No statutory requirement for procedural rules

Auditor of State Behavioral Health Handbook recommendations:
- "As no specified procedural rules have been designated for such Boards, the governing board should adopt as quickly as possible its own rules, which should be entered into the record. It is suggested that a common authority, such as Robert’s Rules of Order, be selected."
- Election of a chairperson to serve as presiding officer
- By-laws usually include requirement for adoption of a parliamentary authority/rules of order or specifies Robert’s Rules of Order
Parliamentary Procedure

- Established procedural rules used to present and discuss possible courses of action, make decisions and keep order
- Based on fundamental democratic principles
- Requires meetings to be conducted according to those principles
- Same across all organizations
  - Large or small, private or public
  - No need to learn new procedural rules at every new organization
  - Can be adapted to fit size and needs of organization

Basic Democratic Principles

- All members are equal - equal rights and responsibilities.
- Board is run with impartiality and fairness. Rules are applied equally and fairly. No favored group or preferential treatment.
- All members have equal right to present ideas, speak to those ideas, and vote on the ideas.
- The majority rules but the rights of the minority are protected.
- Everything is handled and accomplished in the spirit of openness. Members have the right to know what is going on within the organization by attending meetings, inspecting the official records and receiving notices and reports from committees, officers, and staff.
- Officers are selected through a fair election process. All members have the right to be considered for office.
- Power is shared equally - no hierarchy of power.

Benefits of Parliamentary Procedure

- Facilitates smooth functioning of group
- Provides firm basis for resolving questions of procedure
- Faster and more efficient and effective meetings
- Promotes fairness and equality
- Improved communication
- Prevention of illegal actions
- Allows focus to be more on substance of work and less on procedure
Robert’s Rules of Order

Robert’s Rules- Official Books
- Reference and technical details

- Beginners, quick reference, those needing the basics

Board Member
Duties and Expectations
Expectations of Members

- Basic knowledge and understanding of rules
- Compliance with rules
- Obligation to obey legitimate orders of presiding officer/chair
- Refrain from conduct injurious to the organization or its purposes
- Attendance at meetings
- Active participation
- Equal and even participation
- Consideration for other members and their ideas

Expectations of Chair/President/Presiding Officer

- Well-versed in parliamentary law, by-laws and any other rules of the organization
- Tactful, use of common sense
- Ability to preside over meetings
- Have copy of bylaws, Robert’s Rules of Order and Order of Business/Agenda at each meeting

Main Duty of Chair/President/Presiding Officer

Duty to run meeting properly
- determine presence of a quorum - Quorum required!
- open meeting
- announce order of business
- recognize members entitled to floor
- state and put to vote all motions and other questions
- expedite business
- answer questions about procedure
- adjourn meetings
Additional Duties of Chair/President/Presiding Officer

* Enforce rules of debate and order and decorum
* Protect meeting and members from annoyance by non-members
* Any additional duties as set forth in by-laws

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Standard Order of Business

* Reading and Approval of Minutes
* Reports of Officers and Staff
* Reports of Committees
* Special Orders
* Unfinished Business
* New Business

* REMEMBER: 3R-SUN *
Motions

- Business is brought before the board by the motion of a member
- Formal proposal by a member that the board take a certain action
- Member must "obtain the floor" to make a motion (be recognized)
- Motion occurs before debate on topic (if debatable motion)

Steps in Making a Motion

- Member seeks permission to take the floor
- Chair recognizes member
- Member makes the motion – “I move to...”
- Chair asks for any seconds or member calls out second
  - If no second, motion fails immediately
  - Motions from committees are automatically considered to be seconded
- Chair "states the question"
  - Ensures clarity by re-stating the motion
  - Only chair can place business before full board
- Motion is now pending and open to debate
Main Motion/Question

- Raises a substantive question for consideration
- One main motion at a time
- Every other motion takes precedence over main motions
- Debatable, amendable and can be reconsidered
- Generally require majority vote
- Board must either fully consider motion (debate and vote) or dispose of motion
- Different categories of motions: main, subsidiary, privileged incidental and special

Subsidiary Motions (secondary)

- Changes or affects the main motion
- May be applied at any time from when chair states question to vote
- Fit an order of preference as listed below:
  - Postpone Indefinitely – kills main motion without vote
  - Amend – modifies something in main motion before motion acted on
  - Commit or Refer – assigns the motion to a committee for investigation or a report
  - Postpone Definitely – puts off question until expressed time
  - Limit or Extend Debate – shortens or lengthens the time for debate on a motion if needed
  - Previous question – closes debate and amendments, bringing a vote on the motion
  - Lay on the Table – interrupts to introduce urgent business immediately

Privileged Motions (secondary)

- Raises urgent procedural matters
- Do not relate to any pending business
- Takes precedence over everything else, including debate
- Addressed by order of preference:
  - Calls for the orders of the day – take up proper business in order (no second required)
  - Raising a question of privilege – emergency question dealing with rights/privileges of members
  - Recess – gives assembly short break
  - Adjourn – closes the meeting
  - Fix the time to adjourn – sets time for meeting to end
Incidental Motions (secondary)
• Raises questions of procedure related to another motion
• In order only when legitimately incidental to another pending motion or to other business at hand – take precedence over other pending motions
• Must be decided before business can continue

