	RESPONSIBILITY	REPORT #	RFD #
1. Call to Order	Chair Name		
2. Roll Call	Secretary Name		
3. Meeting Appointments	Chair Name		
4. Report of Officers	Chair	5A	
	Vice Chair		
	Secretary	5D	
	Treasurer		
6. Report of President	President Name	6A	6A, 6B
7. Report of ABC Committee	Committee Chair	7A	7A
8. Report of KLM Committee	Committee Chair	8A, 8B, 8C	8A
10. New Business Proposal to Selection of	Member Name		10A
	Member Name		10B

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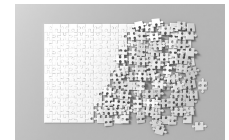
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Unfinished Business

- Usually, any motion that was pending when the last meeting adjourned OR
- Any motion that was postponed to this meeting.
- The presiding officer should know if there is any unfinished business. If there isn't any, don't put it on the agenda. Don't ask for it.



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New Business

- Only what was in the notice of the meeting

New Business

1. FY26 Calendar
2. Action: MLN Memorandum Of Understanding FY26-30
3. Action: Purchase Order and Payment Approval – cost of Microsoft license for staff and patron computers. \$52,307.94 total for three years to IT Outlet.

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Making Decisions

Facilitating decision making



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Relaxed Rules vs Formal Rules

Chair participates	Chair is impartial
Motion can be <u>after</u> discussion	Motion <u>before</u> discussion
No second needed	Second is needed
Informal debate (no limit on # of times or how long you can speak)	Formal debate (time limits and speaking limits)
Remain seated	Stand when speaking

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Motions

- A motion is a statement to take a particular action.

Example: "I move that the library purchase a new computer for the executive director."



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Processing a motion

Chair recognizes member

1. Member **makes the motion**
2. Another member **seconds it**
3. Presiding officer **STATES the motion**
4. Members **discuss the motion**
5. Presiding officer PUTS the motion to a **vote**
 - Presiding officer **states the motion** again (as often as needed)
6. Presiding officer announces the result and effect



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Motion #1: "I move that the library purchase a new computer for the executive director."

- **Member B:** Second
- **Chair:** It is moved and seconded that the library purchase a new computer for the executive director. **Is there any debate?**
- *[Members debate.]*
- **Chair:** Are you ready for the question? (Are you ready to vote?)
- The question is that the library purchase a new computer for the executive director.
- Those in favor of the motion say Aye.
- Those opposed say No.

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Decorum

- 1st time speakers go before 2nd time speakers
- Stick to the subject, especially with amendments.
- Issues, not people.
- Chair can alternate pro and con
- Motion maker speaks first
- If it's a large group or contentious, best to use formal language

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What can you do with a motion:

Vote on it

Get Rid of it (Postpone Indefinitely)

Amend it

Refer it to a committee

Postpone it to a certain time

Lay it on the Table*

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Amendments

- AMP method
- State the **A**mdendment
- State how the **M**ain motion will read if the amendment is adopted
- State the **P**ending motion to amend

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Amending motions – changing words

- **Strike out** words
- **Insert** words
- **Strike out** some words **and Insert** other words
- Be specific

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Amendment Example

- Main Motion: That the library purchase a new computer for the executive director.
- During discussion, **Member C** says: "I move to insert "laptop" before "computer".
- **Member D**: Second!

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- Presiding Officer **STATES THE AMENDMENT**: "It is moved and seconded to insert "laptop" before "computer".

- **STATES HOW THE MAIN MOTION WILL READ, IF ADOPTED** – "If the amendment is adopted, the main motion will read, "That the library purchase a new laptop computer for the executive director.

- **STATES THE PENDING QUESTION**: "The question is (just) on inserting laptop before computer".

- **ASKS FOR DEBATE**: "Is there any debate (discussion)?"
 - Keep it focused only on whether to change the words

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- (After discussion) Are you ready to vote on the amendment?
- **STATE THE PENDING QUESTION:** The pending question is to amend by inserting "laptop" before "computer".
- **STATE HOW THE MAIN MOTION WILL READ:** If the amendment is adopted, the main motion will read that "the library purchase a laptop computer for the executive director."
- **VOTE ON THE AMENDMENT:**
 - Those in favor of inserting "laptop" before "computer" say Aye.
 - Those opposed, say No.

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- **GIVE THE RESULT:** The Ayes have it and the **amendment** is adopted.

IMPORTANT!

- **STATE THE PENDING QUESTION:** The pending question is now the **amended main motion:** That the library purchase a laptop computer for the executive director.
- **ASK FOR DEBATE (DISCUSSION):** Is there any discussion?
 - You can still make other amendments.
 - You can debate whether or not the executive director needs a computer or if the budget allows for it.

