

North Hills Sports Car Club

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North Hills Sports Car Club Parliamentary Procedures

*A Guide to Conducting Timely
and Fair Membership Meetings*

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Introduction

It is essential that any governing body engaged in legislative, decision-making debate do so in a manner that is clearly consistent, truly democratic, and subject to rules that provide for fair and equitable expression of opinion and impartial administration

An orderly, well-conducted meeting should be the goal of every officer and member. In order for the presiding officer to conduct a good business meeting, the entire membership should be informed of parliamentary procedure. Parliamentary procedure helps the officers and members follow a logical order in conducting a meeting.

If there are any disputes as to what is appropriate, proper conduct of a discussion or decision, reference *Roberts Rules of Order* for resolution. It is available for purchase at most local bookstores.

Each member should consider the five principles of parliamentary law:

1. Courtesy and justice to all.
2. Consider only one thing at a time.
3. The majority rules.
4. The minority must be heard.
5. The purpose is to facilitate action.

Parliamentary Courtesies

Courtesies are expected of all members.

- 1.** Raise your hand when making a motion.
- 2.** Stand when addressing the Chair, as in discussing a question before the assembly, or making a committee report.
- 3.** Address the President and Chair as "Mr. Chairman, or Mrs. Chairman"
- 4.** Sit down promptly when finished talking.
- 5.** Do not speak during the business meeting except when addressing the Chair and then only after having been properly recognized.
- 6.** Never talk or whisper to another member during the meeting.
- 7.** Never stand to get recognition from the President when another member has the floor.
- 8.** Confine discussion to the question before the group.
- 9.** Willingly accept the decision of the majority.
- 10.** Be punctual for club meetings.

Reminders for the Presiding Officer

Correct procedure should always be your goal.

1. Conduct the meeting in an orderly and businesslike manner
2. If dealing with motions or amendments, always state the exact wording. Ask the secretary to read it if you forget how it was phrased.
3. Discussion is not in order until the Chair has stated the motion.
4. The Chair may not enter the discussion while presiding. Such participation may take place upon relinquishing the Chair to the next Club Officer following the Chain of Command defined by the Bylaws.
5. The Chair may only vote if a tie has occurred.
6. Always indicate clearly that a vote shall be taken with the raising of hands.
7. Adoption of an amendment does not mean adoption of the main motion. Remember to state the main motion as amended.
8. It is better to say: "*The motion is out of order*" than "*The member is out of order.*"

Order of Business

An order of business or agenda is simply a plan for conducting the business of the group in a logical, organized manner. An agenda helps a meeting go smoother and faster, and lessens the possibility of items of business being overlooked or forgotten. Every meeting should have an agenda. A typical agenda or order of business is discussed below. The agenda should be posted on the web site OR printed and passed out to the membership before the start of the meeting.

Agenda

1. Call to Order. The Chair calls the meeting to order after he has determined a quorum is present. The Chair says, "The meeting will come to order."
2. The Chair should then ask if all members have signed the Sign-In Sheet.
3. Reading of the Minutes. The Chair asks the secretary to read the minutes. Following the reading the Chair asks, "*Are there any corrections to the minutes?*" The Chair responds, "*The minutes are approved as read,*" or "*as corrected.*"
4. Treasurer's report. The Chair asks the treasurer for his report. The Chair asks: "*May we have the Treasurers report please?*" After the report, the Chair responds, "*The treasurer's report will be filed.*"
5. Reports of Officers and Standing Committees. The Chair recognizes officers who have reports. The secretary is asked to read any correspondence. Any other elected officers who may have reports are called upon. Motions arising out of these reports should be handled immediately.
6. Unfinished Business. When the minutes show that the decision on some item of business was postponed to the present meeting or that a question from a previous meeting is pending, it should be listed on the agenda under unfinished business. The Chair should **not** ask, "*Is there any unfinished business?*" but simply proceed through the items listed. An idea discussed informally at the previous meeting and agreed to be brought up at the next meeting should be included under new business.
7. New Business. After unfinished business is taken care of the Chair asks, "*Is there any new business?*" At this point, members may introduce new items of business. As long as members are claiming the floor to introduce business, the Chair may not deprive them of their rights by hurrying through the proceedings.
8. Announcements. When all new business has been handled and no member wishes to bring further items to the group for consideration, the Chair proceeds to announcements. However, the Chair at any point may make urgent announcements during the meeting.
9. Program. The program is usually presented before the meeting is adjourned since the group may want to take action as a result of the information provided. It is acceptable to have the program at the beginning of the meeting.

