

Parliamentary Procedure 101: Introduction to Parliamentary Procedure

Module Description:

Introduces the student to the basic concepts of parliamentary procedure (what it is, why we do it, when and where we do it, and how we do it). Provides the student with an overview of the origins of and requirement for parliamentary procedure and an understanding of how to use parliamentary procedure to conduct successful meetings.

Prerequisite:

None.

Self-study training course consists of a variety of learning tools which may include: readings, analysis of case studies, self-evaluation instruments

Objectives:

The student will enter the module with a basic understanding of the role of the member and the club in the association and of the necessity to have binding rules of order in order to conduct effective meetings at every level of the association.

Upon completion of the module, the student will:

- Have an appreciation for General Operating Bylaw No. 1;
- Have a basic understanding of the concept of parliamentary procedure, including the definition of a meeting's chair, resolutions, amendments, etc.;
- Have basic knowledge of standards for rules of order;
- Be able to conduct a meeting; and
- Have an understanding of why clubs should conduct meetings according to generally accepted rules of order.

Resources:

- Kin Canada General Operating Bylaw No. 1
- Robert's Rules of Order, Tenth Edition
- Kin Canada Rules of Order as set forth in the association's National Policies and Procedures

Length:

The module should take approximately 5-6 weeks to complete, assuming two three-hour self-study sessions each week

Sample Activities:

In order to achieve the goals of this module, the student should be prepared to:

Read Kin Canada's **General Operating Bylaw No. 1** in its most recently amended form, including the accompanying Policies and Procedures documentation, at least once.

Review **Robert's Rules of Order, Tenth Edition**, and **Kin Canada Rules of Order** as set forth in the association's **National Policies and Procedures**, as required to obtain an understanding of general rules of procedure.

Read any other available documentation, such as the presentations available on the Kin Canada web site, to become familiar with common terms and conventions.

Observe several meetings of their own club and of other agencies or organizations to determine how those meetings are conducted; and perform a critical evaluation of what differed and what was similar from meeting to meeting and discuss how these differences and similarities yielded different or similar outcomes for the meetings.

Conduct a number of meetings where possible and perform a critical analysis of their performance, including seeking feedback from other meeting attendees.

Parliamentary Procedure 101: Introduction to Parliamentary Procedure

Section 1: Why Parliamentary Procedure?

We've all sat through meetings where everything and everyone seemed to be out of control; meetings where everyone spoke at once, no respect was shown for the person presiding and it was hard to stay "on topic"; and, worst of all, where nothing was achieved and everybody left feeling frustrated.

Imagine trying to run a group, a business, or even a legislative assembly where there were no established rules of order, no established codes of conduct to determine how the affairs of the organization should be discussed. Pretty scary thought, huh?

That's why, over the years, organized groups have developed rules of procedure that establish how meetings to determine the direction of the groups should be conducted. As long as groups have been getting together to discuss important issues, rules of conduct have been in place; whether it's a meeting of tribal elders, a company's board of directors, your local not-for-profit group or a municipal, provincial or federal government, each has a defined set of rules by which their stakeholders agree to abide when conducting business.

In a country such as Canada, we tend to believe that we derive the origins of our Parliamentary Procedures from "The Mother of All Parliaments" – i.e., from the British Parliamentary Democratic System, dating back to the years immediately following the Norman Invasion of England in 1066.

But the origins of meeting rules go back even further than the time of William the Conqueror – probably as far back as when humans first gathered together in groups to discuss matters of common interest. In those early cases, those assembled probably deferred to the "elder" of the group, who carried the oral history and traditions of the group down from previous generations. The group would likely assemble in a circle around the elder, who might carry a "speaking stick" of some kind (perhaps replaced in later generations by a mace or a gavel), which would be the device by which he or she, or any other person who wished to speak, would garner the respect and attention of the assembly.

