

2020 MVMA AGM - Basics of Parliamentary Procedure

- 1. Meeting Rules** - Pursuant to MVMA By-laws, the rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly revised shall govern MVMA in all cases to which they are applicable and in which case they are not inconsistent with the *Veterinary Medical Act*, MVMA By-laws and any special rules of order that MVMA may adopt.
- 2. One speaker at a time** - Only one person may speak at a time. To be recognized to speak, a member must move to one of the floor microphone stations and be called upon (or "recognized") by the chair.
- 3. Limited speaking time per member** - On any given motion or topic, each member may speak only twice, for up to the MVMA designated time of five minutes for the first speech and three minutes for the second. This time cannot be combined, split, shared, or yielded to another member. A member who has not yet spoken has priority over another member who wishes to speak for a second time.
- 4. Staying on topic** - All member speeches must remain strictly on topic. The current topic will be clarified by the chair if necessary. If there is a motion pending, debate is limited to the merits of that motion. Debate may never go into the motives of particular members or become personal in nature.
- 5. All remarks directed to the chair** - All remarks must always be directed to the chair. No member may speak directly to nor address another member or members, except for the chair.
- 6. Motions** - A motion is a formal proposal (the "question") to the assembly to make a decision or take an action. A motion is 1) made by a member, 2) seconded by another member, 3) stated by the chair, 4) debated by the members, 5) re-stated (or "put") by the chair, 6) then voted upon by the members. All questions are decided by a majority vote of those members present and voting unless otherwise indicated. A majority is more than half of the members present and voting.
- 7. Debate** - The member who introduces a motion is entitled to speak first in debate if he/she so desires. Members engaging in debate should refer to themselves in the first person, and must refer to each other in the third person, not the second person.
- 8. Amendments** - Any member who believes the pending motion should be modified before it is voted upon may move an amendment to that motion. The motion to amend is processed in the same way as any other motion. While the amendment is being processed, the underlying motion is temporarily set aside. After the vote is taken on the motion to amend, the debate on the underlying motion (as amended or not) resumes.
- 9. Voting** - Voting on motions and other items will be completed by a show of hands unless a member or the MVMA Council requests that it be done by ballot.
- 10. Points of Order** - A point of order may be raised if the parliamentary procedure rules appear to have been broken. The point is resolved before business continues.
- 11. Scrutineers** - When a counted vote is required, two (or three) individuals appointed by the assembly will count the vote.