

## **Conducting a meeting**

### **General Meetings**

It is difficult to give a complete outline of a general meeting because procedures vary from club to club, zone to zone and district to district. However, traveling Kinsmen and Kinettes from coast to coast should feel able to visit your club and feel at home with at least some of the procedure. The visitor should see:

- The prominent display of both the Canadian and Association's flag
- The singing of "O Canada"
- The Association's song or the reading of the Object and Aims of the Association
- A toast to Canada, the flag or the Queen
- If a dinner meeting, the Association's grace.

A review of your agenda will serve as a check-list for what you, as president, must make sure is done. In larger clubs, a meeting committee may be used to plan all the details, but in most clubs, you the president, must ensure that the details are in place. Some of the details include:

- Is the meeting location in readiness?
- Is the meal ordered in quantities sufficient to satisfy the expected numbers?
- Is there to be a guest speaker? Has the speaker been reminded? Does the speaker have audio-visual needs? What is the projected time of the presentation? Will the speaker want to leave right after the presentation? Who will introduce the speaker and who will thank the speaker and present a gift (if appropriate)?
- Are the regalia in place?
- Is the mystery person, sergeant-at-arms, fines person chosen?
- Are printed agendas distributed?
- Is the head table planned?
- Is time allotted for fine session?
- Are there guest badges available for guest and visiting Kin?
- Has the bar been arranged?
- Have members giving reports been checked for readiness?
- Have any motions coming to the meeting been distributed either in the bulletin or with the agenda?
- Has any old or new business item(s) been submitted?
- Have you prepared any announcements or coming events information?
- Has the "after meeting fellowship" been planned and has some member been designated to do it?
- Is the goal to "*Grow. Learn. Make friends. Have fun.*" in evidence?

### **Executive Meetings**

Your executive meetings offer you the continuing opportunity to build and sustain a positive, unified and enthusiastic club management team. Productive executive meetings include these key elements:

- Carefully planned agenda – Have a complete meeting agenda prepared in advance, preferably in time to be forwarded to everyone attending the meeting. Include minutes of last meeting, officers' reports, membership review, activities review, and agenda for next general meeting and old and new business review.
- Parliamentary procedure – Adherence to the basic guidelines of parliamentary procedure will help keep the meeting organized, orderly and coherent.
- Pace – Keep the meeting as short as possible.

- Participation – Have a report from every executive member. Participation stimulates unity and enthusiasm.
- Membership growth review – Monitor your membership budget/plan. Is it on target? Check on new and potential members and membership renewals. Discuss additional ideas to encourage membership growth.
- Review your year's action plan – Is it on target? Are there problem areas? Are there additional requirements?
- Prepare the general meeting agenda – Discuss business to be done and agree on individual or committee responsibilities.
- Allow for input - new ideas, beefs, help needed and help offered and any brainstorming. Ensure the opportunity to *"Grow. Learn. Make friends. Have fun."*

## Procedures of Meetings

### Objective of a Meeting

The objective of holding a proper meeting is to ensure due deliberation and orderly discussion of every question. And to *"Grow. Learn. Make friends. Have fun."*

### Quorum

(a) General Meetings: A majority of the active members including Life Members constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any special or regular meeting.

(b) Executive Meetings: A majority of the members of the executive constitute a quorum for any meeting of the club executive.

### Agenda

The agenda is prepared by the president, or it may be made up by an appointee, then edited by the president. If the president is unable to attend a meeting, then automatically the vice-president or an appointee prepares the agenda. The informal agenda is to *"Grow. Learn. Make friends. Have fun."*

The formal agenda is the order of business for the meeting. Two things which the agenda must contain are:

- the minutes of the previous meeting, and
- new business.

Each item on the agenda must be called by the chair, so that everyone is aware of what is being discussed. Once called, it must be adhered to until it is disposed of. If a member brings up business which is out of order with the agenda the chair must ask the member to bring the subject up under "new business".