As human civilization has developed over the past 5,000 – 10,000 years, the way in which people assemble to do business has developed according to the culture and tradition of the region in which the people live and interact. The path towards what we deem to be "civilized meeting behaviour" hasn't always been smooth; and depending upon from where in the world your ethnic origins may be, you may have a whole different set of values and traditions to your peers from other cultures and geographical regions.

Because everybody is wired differently, with a different set of values, priorities and ideas to everybody else, it is understandable that those differences will occasionally manifest themselves as conflict during meetings as each person lobbies for his or her interests or goals. Hence there is a need to establish a series of rules of procedure to determine a common approach to how a group of people interacting together for a common purpose and goal should behave, respectfully and fairly.

In a modern western-style democratic system, the most commonly held rules of order applied to meetings are those developed by General Henry M. Robert of the United States Army in the decade following the American Civil War. Robert was concerned at the lack of

consistency between meetings of community groups, fraternal organizations and church groups that he attended in the various communities in which he was stationed.

While stationed in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in 1876, Robert developed a Manual of Rules of Order which served as a series of guidelines along which meetings should be conducted. Over the last 130 years, these basic Rules of Order have been developed, expanded and amended to reflect the changing times; Robert's Rules of Order are now in their tenth revision. There are, of course, any number of other parliamentary rules of order that have been set down over time, but the most commonly-adhered-to formal meeting rules are those that incorporate the basic tenets of Robert's Rules therein.

Kin Canada uses a modified version of *Robert's Rules of Order* as the basis for the conduct of its meetings, including its annual conventions. That being said, Robert's Rules are not the be-all and end-all of how business is conducted throughout the organization. The association operates under a package of rules called *General Operating Bylaw No. 1*, referred to as the "G.O.B." for short. In addition, each district, zone and club will typically have a set of bylaws and house rules which reflect the regional values, beliefs and traditions of its members. These rules will further delineate how business is to be conducted during meetings of each group.

Exercise:

1. Download *General Operating Bylaw No. 1* from the members-only section of the Kin Canada web site at <http://www.kincanada.ca> and read the document through once. Don't expect to take it all in at once, as it is a large and complex document, but try to get an understanding of the specific things that it contains (as well as the specific things that it excludes). Try to get your head around the concept of democracy and the role of the member in a volunteer-driven organization. You will note that there is only a very brief reference to Rules of Order in the G.O.B. (Section VI), but there is a great deal of information about the purpose of the association and the roles, rights and privileges of each member.
2. Download Kin Canada's *National Policies and Procedures* from the members-only section of the web site and read the section relating to Rules of Order once.
3. Obtain a copy of *Robert's Rules of Order, Tenth Edition*, either from your local library or from a bookstore. Or, if you don't have access to these resources, visit the Robert's Rules of Order web site at <http://www.robertsrules.org> and click on "Introduction to Robert's Rules". Read this section to get an understanding of the necessity for parliamentary rules and to get an introduction to some of the terminology used in this course.

In the next section, we will talk about some of the key concepts and definitions that should be kept in mind when conducting a meeting. But for now, let's have a pop quiz on the elements of this section ...

Section 1: Why Parliamentary Procedure? – Test

1. How far back do the origins of meeting rules go?
 - a) Since the American Civil War
 - b) Since people have been assembling to discuss matters of common interest
 - c) Before 1776
 - d) Immediately after the 1066 Norman Conquest

2. Why is it important to have rules of order in a meeting?
 - a) The club president can't control the club
 - b) Everybody in the club talks at once
 - c) Nobody in the club should speak until they are spoken to
 - d) Conflict arises when different members have competing interests

3. Robert developed his Rules of Order because:
 - a) He wanted to run meetings like the U.S. Army
 - b) Times have changed since 1876
 - c) He wanted to see more consistency in the meetings he attended
 - d) Conflict between competing interests can result in civil war

4. Member clubs in Kin Canada use Robert's Rules of Order to determine the conduct of their meetings, as well as:
 - a) The association's General Operating Bylaw No. 1
 - b) The association's Constitution and Bylaws
 - c) District, zone and club bylaws and house rules
 - d) (a) and (b)
 - e) (a) and (c)

