

Parliamentary Procedure For Board Secretaries

Based on *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* (11th Edition)

MISSOURI SCHOOL BOARDS
ASSOCIATION

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GENERAL DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY

1. The secretary keeps the minutes of the regular and special meetings of the board.
2. If the president and vice-president(s) are absent, it is the duty of the secretary to call the meeting to order and to preside at the election of a chairman pro tempore.
3. Place in the minutes what was done, not what was said or the opinion of the secretary.
4. The secretary is the custodian of the records board meetings.
5. The secretary checks the district's policies carefully to see what additional duties may be included.
6. The secretary should be on time with the records, a copy of the bylaws, and any other document likely to be needed.
7. A great deal may depend on the accuracy of the secretary, for, remember, the minutes are the legal record of the organization.
8. Keep a file of all written reports presented to the board.
9. Notify officers, committee members, and delegates of their appointment.
10. Furnish delegates with proper credentials.
11. Keep on hand a list of all board committees and their members; take such to each meeting.
12. Sign all certified documents for the organization, unless otherwise provided in board policy.
13. Maintain a list any special rules of order or standing rules and bring a current copy to every meeting.
14. Send notice (Known as the "call") of each meeting to the members of the board and post as required by law.
15. Read the correspondence of an official nature at meetings as requested.
16. Read the minutes in meetings unless printed and distributed.
17. Work closely with the president and superintendent, providing them with a copy of the minutes as soon as possible after the meeting.



RANKING MOTIONS

	MOTIONS IN ORDER OF PRECEDENCE	SECOND NEEDED	AMEND - ABLE	DEBATE- ABLE	VOTE NEEDED	INTERRUPT SPEAKER	RECONS- IDER
PRIV- ILEG- ED	13 Fix the Time to Which to Adjourn	Y	Y		MAJ		Y
	12 Adjourn	Y			MAJ		
	11 Recess	Y		Y	MAJ		
	10 Raise a Question of Privilege				CHAIR	Y	
	9 Call for the Orders of the Day				INDIV	Y	
SUB- SID- IARY	8 Lay on the Table	Y			MAJ		
	7 Previous Question	Y			2/3		(Y)
	6 Limit or Extend Limits of Debate	Y	Y		2/3		(Y)
	5 Postpone to a Definite Time	Y	Y	Y	(MAJ)		Y
	4 Commit or Refer	Y	Y	Y	MAJ		(Y)
	3 Amend	Y	Y	Y	MAJ		Y
	2 Postpone Indefinitely	Y	Y	Y	MAJ		(Aff) Y
1 MAIN MOTION	Y	Y	Y	MAJ*		Y	

RANKING MOTIONS

SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS

1. **Main Motion:** Any motion moved while nothing else is pending (original & incidental)

“I move that . . .”

2. **Postpone Indefinitely:** To kill a motion or take a test vote.

“I move that the question be postponed indefinitely.”

3. **Amend:** To modify the wording of a motion by inserting, striking or striking & inserting. Only two levels are in order (primary & secondary).

“I move to amend by inserting the word(s) . . .”

“I move to amend by striking the word(s) . . .”

“I move to amend by striking the word(s) . . . and inserting . . .”

4. **Commit or Refer:** To send a motion to a committee so the question can be carefully considered and put into better condition for the membership to consider.
Include:

- ▶ Whether sending to standing or special committee
- ▶ How many will be on the committee
- ▶ How the committee will be selected
- ▶ Any powers the committee has
- ▶ When the committee will report

“I move to refer the motion to a committee of three to be appointed by the Chair and to report at the next meeting.”

“I move to refer the motion to the Social Committee with power to act.”

5. **Postpone to a Definite Time:** To postpone action till a certain time or after a certain event.

- ▶ Majority vote creates general order
- ▶ 2/3 vote creates special order

“I move to postpone the motion to the next meeting”

“I move to postpone the question until 9:00 p.m.”

6. **Limit or Extend Debate:** To set, reduce or extend limits on debate (length of speech, number of speeches, and length of debate).

“I move to limit debate on this motion to ten minutes.”

“I move to limit debate on this motion to the next four speakers.”

7. **Previous Question:** To immediately close debate and take a vote.

“I move the previous question (on all pending questions).”

8. **Lay on the Table:** To temporarily set aside pending business *because something more urgent needs immediate attention.*

“I move to lay the question on the table.”

PRIVILEGED MOTIONS

9. **Call for the Orders of the Day:** Permits one member to require that the assembly conform to its agenda.