### Minutes

Minutes are usually placed first on the agenda at the discretion of the president. The chair must call for the minutes to be read by the secretary, or alternatively call for someone to move that the minutes be accepted as published only if the minutes have been published in their entirety. When it has been moved and seconded that the minutes be adopted, the chair must then ask for any errors or omissions. It is not proper procedure to raise discussion of a policy or question when attention is called to an error in the minutes. Remarks must be made only with reference to the particular error.

### Address to the Chair

The address to the Chair shall be: "President \_\_\_\_\_ and fellow Kinsmen/Kinnettes/Kin", or if there be a nominee of the President presiding, "Chair \_\_\_\_\_ and fellow Kinsmen/Kinnettes". In the interest of expediency, national officers, dignitaries and guests will be recognized upon their introduction only, and thereafter it shall not be necessary to address the chair otherwise than as mentioned previously.

## Motions

One of the basic principles of parliamentary procedure is, that without a motion and question, there is no debate. There must be a defined subject before the meeting, or there can be no questions or discussion and all remarks are irrelevant. Before any question may be discussed at a meeting, it must be submitted in the form of a motion, which is moved by one member and seconded by another. (If possible, it should be submitted in writing to assure accuracy). In the appendix of this manual you will find a motion blank to use for this purpose. The motion is then debatable and may be accepted, amended, withdrawn or rejected. When a motion has been adopted, it becomes a resolution.

### Speaking to a Motion

1. **Recognition by the chair:** Any member in good standing shall be permitted to speak only if and when they have been recognized by the chair, and all remarks shall be directed to the chair.
2. **Gaining recognition:** In order to gain recognition, any member wishing to be heard shall, at times when no other person recognized by the chair has the floor, stand and wait to be recognized, and such recognition shall not be withheld by the chair.
3. **Speaking for or against motion:** When speaking to a motion, a member shall, before entering upon the substance of his/her remarks, state whether they are for or against the motion.
4. **Limitations on speaking:** Any member who has spoken to a motion once shall not, without the express permission of the chair to be given or withheld at the sole discretion of the chair, speak again, except:
  - with leave of the chair in explanation of their previous remarks if misunderstood,
  - in the case of a mover or seconder only at the request of the chair to answer questions from the floor directed by the chair,
  - in the case of a mover, only who may reply closing debate upon any substantive motion after all others having had an opportunity of being heard, provided the mover specifically requests such privilege before previously yielding the floor, and further provided that prior to granting such privilege the chairman shall call for any discussion.

### Amendments

Amendments to a motion may be proposed at any time during the discussion. No amendment may be entertained which has the effect of nullifying the main motion. Any amendment must be relevant to the subject matter of the motion and may amend it in only one of three ways:

- by leaving out certain words,
- by adding certain words, or
- by deleting certain words and replacing them with others.

### Number of Amendments

In order that discussions move forward, no more than two amendments can be before the meeting at one time. However, as soon as one amendment has been accepted or rejected, another may be proposed; provided that its intention is different from one already defeated.

### Notice of Motion

Advance notice of certain motions is sometimes required by the constitution or by-laws. In such cases, members must be advised, in writing, a prescribed number of days in advance of motions which are to be introduced. Generally, this applies in cases of important measures, such as revision of the constitution, or expenditures of large sums of money. Care should be taken to see that the notice is so phrased so that the motion may be amended by the meeting.

### Withdrawal of Motions

General procedure accepts the withdrawal of a motion on the consent of the mover and seconder. Amendments must first be withdrawn in reverse order, with full consent of their sponsors. If any of these should refuse their consent, then the motion must stand.

### **Tabling Motions**

To table a motion, or "lay on the table", is an American rule used extensively in Canada. A motion to table is not debatable and requires only a simple majority to approve. If the motion is to table only until a particular time, it is debatable as to time only. If carried, the motion in question comes up automatically at the appointed time or, if indefinite as to time, it remains tabled until such time as another motion (not debatable) "that the former motion be now reconsidered" is carried. A simple majority only is required in this case.