5. The gavel or mace is a symbol of:
 - a) Ultimate power of the holder over the rest of the meeting attendees
 - b) Admiration and respect of the club president for the members
 - c) Respect and attention commanded by the holder from the members
 - d) A weapon to punish the meeting attendees who step out of line

Exercise:

Think about some meetings that you have attended in the past – not necessarily Kin meetings; perhaps meetings of your local community league, or a meeting of your child's school parent-teacher association. Make some notes ... list a few of the things that you found common to each meeting, and what was different about each meeting. What was done well, and what could have been improved somehow? Did the chair of the meeting have control over the agenda? Was there, in fact, an agenda? How did you feel when you left the meetings? And to what do you attribute those feelings? Did you learn anything at any of the meetings that you think you could apply to your home club's meeting?

Section 2: Key Concepts, Standards and Definitions

To understand parliamentary procedure fully, it's important to have a working knowledge of the key concepts and standards that are generally used in rules of order. It is also important to understand the meaning of certain words or phrases used in parliamentary procedure so that you can use them appropriately during meetings.

Bylaws & House Rules: these are the basic rules under which an organization operates on a day-to-day basis. Typically, an organization's bylaws do not govern issues relating to parliamentary procedures, except where the members of the organization specifically wishes the organization to be governed by parliamentary procedural rules that may be different to those that are generally accepted.

Constitution: this document is the framework for creation and the basic set of regulations governing the organization, including things such as the name, articles of association (organizational purpose), designation and qualification of members, definition of officers, frequency of meetings and the authority under which the organization has been created (for example, the *Canada Corporations Act* for Kin Canada and the *Societies Act* of Alberta for every Kinsmen, Kinette and Kin Club incorporated in the province of Alberta). The Constitution may actually form part of an organization's bylaws.

Motion: this is the main way by which a member may bring business of any kind before the organization. The organization may amend its bylaws and/or house rules by means of a motion, or it may use a motion to spend money or follow a given course of action within the parameters of its constitution.

Notice of Motion: typically, if an organization is planning to amend its bylaws, pursue a course of action not in keeping with its usual activities or spend an amount of money in excess of its constitutional limits, a notice of motion may be put forth that will put members "on notice" that a significant item of business will be discussed and will give the members an opportunity to take some time to think about and research the issue under consideration. A Notice of Motion has the effect of immediately "tabling" the item for discussion until a specific time when all parties are ready and equipped to discuss it.

Presiding Officer: the presiding officer is the chairperson, i.e., the person who conducts the meeting and ensures that it follows the accepted rules of order. Typically, the presiding officer at a Kin meeting is the President or his or her designate (e.g., the Vice-President or a Committee Chair).

Quorum: this is the minimum number of members that must be present for the business of the organization to be transacted in accordance with its governing documents (constitution or bylaws). Where the governing documents are silent on the rules for quorum, custom would dictate that quorum is a majority of the active members (and, in the case of Kin, active Life Members) of the group.

Now you know pretty well everything you need to know to have a basic understanding of what goes on at your meetings and why. Let's have a test to see how much you've learned.

Section 2: Key Concepts, Standards and Definitions - Test

1. Under what Federal Act is Kin Canada incorporated?
 - a) The *Kin Canada Act*
 - b) The Constitution
 - c) The *Canada Corporations Act*
 - d) The *Societies Act*

2. Who is the presiding officer of a club?
 - a) The club president or his or her designate
 - b) The vice-president
 - c) Anybody the club members choose to run the meeting
 - d) Any member who does not have a competing interest with the president

3. What majority of the members is normally required to amend the club bylaws?
 - a) 50%
 - b) 50% + 1
 - c) A simple majority
 - d) A two-thirds majority

4. A member may bring business before the club by:
 - a) Making a notice of motion
 - b) Making a tabling motion
 - c) Making a motion to adjourn
 - d) Making a motion