How to Present and Dispose of a Motion

A motion is the method by which business is brought before the assembly. Motions may grow out of reports or other communication. Often a committee report, letter, or memorandum will introduce information the assembly wishes to take action on. The procedure used in handling a motion is described by the following series of steps.

Step 1: Obtaining the Floor

Before a motion can be made, the member of the assembly first must obtain the floor; that is, the member must be recognized by the Chair as having the exclusive right to be heard. The Chair must recognize any member who seeks to obtain the floor and is entitled to it. To be recognized, the member raises their hand when no one else has the floor and addresses the Chair by the proper title, such as Mr. President, Madam President, or Mr. Chairman, or Madam Chairman. The Chair normally recognizes the member by announcing the person's name or title or by saying, "*The Chair recognizes the member to my right.*" In a small group or where it is obvious only one person is seeking the floor, the Chair may recognize that person by nodding to him. Once the member is recognized and has the floor, no one else may interrupt.

Step 2: Making a Motion

A member makes a motion by simply stating, "*I move that*" The member will have the right to speak first in debate, if he wishes, after the Chair has stated the question. If the motion has not been heard it can be repeated by the maker, the Chair, or the secretary. (Motion classifications are discussed later.) Each member has three (3) minutes to speak, whether they are making a motion, or debating.

Step 3: Seconding a Motion

After a motion has been made, another member seconds the motion by saying "*I second the motion,*" or "*Second.*" The member seconding a motion does not have to obtain the floor. A second to a motion indicates that another member wishes the question to be considered by the assembly; it does not necessarily mean that he is in favor of the motion. If no one seconds a motion immediately upon its being made, the Chair normally asks, "*Is there a second to the motion?*" Once the motion is seconded the Chair understands that there are at least two members of the assembly who wish to consider this question and he states the question, thus placing it before the assembly. The motion now belongs to the group and the maker may no longer withdraw the motion without the assembly's consent. If there is no second, the motion is not before the assembly and the Chair moves on to the next item of business. Motions made by direction of a board or committee do not need a second since they are made by a majority vote within the committee and are desired by more than one member of the group.

Step 4: Debating the Motion

Immediately after the Chair states the motion he should ask, "*Is there any discussion?*" The person making the motion has the right to speak first and should be allowed to do so. The maker of the motion is not required to speak. However, if he chooses to do so he must speak in favor of the motion. During the discussion each member has the right to speak once (or more, if the Chair notifies the assembly) on the same question. No members may speak the second time as long as another member who has not spoken on the question desires the floor. Speakers must limit their remarks to the pending question. They should address the Chair, speak in a courteous tone, avoid personalities, and under no circumstances attack or question the motives of another person. The question, not the person, is the subject of debate. The Chair cannot close debate until all members have been given time to speak at least once on the question. Each member has three (3) minutes to debate the motion.

Step 5: Putting the Question (calling for a vote)

When it appears that debate has ended, the Chair asks, "*Are you ready for the question?*" If no one raises his or her hand to obtain the floor the Chair again states the motion and calls for the vote. The vote is usually taken with a show of hands. The Chair always asks for the negative vote, even when the affirmative appears unanimous. Although the maker of the motion is not allowed to speak against the motion, he may vote against it.

Step 6: Announcing the Results

The Chair announces the result of the vote immediately, including:

1. Which side has won. Example: "*The ayes have it.*"
2. The result of the voting. Example: "*The motion carries.*"
3. The action that must result. Example: "*The club will*"

Classification of Motions

Motions are classified into four types depending upon their purpose.

1. **Main motions** are used to introduce a main item or question of business to the group. Only one main motion may be before the group at a time. It must be disposed of before another item may be considered. There are other procedural motions, which may be considered, but only one main motion may be considered at a time.
2. **Subsidiary motions** will modify, defer, remove, or dispose of the main motion. Subsidiary motions take precedence over main motions; they must be handled first.
 - Lay an item of business on the table
 - Close debate
 - Limit or extend debate
 - Postpone to a fixed time
 - Refer to committee
 - Amend or postpone indefinitely

Example: *"I move that we refer the motion to committee"*

3. **Privilege motions** relate to order and the rights and welfare of the members. They rank higher than subsidiary motions or main motions. They include motions to:
 - Call for the orders of the day
 - Adjourn
 - Recess
 - Raise a question of privilege
 - Set the time to adjourn

Example: *"I move that we adjourn for the evening"*

4. **Incidental motions** relate to procedures. Incidental motions have no rank and are considered before the motions from which they stem. Incidental motions include those that:

- Appeal the ruling of the Chair
- Suspend the rules
- Rise to a point of order
- Withdraw motions
- Reconsider
- Rescind
- Take from the table

Example: "Motion to rise to a point of order"

(See the table at the back of this document that lists the types of motions and the procedure for handling each.)

