





 THE MARYLAND MUNICIPAL LEAGUE
EFFECTIVE MEETINGS





- Background in running a meeting
 - Mayor
 - Councilman
 - MML President
 - School Board President
 - Committee Chairman
 - Registered Parliamentarian
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The Disclaimer

- The views expressed in this presentation, although absolutely correct, do not reflect the views of LGIT, MML, or MACO - These are things they don't want you to know!
- The stories contained herein are not stories about real towns, people you know, or towns I represent - even if I use their names by accident!
- I've been in municipal government so long I'm jaded - so don't get upset when I belittle the public and elected officials.

- Municipal Officials love meetings?
- Council Meetings
 - Staff Meetings
 - Committee Meetings
 - MML Meetings
 - Workgroup Meetings
 - Community Meetings
- 

What is "Effective"?



- Producing a desired result

All meetings should have an objective

Wrong Objectives:


Elected Officials → Publicity

Staff Members → Interruption of job

Press → Information to misinterpret

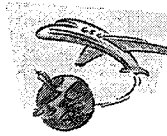
Public → Berate officials

- Proper Objectives for Meetings:
- Meet Charter obligations
 - Debate and exchange ideas
 - Conduct public business
 - Make decisions
 - Inform the public
- To Accomplish Something!!!*





A meeting should be like theater, where the audience can follow the storyline, the actors know their roles, and the slips-ups and mistakes are taken as part of the plot.

So How Do We Get There?



Taking The Trip

● Pick Destination	● Goal for meeting
● Packing List	● Agenda
● Travel Arrangements	● Meeting set-up
● Take the trip	● Conduct meeting
● Prepare for unexpected	● Contingency plan
● Photo Album	● Minutes





Goals for Meeting

What do you want to accomplish?

Pass a resolution/ordinance
Discuss a problem
Approve a purchase
Plan budget priorities

- **Set in advance**
 - Allows for preparation
 - Focus
 - Better participation
 - Shorter meetings



GOALS → AGENDA

Contents:


- ✓ Specific Detail
- ✓ Identification of speaker
- ✓ Time limits
- ✓ Discuss/Review/Action

A Good Agenda:


- Allows body to be prepared
- Alerts the public
- Informs the media
- Keeps the meeting on track

The Key Factor

You need to follow the agenda!



Success Story - Sykesville



Mayor Ian Shaw


Listing times on the Agenda ... keeps the meeting on track and the discussion on point

Final Thoughts on Agendas

- Set an Agenda Policy
 - Deadline for submission
 - Requests in writing
 - Approval process for Agenda
- Post the Agenda
- Distribute Agenda/materials in advance



MEETING SET-UP

- Perfection/Professionalism is in the details
- "All the world is a stage and we are merely players upon it"



Items to Consider:

- Agenda for public
- Charts/Exhibits for public
- Nameplates
- Speaker podium
- Codebook
- Sign-in sheets
- Space/seating
- Dress code
- Clock

Subtle items to consider:

- Who's coming?
 - Quorum
 - Issue passage
- Recent hot button issues
- Dignitaries and Protocol
- Newspaper deadlines

Visualize the Meeting

"Blue Angel's Strategy"

"The Five 'P' Rule"

- Prior
- Planning
- Prevents
- Poor
- Performance

Be Prepared for Mr. Murphy

Of Murphy's Law Fame

- "Things that can go wrong, will go wrong"
- "The best laid plans of mice and men sometimes go awry"
 - > Stay one step ahead of the pack
 - > Figure out and prepare for all possibilities

THE MEETING

- TIME
- RULES
- RECORD



TIME

- Most people detest meetings because they are a "waste of time"
- Most people don't attend meetings because they "don't have the time"
- Most people believe that instead of participating at meetings their "time can be better spent"

Tips on Time

- Start on Time
 - Takes control
 - Easy to do
 - Shows value for others' time
 - Shows professionalism

"The Moe 'Go' Rule"

Set an Informal Ending Time

- Meeting isn't an endurance test
- Agree to anything just to leave
- Public doesn't stay
- Press deadlines are missed