“I call for the orders of the day.”

10. **Question of Privilege:** To bring up for immediate consideration any matter relating to the privileges/comfort of the assembly.

“I rise to a question of person privilege.”

11. **Recess:** To provide a short intermission in the assembly’s proceedings.

“I move to recess for ten minutes.”

12. **Adjourn:** To close the meeting at any time. If there is no other business (end of the agenda) the Chair can assume and state the adjournment of the meeting.

“I move that we adjourn.”

13. **Fix the Time to which to Adjourn:** To set the time for another meeting which will be a continuation of the present session.

“I move that when we adjourn, we adjourn to meet at 7:00 p.m. tomorrow.”

RECONSIDER

MOTION	SECOND NEEDED	AMEND - ABLE	DEBATE- ABLE	VOTE NEEDED	INTERRUPT SPEAKER	RECONSIDER
RECONSIDER	Y		(Y)	MAJ	(Y)	

- ▶ **Mover** must have voted on the prevailing side
- ▶ **Time Limit:** One day session: same day
Multiple day session: same day or next business day
- ▶ **Making the Motion:** Takes precedence over every other motion
- ▶ **Considering the Motion:** Has rank of motion to be reconsidered. Called up by the Chair or any member
- ▶ **Apply** to vote on any motion **except:**
 - ▶ If motion can be renewed
 - ▶ If provisions of motion are being carried out
 - ▶ If contractual and party has been notified
 - ▶ If something has been done that is impossible to undo
 - ▶ If same result can be obtained by another parliamentary action

THE HANDLING OF A MOTION

The handling of a motion varies according to condition. However, in the ordinary case, the following **six steps** are essential:

1. A member **makes the motion**.
 - ▶ The member must be recognized by the chair before stating a motion.
 - ▶ Common form: "*I move that _____.*"
2. Another member **seconds the motion**.
 - ▶ It is not necessary to be recognized prior to seconding a motion.
 - ▶ The name of the member who seconds a motion is **NOT** recorded in the minutes.
 - ▶ Common form: "*Second*" or "*I second the motion.*"
3. The Chair **states the question**, i.e., states the exact question and indicates that it is open to debate.
Common form: "*It has been moved and seconded that _____. Is there any discussion?*"
4. The members **debate the motion**.
 - ▶ Each member must be recognized before speaking for or against the motion.
 - ▶ Discussion is strictly limited to the merits of the motion under consideration.
 - ▶ All debate is directed to the chair or through the chair to other members. Members never address each other directly.
 - ▶ Ordinarily, each member may speak only twice on the same motion, and each speech is limited to 10 minutes. The organization may adopt other rules that limit debate.
5. The Chair **restates the motion** and then **puts the vote**.
 - ▶ The affirmative vote is taken first, then the negative.
 - ▶ Abstentions are not counted.
 - ▶ A majority vote means a majority of those who vote for or against a motion. Members present but not voting are not counted. A majority is MORE THAN HALF.
 - ▶ The chair votes only when the chair's vote will affect the results, i.e., to make or break a tie vote.
6. The Chair **announces the results** of the vote.
 - ▶ The vote on any motion is not considered final until the chair has done this.

MINUTES

The record of the proceedings of a deliberative assembly are called the minutes. The minutes should contain mainly a record of what was done at the meeting, not what was said by the members.

The minutes should never reflect the secretary's opinion, favorable or otherwise, on anything said or done.

Additional rules and practices relating to the content of the minutes are the following:

- ▶ The name of the seconder should not be entered in the minutes unless ordered by the assembly.
- ▶ When a count has been ordered or the number of votes on each side should be entered; and when the voting is by roll call, the names of those voting on each side and those answering "Present" (abstaining) should be entered.
- ▶ If members fail to respond on a roll call vote, enough of their names should be recorded as present to reflect that a quorum was present at the time of the vote.
- ▶ When a question is considered informally, the same information should be recorded as under the regular rules, since the only informality in the proceedings is in the debate.
- ▶ When a committee report is of great importance or should be recorded to show the legislative history of a measure, the assembly can order it "to be entered in the minutes," in which case the secretary copies it in full in the minutes.
- ▶ The name and subject of a guest speaker can be given, but no effort should be made to summarize his remarks.

Signature: Minutes should be signed by the secretary and can also be signed, if the assembly wishes, by the president. The words "*respectfully submitted*," although occasionally used, represent an older practice that is not essential in signing the minutes.