5. If a club's bylaws do not specify what constitutes a quorum, what would be the number required to form a quorum?
 - a) 10% of the membership
 - b) 25% of the membership
 - c) Whatever the members decide
 - d) A majority of the active and active Life Members of the club

Exercise:

Review your home club's bylaws and/or house rules. Does your club, in fact, even HAVE bylaws and/or house rules? How often are they reviewed and amended? Have a good look at them and see whether they are still relevant to what your club does these days. Do they follow the general principles of Kin Canada's *General Operating Bylaw No. 1*, of your zone or of your district? Can you get in touch with other nearby clubs and see if their governing documentation is in good form and comparable to yours? If your home club's bylaws need amending, how would you go about starting the process?

Section 3: How a Motion is Handled

The process by which a motion (otherwise known as a "resolution") is adopted or defeated by an organization can seem to the untrained eye to be very cumbersome and difficult. In fact, the opposite is true. Provided the basic six steps listed below are followed in order, the process can be quite smooth, and it allows every member who wishes to be heard on the matter to have his or her say in fair and respectful without fear of reprisal.

Here are the six steps towards the adoption or defeat of a motion:

Step 1: The Motion is Proposed (or "Moved")

For a motion to be proposed, he or she must first be recognized by the presiding officer (we will refer to the presiding officer as "the chair" henceforth). Depending on the level of formality in the club, the member gets recognition from the chair by either standing or raising their hand.

If the member is entitled to the floor at that time (in other words, if there are no other motions or other issues on the floor at that time), the chair will recognize the member by stating their name.

At this point, the member addresses the chair and presents the motion by saying "I move that ..." and completing the motion. The member then stops speaking and sits down, if standing. It is good practice at this point to have a written copy of the motion available to deliver to the chair, so that (1) the chair will be able to read the motion back to the members accurately and (2) the secretary will have an accurate record of the motion to place in the meeting minutes.

Step 2: The Motion is Seconded

Another member who wishes the motion to be considered for discussion will raise their hand or stand and say "I second the motion". The seconder does not need to be recognized by the chair. The seconder does not necessarily have to be a person who supports the motion; he or she need only be a person who believes the motion is worthy of discussion before the assembly. If no seconder is found for the motion, the motion is declared by the chair to have been "withdrawn (or to have died) for lack of a seconder".

Step 3: The Chair Places the Motion before the Assembly ("on the floor")

Once the motion has been proposed and seconded, and has been deemed by the chair to be in order (i.e., it deals with business that can be legally debated by the club within the context of its governing documents), the chair formally places the motion before the members (otherwise known as "bringing the motion on or to the floor") by stating the motion (remember what we said earlier about having a written copy of the motion available?) and states that the motion is now open for discussion.

In practice, the chair may suggest, with the consent of the proposer, small changes in the wording of the motion (without affecting the intent of the motion) that will make the motion easier to understand or less ambiguous, or that will put it in more parliamentary terms. Once the chair has stated the motion is open for discussion, it becomes the property of the whole club and may not be withdrawn or amended by the proposer without the club's consent.

Step 4: The Motion is Discussed

Now that the motion is on the floor, the chair first asks the proposer if he or she wishes to speak to the motion. In some assemblies, the proposer gets the opportunity not only to speak first in favour of the motion, but also to have "the last word" on the motion. Typically, he would reserve the right to speak last on the motion with the chair on commencement of discussion.

After the first speaker in favour of the motion has spoken, the chair will ask for a speaker in opposition to the motion (if any), and will continue to alternate between speakers for and against the motion until everybody who so wishes has had an opportunity to speak. No member is entitled to speak a second time on the motion as long as any other member who has not spoken has had an opportunity to speak.

In most assemblies, once there have been two speakers in opposition to the motion, this automatically cuts off debate (unless the proposer has specifically asked for the opportunity to speak last).

Note: at all times, discussion must be limited to the merits of the motion on the floor. If any member wanders off topic, uses inflammatory language or in any other way detracts from the spirit of the discussion, the chair has the right (and indeed the responsibility) to interrupt the member and to remind him or her to confine their comments to the matter under discussion.

