



MICHIGAN 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Michigan 4-H Advisory Groups

Parliamentary Procedure Frequently Asked Questions

Following correct Parliamentary Procedure during meetings can help keep the meeting on track, on time and productive. Sometimes however, following the proper procedures can get confusing. Listed below are frequently asked questions that the 4-H Leadership/ Civic Engagement Team hear during Parliamentary Procedure Training.

When does the President Vote? Groups need to refer to their by-laws to determine this. 4-H Advisory groups usually only have the President vote in the case of a tie or to cause a tie. If the Chairperson or President is treated as a full member then they would vote. If it is determined that they only vote when it will change the outcome (i.e. In the event of a tie or to cause a tie) then they would only vote in those circumstances.

How does a President cast their vote in an election without it being so obvious who they chose? It is a good idea to only do secret ballot voting when it comes to elections. During this time the President can cast their vote and put it into a separate envelope. The vote certifier will then only open the Presidents ballot in the case of a tie. They should not report the number of votes that each person received and do not have to report if the presidents tie breaking vote was used.

Can the President make a motion? Technically the President can make a motion but since they are supposed to remain impartial it isn't good practice to do so. However, the President can say "I will now entertain a motion to..." This is a way to guide a motion without actually making it and can often get the same result.

The President can assume a motion. For example, they may adjourn the meeting by stating, "If there isn't any further business this meeting will adjourn. Hearing none, this meeting is adjourned."

Can the President enter into the debate? The primary role of the President is to facilitate discussion, remaining impartial and not giving their personal input is important to that discussion. To enter the debate, the President may choose to pass the role of President off to the Vice President or another member that does not wish to speak on the issue.

Why do groups say the pledges at the beginning of a meeting? Pledges at the beginning of a meeting are not a requirement. However, saying the Pledge of Allegiance and then the 4-H Pledge brings the group together before starting the meeting. They are pledging these things together and it sets the scene for the meeting to be guided by these principles. 4-H Members and Leaders should always be thinking of their head, heart, hands and health when doing 4-H business and saying the pledge together at the beginning of a meeting sets that tone.



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Do you have to read the minutes before they are approved? You do not have to read the minutes if they have been provided to the membership in advance. If a copy has not been provided prior to the meeting then the Secretary needs to read the minutes before approval.

Do you have to vote on accepting the minutes? A motion should be made to accept the minutes, be supported by a second and voted on. The President should ask for corrections to the minutes before a motion to accept is made however, if a motion is made and seconded they can ask for discussion so members have an opportunity to offer corrections. If corrections are made, then an amendment to the motion must be made *first* before voting on the previous motion to accept.

Do you record who makes and seconds the motion in the minutes? The person who makes the motion must be recorded as they are in support of the motion. The person who seconds the motion should not be recorded. This person may not support the motion but wanted to move it forward for discussion.

Can Minutes be corrected even after they have been adopted? Minutes can be corrected even after approval for an unlimited time. To be corrected after they have been accepted it requires a motion to amend minutes previously adopted. This requires a two-thirds vote or a majority vote with proper prior notification to the membership that corrections were going to be presented.

Do you have to vote on accepting the treasurers report? The treasurers report it's a statement of indisputable numbers (i.e. Expenses, Income, Balance, etc.) it cannot be contested by the membership therefore it is placed on file or received and not voted on. For example the chair or President would say, "The Treasurers report has been placed on file." Treasure reports should be sent to audit annually and then the annual audit may or may not be approved.

Should the person who makes the motion vote in favor of the motion? Yes, the person presenting the motion is basically stating they are in favor of it. If after discussion takes place they are no longer in favor of the motion they should withdrawal the motion or amend the motion to be something they would support.

What is the proper procedure when someone "Calls the Previous Question"? The President will acknowledge the individuals request, ask for a second and if a second is received call for an immediate vote as this motion is not debatable. If a two-thirds vote is achieved then all discussion must end and the group will vote on the previous motion. If a two-thirds vote or a second is not achieved discussion may continue.

When do you remove something that has been tabled? An item can be removed from the table at the same meeting it was placed there provided other business takes place first or before the end of the following meeting. Placing something on the table may be done for many reasons. For example, there



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may be other pending business that must be done and this item is requiring more time than allowed. A motion may be made to table the item and then when other business is finished it can be taken back up from the table if time permits. In other cases it may be tabled to find out more information before the next meeting and therefore wouldn't be taken back up from the table until the following meeting. Any item not taken off of the table at the conclusion of the next regularly scheduled meeting fails.

For more information or training on Parliamentary Procedure contact the LCE work team at 4HLeadership@anr.msu.edu.



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