

TIPS FOR THE PRESIDING OFFICER

Before the Meeting

1. Prepare an agenda
Review minutes of previous meeting-Was any motion (item) postponed to the upcoming meeting
Check minutes of a meeting held at the same time a year ago. What business was conducted at that meeting? Any item that should be listed on the agenda for the upcoming meeting?
Check the bylaws. Do they specify business that must be conducted at the upcoming meeting? i.e. election of officers.
2. Consult with the secretary. Are the minutes of the previous meeting ready for approval?
3. Contact those who are responsible for certain reports. If someone cannot attend, find out who will be reporting. Do not call on those who do not have a report.
4. Arrive early and check the physical arrangements of the meeting, room. Make certain it is planned and arranged properly for the group that will be meeting. Consider ventilation, heat and cooling. Arrange for any properties that are needed such as podium, microphone, etc.
5. Take with you to the meeting the agenda, a copy of the bylaws, a list of all standing and special committees, the parliamentary authority, a timepiece and a calendar. (A gavel is optional.)

During the Meeting

1. Open the meeting on time (a quorum must be present).
2. Follow the prepared agenda.
3. Announce business in order.
4. Recognize members entitled to the floor.
5. State clearly all motions properly made and announce the results of the vote.
6. Rule improper and frivolous motions out of order.
7. Give information and explanations when necessary but do not express an opinion.
8. Expedite business by the use of unanimous consent ("If there is no objection....") on routine business.
9. Keep order and enforce the rules of debate.
10. Respond to inquiries and decide questions of order.
11. Refer to yourself as the "chair" or "your president", never "I".
12. Be impartial and fair and have common sense, tact and a sense of humor.
13. Relinquish the chair when a motion is made which refers to him/her alone.
14. Stand when:
 - a. Calling the meeting to order and adjourning it.
 - b. Stating a motion, recognizing members seeking to discuss the motion and putting the motion to a vote.
 - c. Explaining reasons for the ruling on a point of order and speaking on an appeal.
15. Be seated (or step back):

- a. During the reading of minutes, reports, etc.
 - b. When the floor has been assigned for debate.
16. Vote when a decision is being by ballot or if the results will be affected by his/her vote. (To make or break a tie.)
 17. Take part in the debate by relinquishing the chair and not returning to the chair until the vote on the issue has been taken and the results announced.

After the Meeting

1. Make notes of any business that will need to be handled at the next meeting.
2. Review the Draft of the minutes before it is distributed. Grammatical, spelling, or informational errors can be embarrassing.
3. Attend meetings of committees (if you are an ex-officio member of the committee) or request an informational report.