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- Are you ready to vote?
- **PUT THE PENDING QUESTION:** The question is on adopting the motion that the library purchase a new laptop computer for the executive director.
- **TAKE THE VOTE:**
 - Those in favor, say Aye.
 - Those opposed, say No.
- **STATE THE EFFECT:** The Ayes have it and the motion is adopted. The library will purchase a new laptop computer for the executive director.
- **FOLLOW UP** – who will notify all the appropriate people, who will purchase, etc.

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Tie vote

- A tie is not a majority, so a tied vote defeats the motion.
- The chair can vote to affect the outcome
 - (Chair should be voting in small board rules anyway)
 - Chair can vote in favor to help it pass
 - Chair can vote no to help defeat it

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Subsidiary Motions

- (Lay on the Table)
- Previous Question – close debate
- Limit Debate
- Postpone to a certain time
- Refer to a committee
- Amend
- Postpone indefinitely (kill it, get rid of it now)

Debate motions

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Lay on the Table

- Used only if something urgent comes up so that you need to interrupt the current business. If not, then:
- Postpone **Indefinitely** – kills the motion for this meeting
- Postpone to a **Certain Time** – like the next meeting



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Postpone Indefinitely – Get rid of the motion



- Allows you to dispose of a motion without a direct vote
- In Robert's: Debatable and Majority vote
- In AIPSC this is "Table": Not Debatable and 2/3 vote

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Why does it matter?

- Postpone Indefinitely is fully debatable and takes a majority vote.
- "Table" in other parliamentary authorities is not debatable and takes a 2/3 vote.
- If you want to postpone indefinitely and not debate, then move to close debate.
- Not allowing debate takes away the rights of the members to discuss the issue (especially in public).

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Privileged motions

- Fix the time to which to adjourn – sets a continued meeting
- **Adjourn**
- **Recess**
- Question of privilege
- Call for orders of the day



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Incidental motions

- **Point of Order** – something isn't being done correctly
- Appeal – challenging a chair's ruling
- Suspend the Rules – to do something you normally can't do
- Division of Assembly – take the vote another way
- **Parliamentary inquiry/ Request for information** — QUESTIONS
- (*Consider by paragraph, divide the question, voting and polls, nomination/election motions, object to consideration, request to read paper, withdraw or modify, excused from duty, any other privilege*)

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"Bring back" Motions

- **Reconsider**
- **Rescind/Amend Something Previously Adopted**
- Discharge a committee
- Take from Table

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Closed session

- Must be in an open meeting
- Vote to go into a closed session (majority, but okay if unanimous)
- Chair must give specific allowable reason
- Deliberate in closed session
- Vote in open session
- Indicate in the notice that you plan to come back



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Closed Session

- The Attorney General has advised that notice of closed sessions must contain the **specific nature** of the business, as well as the exemption(s) under which the chief presiding officer believes a closed session is authorized.
- Merely identifying and quoting from a statutory exemption does not reasonably identify any particular subject that might be taken up thereunder and thus is not adequate notice of a closed session.

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After the meeting – Prepare minutes

- Minutes are a record of what was **DONE**, not what was **SAID**.
- Name moved to do _____. After discussion, the motion was adopted on a roll call vote with Name, Name, Name, and Name voting in the affirmative and Name, Name, and Name voting in the negative.
- OR The motion was referred to the _____ committee.
- The chair of the ABC Committee submitted a written report.

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After the meeting -- Evaluation of Process

- Were the agenda and reports sent ahead of time?
- Did we allow enough time for the agenda items?
- Did we avoid wasting members' time?
- Did we have some humor?



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Evaluation – Decision Making

- Did we have meaningful discussions
- Did we have balanced discussions (pro and con)
- Did we have respectful discussions
- Did we use good information to make decisions?
- Were multiple solutions to issues being considered?
- Did we work on the right topics?
- Were all members' views elicited and heard?

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Evaluation – Member Participation

- Were members prepared?
- Did members feel comfortable expressing their views even when they challenged the predominant opinion?
- Did we hold each other accountable identifying and timely completion of action items?
- Is the work shared among members of the board?

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Conclusion – Parliamentary Procedure = OFEEDS



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Resources

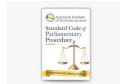
- Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 12th edition.
- Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised In Brief, 3rd edition.
- American Institute of Parliamentarians Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure, 2nd edition.
- Wisconsin Open Meetings Law Compliance Guide, <https://www.doj.state.wi.us/>
- Eli Mina, "Articles, Insights, and Ideas", elimina.com
- Laura Meade: laurameade@meadeparlipro.com 319-899-2023 cell/text



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