Step 5: The Chair Calls for the Question

Once every speaker who wishes to make their opinion heard has had an opportunity to speak, the chair will "call for the question", which is parliamentary-speak for saying "Are you ready to vote on the matter on the floor?" If the question is called at that point, it is understood that no further discussion will take place and the chair will read the motion one more time (assuming there are no amendments – we'll get into amendments in a later section).

The chair will state how the vote will be taken (voice vote; standing vote; show of hands; secret ballot) and will then call for those in favour of the motion to vote accordingly. In the case of a secret ballot, the secretary must initial sufficient ballots and distribute one to every member eligible to vote; the ballots will then all be deposited in a receptacle and counted by the chair and one other person. In the case of a show of hands or standing vote, the chair will count the votes and then ask for those opposed to the motion to vote accordingly.

Step 6: The Chair Announces the Outcome and Directs the Next Steps

Once the votes for and against the motion have been cast, the chair announces the outcome. Regardless of whether the motion is carried or defeated, the chair will direct the membership with regard to the next steps to ensure that the implementation of the motion takes place. This may involve striking a committee, writing a cheque or making a phone call. Regardless, it is important that, once the motion has been dealt with, the appropriate course of action be followed to ensure proper follow-up.

A word about the role of the chair in any debate: the chair, as the meeting facilitator, is traditionally neutral and does not speak or vote on any issue. There are exceptions:

- The chair may appoint a chair *pro tem* (in Kin terms "pass the chair") and speak to a motion to offer additional information which might be missed in regular debate and only rarely to speak for or against the motion – discretion being the better part of valour!
- Traditionally, the chair does not vote in an open, or voice, vote except in the event of a tie where it is common practice for the chair to always vote against the motion; the theory being that the motion does not have sufficient support amongst the club membership to justify its being adopted at that time. However, the chair may cast a vote in a secret ballot.

Let's discuss one more concept in this section: the "Committee of the Whole" ...

How often have you been in a meeting and the discussion on a given motion has been very restrictive, and you have felt that the real reasons behind some of the participants' positions haven't been fully expressed? As a consequence, perhaps the motion that was carried or defeated didn't receive a proper "airing"? This may be because the traditional rules of debate may actually restrict the ability of a participant to get his or her point across.

If there is an issue at stake that requires more relaxed debating rules in order that all the relevant arguments can be brought to the floor, you may wish to consider having the group move into what is called a *committee of the whole*.

The committee of the whole is a convention whereby the general rules of debate are relaxed for a specified time. There is no precedent order of speaking, no "one speaker for, then one speaker against". The rules of debate are, in effect, suspended in order to allow those who would not normally speak an opportunity to state their case, or to allow those who want to explain their positions in greater detail.

One of the key things to remember about the committee of the whole is that nothing that is said during the time the assembly is in this state is recorded in the meeting minutes. In effect, it's a "safe place" where club members may "air their laundry" without feeling threatened or under scrutiny. It's a great forum to discuss matters of sensitivity or of great importance to the club members. Very often, this is how clubs go about debating their annual General Account budget, a potential new project or items where large amount of money is to be donated to a potential beneficiary.

Moving into a committee of the whole is done by a properly moved, seconded and resolved motion. The motion should include a time limit, which should be strictly adhered to, and the chair of the meeting should keep a close watch on the assembly to ensure that everybody who wishes to express an opinion gets an opportunity to do so. If the time limit for the committee of the whole is close to expiring and not all members who wish to speak have been heard, the chair may ask for a motion to extend the time for debate. However, this time extension should not be abused.

Once full and fair debate is deemed to have occurred, the chair should call for a motion to move out of the committee of the whole. Once the meeting is back in its "normal" state, the question should be called as soon as possible and a vote taken using the rules discussed in the six steps discussed earlier.

This may seem like an awful lot of rules to keep track of, but with lots of practice, and a great deal of mutual respect, the rules of order become second nature after a while.