Approval: The minutes of each meeting are normally read and approved at the beginning of the next regular meeting. Minutes which are printed and distributed to members need not be read, the president instead saying, "You have received the minutes of _____. Are there any corrections to the minutes as printed?"

A special meeting does not approve minutes; its minutes should be approved at the next regular meeting.

Corrections, if any, and approval of the minutes are normally done by unanimous consent, the chair declaring that the minutes are approved as read or as corrected.

By a majority vote without debate, the reading of the minutes may be "dispensed with," that is, not read at the regular time. If the reading of the minutes is dispensed with, it can be ordered (by majority vote without debate) at any later time during the meeting while no business is pending;

and if it is not thus taken up before adjournment, these minutes must be read at the following meeting before the reading of the later minutes.

When the minutes are approved, the word Approved, with the secretary's initials and the date, should be written below them.

If the existence of an error or material omission in the minutes become reasonably established after their approval, the minutes can then be corrected by means of the motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted, which requires a majority vote with notice or unanimous consent.

CONTENTS OF THE MINUTES

The following five (5) items should be contained in the **first paragraph of every set of minutes**:

1. **KIND** of meeting: regular, special, adjourned, annual, etc.
2. **NAME** of the assembly
3. **DATE** of the meeting and the **PLACE**, if the board does not have a regular meeting place.
4. **STATE** the fact that the **PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY WERE PRESENT** or the names of those fulfilling their responsibilities pro tem if they are absent.
5. **INDICATE** whether the **MINUTES** of the previous meeting were **APPROVED** as distributed, as corrected, or dispensed with.

Record all **MAIN MOTIONS** (except any withdrawn), all **POINTS OF ORDER** and **APPEALS** together with the reason given by the chair for his ruling, whether or not sustained:

Record of motions should include:

1. the wording in which each motion was adopted or disposed of (with the facts as to how the motion may have been debated or amended before disposition being mentioned only parenthetically);
2. the disposition of the motion, including-- if it was temporarily disposed of-- any primary and secondary amendments and all adhering motions that were then pending; and
3. the name of the mover (the name of the seconder is not needed).

All other motions should be recorded that were not withdrawn.

The **LAST PARAGRAPH** should state the **HOUR OF ADJOURNMENT**.

AVOID USING: *“Respectfully Submitted,”*

OTHER INFORMATION:

Include the general details of the treasurer's report in the minutes.

If an election takes place, include a full report of all votes cast.

When a roll call vote is taken, the names of each person and how they voted should be recorded in the minutes.

When a vote is counted, the number of votes on each side should be entered in the minutes.

SAMPLE MINUTES

The regular meeting of the _____ Board of Education was held on February 11, 2012, at 7:00 p.m., the President being in the chair and the Secretary being present. The minutes of the last meeting dated January 12, 2012 were approved as printed and distributed.

Mr. Brown, reporting on behalf of the **Personnel Committee**, moved "that John Donovan be hired to teach 5th grade for the remainder of the year." After debate, the vote was taken and the motion carried five (5) to two (2)."

The report of the **Board Policy Committee** in regard to adopting special rules of order for small boards was presented. Discussion followed. Mr. Johnson moved to recommit this matter to the Board Policy Committee for further study and to report at the March meeting. This motion was adopted.

The **resolution relating to the use of the High School library by non-students**, which was postponed from the last meeting, was then taken up. This motion and a pending amendment were laid on the table after the chair announced that the guest speaker, Governor Nixon, had arrived.

The President introduced the **guest speaker**, Governor _____, whose spoke on the subject of "21st Century Education in Missouri."

At the conclusion of the Governor's remarks, the **resolution relating to the use of the High School library by non-students** was taken from the table. After amendment and further debate, the resolution was adopted by a vote of six (6) in favor and one (1) opposed as follows: "Resolved, That non-students be permitted to use the High School's library only between the hours of 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. on Wednesday and Thursday."

Mr. Smith moved "that the School District offer a **summer program for children** at the Junior High School." Mrs. Richardson moved to amend this motion by inserting the word "underprivileged" before "children." On motion of Mr. Thomas, the motion to establish the summer program, together with the pending amendment, was **referred to a committee of three** to be appointed by the President with instructions to report at the March meeting. The chair appointed Mrs. Richardson, Mr. Johnson, and Ms. Smith to the committee.

There being no further business, the **meeting adjourned** at 9:30 p.m.

Leonard M. Young, Secretary