### **Questions**

If a member wishes to ask a question or seeks clarification in respect of a subject then before the meeting, and may do so without interrupting another speaker, they shall, upon recognition, so state and shall not proceed further without leave of the chair; provided that in any event any such question shall be directed to the chair and shall not be used to discuss the merits of the subject then before the meeting.

### **Interruption of Speaker**

No member shall interrupt any other member who has been recognized by the chair and has the floor, except upon recognition by the chair upon a point of order, or a question of privilege.

### **The Point of Order**

If a member feels that improper language has been used, irrelevant argument introduced, or a rule of procedure broken, they are entitled to "rise to a point of order", interrupting the speaker. The point of order must be stated definitely and concisely. The chair shall decide without debate, although they may ask opinions. They should not argue, and should state their opinion authoritatively. Their ruling may be appealed by the member. If so, the chairman states his or her decision and the point of appeal, then puts the question (which is not debatable): "Shall the decision of the chair stand as the judgment of this meeting?" A simple majority determines the issue. This merely settles a point of procedure, and is not a vote of confidence in the chairman.

### **Question of Privilege**

If a member feels that their own or the club's or Association's reputation or position is endangered, they are entitled to "raise a question of privilege". The procedure is the same as for a point of order.

### **Closing Debate**

Upon a reasonable opportunity for discussion of a motion, in the opinion of the chair, and when no other person is holding the floor, a motion may be made that "the questionable now put", which motion is neither amendable or debatable; and if such motion is passed, the main motion or amendment, as the case may be, shall be forthwith voted upon without further amendment or debate.

### **Voting on Motions and Amendments**

1. Voting on motions and amendments is in the reverse order in which they are made:
  - on the amendment to the amendment, or the second amendment,
  - on the amendment,
  - on the motion; or on the motion as amended.

NOTE: Carrying of the amendment does not carry the motion, and the motion as amended must be voted upon.

2. If a member abstains from voting it means that the member has decided to not exercise his or her right to vote. It does not indicate either a yes or nay vote on the question; but is simply "no vote". Abstentions do not affect the quorum requirements as set out in the by-laws. A quorum is required to consider a question; but all questions will be decided by a majority of those members present and voting unless otherwise provided by in the by-laws.

### **Deciding Vote**

Normally the chairman does not vote, except in the case of a tie. The chairman generally explains his or her reason for voting they way they do; and customarily votes against a motion on the premise that, if half the members are opposed, the matter should not be forced upon them. Where voting is done by secret ballot and the chairman has already voted, they will not, in the case of a tie, have a second or casting vote, and the question will be determined in the negative.

### **Similar Motions**

No motion or amendment which is the same or substantially similar to a previous motion or amendment voted upon by the meeting may be put to the same meeting or any subsequent session thereof.

### **Reconsideration of a Motion**

A motion may be made to reconsider the vote on any other motion (except a motion to adjourn or to table) whether affirmative or negative, provided that such motion is made at the same meeting (including the next session of the same meeting) at which such other motion was voted upon. A simple majority is required; and the motion to reconsider is not amendable, but is debatable if the motion, the vote of which is proposed to be reconsidered, was itself debatable. If the motion to reconsider is not made at the same meeting, and if it is made at another meeting in the same year, a two-thirds majority of the members present is required.

### **Exception to Reconsideration**

Notwithstanding the foregoing, a motion to reconsider may not be put if the motion to which it is intended to apply has already been acted upon.

### **Orders of Business**

The orders of business shall be determined by or with the consent of the chair. The orders of business (agenda) will, preferably, be circulated and approved as the first item of business.

### **Proceed to Next Order of Business**

A motion to proceed from the present to the next order of business is not debatable or amendable and, if carried, the present order of business shall be brought before the meeting after completion of the orders of business and before the meeting is finally adjourned.

### **Committee of the Whole**

A meeting may resolve itself into a "committee of the whole", during which time all members present act as a committee to consider a matter of business, and the meeting, as such, is suspended during this time. The regular rules of order are not strictly applied, and the motions are limited to those which report to the meeting upon its resumption matters referred to the committee, or which resolve to revert from committee of the whole and resume the meeting.