REMEMBER: No rules will ever take the place of tact and common sense

Section 3: How a Motion is Handled – Exercise

Let's look at a typical gathering of a group of people to discuss an issue of common interest – it doesn't have to be a meeting with a defined membership. For example, a neighbourhood group gathers to discuss and potentially implement a policy regarding individual homeowners' responsibilities for snow removal in their back alleys.

Describe, in point form, a step by step procedure to convene and format the meeting, introduce debate and action the motion.

Section 4: Subsidiary Motions

We spent the last section of this course discussing how to steer a motion through the choppy waters of your club or your community. Now we are going to look at some variations on that theme, and discuss how we deal with subsidiary motions. Strap yourself in; this is where it can get complicated.

"Subsidiary motions" are ones that can be considered by the club while a "main motion" (the type we discussed in the previous section) is on the floor. The important things to remember are:

- a) Although a series of subsidiary motions can be brought to the floor while the main motion is under consideration, only one motion (the "immediately pending motion") can be discussed at a time.
- b) Each of the subsidiary motions has what is called an "order of precedence", which means that they must be considered in a certain logical order. They are used to modify, delay action on or dispose of the original (main) motion.

Here are the seven types of subsidiary motion, arranged in order of precedence, from highest rank to lowest:

1. Motion to table (or to "lay on the table") the main motion
2. Motion to close debate ("to call the question")
3. Motion to limit or extend limits of debate
4. Motion to postpone debate to a certain time (postpone definitely)
5. Motion to refer to committee
6. Motion to amend
7. Motion to postpone debate indefinitely

We will discuss each of these subsidiary motions and their implications for the main motion in turn.

1. Motion to Table

A tabling motion is used to permit the members to temporarily set aside the immediately pending motion when an urgent matter has arisen. This would be used in a case where a piece of business has to be dealt with immediately (for example, a visit by a V.I.P. of some kind who wishes to speak to the meeting, but only has a limited amount of time at his or her disposal). A tabling motion requires a seconder, is not debatable (other than the timeframe around the tabling) and requires only a simple majority (50%+1) of the assembly to be carried.

Once the urgent matter has been dealt with appropriately, a motion to take the pending motion from the table can be presented, seconded, carried and debate on the pending motion can proceed immediately.

The motion to table must not be taken or used lightly, or as an underhanded way in which to suspend debate on the pending motion. We will discuss subsidiary motions to postpone in a few minutes and you will see the difference.

2. Motion to Close Debate

The motion to close debate or to "call the question" is designed to bring the pending motion to an immediate vote. This is done when the members believe they have heard sufficient debate on an issue to allow a vote to proceed, but must not be done until all who wish to speak on the pending motion have had an opportunity to do so.

The motion to close debate requires a seconder, is not debatable and must be carried by a two-thirds majority of the members present.

3. Motion to Limit or Extend Limits of Debate

This subsidiary motion may be used to ensure that the length of debate on a main motion doesn't get out of hand. Typically the motion will set a closing time for the debate, or place limits upon the amount of time each speaker may take in speaking to the motion.

This motion requires a seconder, is not debatable and requires a two-thirds majority of the members present to be carried.

4. Motion to Postpone Debate to a Certain Time (Postpone Definitely)

The purpose of the motion to Postpone to a Certain Time is to allow time to get further information about the subject under debate. The subsidiary motion has the effect of making the motion an order of the day for the time and day to which it was postponed.

The subsidiary motion requires a seconder, allows for limited debate which must not go into the merits of the main question any more than is necessary and requires a simple majority to be carried.

5. Motion to Refer to Committee

If the assembly feels that it needs more information concerning the motion, or if it feels that the question needs to be more fully researched and/or better presented, it may move to refer the question to a standing or special committee.

The subsidiary motion requires a seconder, is debatable and requires a simple majority to be carried.

6. Motion to Amend

A subsidiary motion to amend the main motion is the most common of all the subsidiary motions. Motions to amend usually come about when a member or members of the assembly agree in principle with the main motion, but feel that it needs a change or two to bring it more into line with the assembly's principles or values.