Minutes

The minutes of the organization become the permanent record of the group's actions. The minutes are a record of facts, not opinion. They are a record of what happened and not the thoughts or feelings of members or officers. The secretary is responsible for recording and keeping the minutes of all meetings. They should be written clearly, in a manner that leaves no room to question actions taken by the assembly. An absent member should be able to read the minutes and have a clear understanding of the business transacted at the meeting. All names should be clearly recorded, such as Nancy Jones not Ms. Jones.

All resolutions (a written motion adopted by the assembly) shall be typed individually on blue paper for the next meeting to facilitate easy reference.

If the minutes are hand written by the secretary during the meeting, they should be typed on white paper using the format described below.

All passed motions that affect a change to the Bylaws, Rules and Policies, and the Addendum to the SCCA Rule Book should be applied to these documents and then posted on the Club's web site for the membership. The updated documents should be made available before the next General Membership Meeting.

Guidelines for Writing Minutes

First Paragraph:

- The first paragraph of the minutes should include:
 - The kind of meeting
 - General Membership
 - Committee
 - Board
 - The name of the group listed as: The North Hills Sports Car Club
 - The date, time, and place of the meeting
 - Whether or not the President, Vice President, and Secretary were present and, in their absence, the name of their substitute(s)
 - The disposition of the minutes of the last meeting.

The body

The Body of the minutes should include a separate paragraph for each subject matter and all main motions or motions to bring a main question before the assembly, the exception being motions which were withdrawn.

1. When recording a motion, include:
 - The exact wording of the motion as adopted or otherwise disposed of
 - The disposition of the motion, including temporary disposition, and any primary or secondary amendments and all adhering secondary amendments that were pending.
 - The name of the person making the motion.
2. All points of order and appeals, whether sustained or lost, and reasons given by the Chair for the ruling.
3. All resolutions (a written motion adopted by the assembly) should be printed on blue paper for easy referral.

The Closing

1. The last paragraph of the minutes should contain the hour of adjournment.
2. The minutes should be signed by the secretary or the person who took the minutes.

Treasurer's Report

At each meeting of the organization, the Chair may ask for a report from the treasurer. This report may be a verbal statement of the balance on hand or the balance minus outstanding obligations. This report requires no action by the group. The treasurer's report shall NOT be posted on the web site.

Elections of Officers

The Bylaws of the North Hills Sports Car Club specify the opening and closing dates for the election of officers of the organization. The North Hills Sports Car Club uses the "Floor Nomination Procedure."

For nominations from the floor, the Chair declares the floor open for nominations and any member may nominate another member. This nomination must be seconded. The Chair does not have to recognize the member for a nomination to be made.

At the January General Membership Meeting the Chair will announce:

"Nominations for the North Hills Sports Car Club Officers are now open and remain open until the close of the February General Membership Meeting."

All nominations will be recorded by the Secretary.

Before the close of the February General Membership Meeting the Chair will announce:

The Chair will once again call for nominations of Officers to the North Hills Sports Car Club.

After any additional nominations have been made, the Chair will close nominations.

Voting

The North Hills Sports Car Club's voting methods, times, and requirements are described in the Bylaws.

In recording the ballots, the Treasurer should be instructed to:

- Not include blank ballots or blanks on a ballot in determining the total number of votes cast
- Accept ballots which may contain small technical errors such as a misspelled name,
- Declare illegal two or more ballots folded together
- Declare illegal sections of ballots where the member votes for more than one candidate for an office and no clear choice can be determined
- All illegal ballots should be counted in determining the total number of votes cast for figuring the majority. However, no candidate benefits with a vote from an illegal ballot. (The same applies to motions.)

Following the counting, the Treasurer prepares a report, which contains:

- The number of votes cast
- The number required for a majority
- The number received by each nominee
- The number of illegal votes

Upon reading the election results report to the Membership, the Treasurer hands the report to the Secretary for filing.

Conclusions

Every member of the North Hills Sports Car Club should know the basic rules of parliamentary procedure. The presiding officer will find it helpful to learn more rules than are used. The use of parliamentary procedure in all meetings will help the group transact business efficiently, protect the group from leaders who dictate policies, and protect the rights of each individual in the group. Remember, if you are overly strict with rules and procedures, members may be afraid to speak up. Parliamentary rules, like all other rules, should be applied with common sense.