Incidental Motions (secondary)
• Incidental Motions
  • Points of order – rules being followed?
  • Appeal – decision taken from chair and given to board
  • Suspend the rules – action would violate rules
  • Objection to the consideration of a question – avoids main motion if board thinks never should have come before it
  • Division of the question – vote on parts of motion separately
  • Requests and Inquiries
    • Parliamentary inquiry (no 2nd needed)
    • Point of Information (no 2nd needed)
    • Request to withdraw or modify motion after stated by chair

Special Motions
• Bring a question before the board again
• Special because raising a decided or disposed of question requires special circumstances and process
  • Take from the table or un-table
  • Rescind something previously adopted (different meeting)
  • Amend something previously adopted (different meeting)
  • Discharge a committee-take matter from committee
  • Reconsider - motion adopted same day but after new info or changed situation may change outcome
Amendments (Subsidiary Motion)

- Amendments modify the wording of the stated motion – do not decide whether main motion is adopted
- Must agree to amend the motion and then agree on the amendment before the amendment becomes the main motion
- If amendment fails – main motion not modified
- If adopted – main motion is amended, debated and vote taken
- Must always be "germane" to the motion (cannot amend a motion that is not pending)

Amendments (Subsidiary Motion)

- Not permitted on "settled" matters
- Debatable when the motion being amended is debatable
- Secondary amendment - amendment may be amended (once)
- Can be reconsidered
- Cannot have effect of rejecting main question or of repeating question already decided
- Cannot be frivolous, make motion incoherent or convert motion to improper form
- 2/3 vote required OR majority vote with notice OR vote of majority of membership

Amendments

- Five Forms of Amendments
  - Inserts or adds words or paragraphs
  - Strikes out words or paragraphs
  - Strikes out and inserts
  - Substitutes
  - Fills in blanks
- Must specify location in motion wording
- Specific rules for each of these
Debate/Discussion

- Debate begins when a motion is made, seconded and then stated by the chair
- Each member may speak 2 times on a motion
- Speeches are limited to 10 minutes each
- Must "obtain the floor" after it has been "yielded"
  - Wait until person speaking finishes speaking
  - Signal desire to speak
- Chair assigns the floor
  - Maker of motion has the right to speak first
  - Anyone who has not spoken yet gets recognized before someone who already has spoken once
  - Should try to alternate sides to a debate

*Note: These rules are often relaxed for smaller bodies and organizations

During Debate

- Remarks must be related to motion under discussion and whether or not motion should be adopted (be "germane")
- Irrelevant topics are not in order
- Avoid personal comments – attacking motives for position on a motion not okay, criticizing reasoning is okay but not criticizing personally
- Be courteous – cannot say that a statement is false or that someone is lying – may say believe strong evidence that member is mistaken
- Chairperson does not participate in debate, generally
Debate/Discussion

Closing Debate
- Move to end debate at certain time or to limit/extend length of speeches
  - 2/3 vote required
- Move the previous question
  - To immediately close debate
  - Prevents making of secondary motions
  - 2/3 vote required

Interruptions

In general, others must remain quiet and not interrupt except in urgent situations

Interruptions that may be made prior to motion being stated by chair
- Objection to consideration of a question
- Request to withdraw or modify a motion
Interruptions

Interruption that may be made while member has floor

- A call for the orders of the day when not followed
- Raising a question of privilege
- Raising a point of order when member believes parliamentary procedure has been breached
- Chair calling to a members’ attention that the member is not observing the speaking rules
- Calling for separate vote on set of resolutions on different subjects that were included in one motion
- Parliamentary inquiry
- Request for information
- An appeal

How to Interrupt

- Member requests recognition by chair and when recognized, states reason for interruption
- Member who had the floor does not lose it but takes seat until matter addressed (unless member addressed directly by chairperson during the interruption)
- At the end of the interruption, the member who had the floor regains it when the chairperson directs the member to rise and proceed (example: “Mr X has the floor”)

**Note: More informal process can be used in smaller organizations**
Putting a Motion to Vote

- Chair asks if members are ready for the question or if any further discussion
- If no further discussion, Chair states the Question
  - Example: “The question is on the adoption of a motion to...”

Voting

- General consent - “If there is no objection...”
  - If even one objection to a vote by unanimous consent, must be formal vote
- By voice, show of hands, rising vote, roll call
  - Vote by voice most common - All in favor? Those opposed? Any abstentions?
- Majority vote typically required (tie fails), some motions require 2/3 majority
- Chair may vote when will affect result (break a tie) or on regular basis for smaller or less formal organizations
- Chair announces “carried” or “adopted” OR “lost” or “rejected”

Abstentions

- When a member that is present does not vote on a motion
- All members have right to abstain, or decline from voting if have personal interest in outcome of vote
- Robert’s Rules does not require abstention for conflict of interest
- Ohio law requires abstention if conflict of interest
- Abstentions are not counted and have no effect on result
Adjourning the Meeting

After all debate and business is finished, Chairperson should:
• Give opportunity to take up unfinished business or take up at next meeting
• Make important announcements
• Decide time and date of next meeting if not already determined
• Ask if there is any further business before stating that the meeting is adjourned

Robert’s Rules- Official Website

Online: http://www.robertsrules.com/
• History of Robert’s Rules
• FAQs
• Interpretation and Application of Rules

*NOT robertsrules.org*
“Where there is no law, but every man does what is right in his own eyes, there is the least of real liberty.”

-Henry M. Robert, Robert’s Rules of Order,