An amendment is debatable in all cases except where the main motion (the one to be amended) is not debatable. An amendment of a pending question requires only a majority vote for its adoption, even though the question to be amended requires a two-thirds vote.

An amendment of your club's house rules or bylaws, or rules of order, or an order of business previously adopted, requires a two-thirds vote of the assembly; but an amendment of that amendment requires only a majority vote.

When a motion or resolution is under consideration only two amendments are permitted at a time. This is common sense. You can imagine how complicated it would become once the assembly has three or more amendments to deal with at any given time! An amendment must relate to the matter under consideration; in other words, it must not alter the general intent of the original motion.

7. Motion to Postpone Debate Indefinitely

The purpose of this subsidiary motion is not to postpone, but to reject, the main motion without incurring the risk of a direct vote on it, and it is made only by the opponents of the main motion when they are in doubt as to their being in the majority.

This subsidiary motion has the effect of allowing the opponents of the main motion one more chance to kill the motion by determining how much support they have for their side of the debate. The subsidiary motion requires a seconder, is debatable and requires a simple majority to be carried.

And that's everything you ever wanted to know (or probably not) about subsidiary motions. In practice, you will probably only ever encounter one or two of these subsidiary motions as you go through meetings of your club or any other organization with which you may be affiliated; but it doesn't hurt to have a passing knowledge of all of them in case you are sitting in a meeting and are suddenly confronted with a scenario where one is used unexpectedly.

It's time to see what you have learned on this journey through the basic principles of parliamentary procedure. The next test, which is the last associated with this module, gives you an opportunity to review your ability to wade through the potentially stormy waters of conducting a meeting.

Once you have completed the final test successfully, it's safe to say that you have some experience in parliamentary procedure, which can be a useful asset to have. Having said that, it's important to keep up with the latest developments in this field. Keep checking the Kin Canada web site to see if there are any new resolutions being proposed for the *General Operating Bylaw No. 1* or any other governing documents used by the club. And have a good look at the various web sites dealing with Robert's Rules of Order. Each one has a slightly different spin on the rules, and it's worth looking at how different groups view the same rules! Review your club's governing documents to determine whether any sections or clauses need to be amended or deleted.

And use your new knowledge to make sure that business in your community league, or in other organizations in which you may have an interest, is conducted in an effective manner. The more you know about how parliamentary procedure works, the stronger your voice in your community and your workplace can be.

Section 4: Subsidiary Motions – Test

You are a member of the Kin Club of Lower Rubber Boot, and the club treasurer is presenting the proposed budget for Kin year 200X-200Y. There is a motion on the floor, duly seconded, to accept the budget as presented.

1. A member brings to the attention of the chair the fact that a report is pending from a major fundraising project. This report may have a major (positive or negative) effect upon the finances of the club. What course of action would you recommend to the club member to ensure that the pending project report receives due and timely consideration?
2. As the budget debate wears on through the evening and the more seasoned members of the club go through the budget line by line, a “hot button” top arises; the question of whether the club should provide a 100% subsidy for t-shirts for members. There are strong opinions on both sides of the issue as well as opinions about the ability of all members to participate in the budget process. Describe an approach to this situation that would allow everybody an opportunity to speak to the line item without derailing the budget debate completely.
3. Once again, our eagle-eyed seasoned members have spotted a line item that they feel needs to be discussed. They feel that some erroneous information from a previous year’s financial statements has been used to develop figures for this year’s budget. What process should be used to bring this matter to the floor?
4. Earlier in the week, the Provincial government announced a 10% increase in liquor taxes – an increase that the Bar Chair has not included in his calculations for inclusion in the budget. How can this situation be addressed?
5. After a long and grueling debate, the budget finally passes, and everybody is happy. Or are they? After the meeting, some members adjourn to the bar, and some heated discussions ensue. It appears that there are still some significant questions in the minds of a few members about a number of line items. What action (if any) would you suggest that these members take to get their concerns dealt with?