MORE ENERGY




BETTER DECISIONS

Time During the Meeting

- Agree on time limit for speakers
 - Remind people before they speak
 - Stick to it
- Avoid excessive unrelated banter
- Keep audience on task




Success Story – Takoma Park



From 6+ hour weekly meetings...
To 2 hour meetings

Mayor Kate Steward


MEETING RULES





- Charter Requirements
- State Open Meeting Law
- Municipal Code Requirement
- Parliamentary Procedure

Charter Requirements

- When meeting shall be held
- Public right of input
- Financial reports approval
- Open Meetings/Closed Meetings




OPEN MEETING LAW


- General Procedures Article of the Maryland Annotated Code
- Open Session required
- Exceptions for Closed Session

Municipal Code Requirements

- Outline Agenda
- Presiding Officer
- Order of Business
- Matters before Council
- Rules of Procedure




What happens if you don't follow these requirements?




Parliamentary Procedure

- Set of Rules for the conduct of a meeting
- Ensures a fair hearing
- Uniformity
- Prevents Confusion



Procedure Goals:

- Run the meeting "As formal as necessary, as informal as possible"
- Do not use procedural rules as a weapon



Law of KARMA:

"never try to play with other people around you for you may never know that they play better than you."

RULES OF ORDER

- Motions
- Debate
- Voting

Motions

- Main Motion
- Subsidiary
- Privileged
- Incidental

Things to consider – all motions

- O – Is it in order – can I make it?
- S – Does it need a second?
- A – Can it be amended?
- D – Is it debatable?
- V – What vote is needed?

OSADV

"OSADV TEST"

- O
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- S
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- A
nother
- D
isgruntled
- V
oter



The Main Motion

- Introduces the subject
- Can't be made when another motion is pending
- Yields to all other types of motions

Example: Main Motion

"I move that the City buy a new white Public Works truck"

- O Must have the floor
- S Must have a second
- A Can be amended
- D is debatable
- V Majority vote

Subsidiary Motions

- Seven Types:
1. Amend
 2. Limit or extend debate
 3. Lay on the table
 4. Postpone to a time certain
 5. Postpone indefinitely
 6. Refer to a committee
 7. Previous Question

Example – Motion to Amend

Main Motion was:
"I move that the City buy a new white Public Works truck"

Motion to Amend:


"I move to amend the motion by substituting RED truck for a WHITE truck"

OSADV test

- Must obtain the floor
- Needs a second
- Can be amended
- Is debatable
- Majority vote needed

Motions to "Table"

- Lay on the table
- Postpone to a time certain
- Postpone indefinitely



Motion to table

- is to "lay on the table"
 - Temporarily suspend
 - Move to "Take off the table"
 - Failure to take up subject in the same session causes motion to die

"I move we lay the matter of the purchase of Public Works truck, until we hear the budget report"

Postpone to a time certain


- Postpone definitely
- Will be considered as unfinished business
- Matter is still alive until the time set

"I move to postpone this motion until the next month's council meeting"

Postpone Indefinitely

- A parliamentary strategy allowing the disposal of a motion without making a decision for or against it

"I move that the issue of purchasing Public Works truck be postponed indefinitely"




Motions and More Motions.....

- *Privileged Motions – Five Types
- *Incidental Motions – Eight Types

Forget memorizing

↓

Use a chart




Jay's Pet Peeve #1

Happens all the time:

"I will withdraw my motion, if you will withdraw your second"


CAN NOT DO!

Once made motion becomes the "property" of the entire body



Jay's Pet Peeve #2

"I call the question"



Does not end the debate if someone still wants to speak


It is a subsidiary motion that should be voted upon

DEBATE

- Maker of the motion speaks 1st
– *After there is a second!!!*
- Time limitation
- Decorum
– *Use titles; Mr./Ms.; not names!*

VOTING

- Voice vote – yeah or nay
- Show of hands (division of the house)
- Roll call
- Ballot
- General Consent



General Consent

- Also called “unanimous consent”
- When opposition isn't likely

“With no objection, the minutes to the last meeting are approved by unanimous consent”
If someone objects – vote


Final Thoughts on Parliamentary Procedure

- Should be used to assist, not hinder
- Depends on the group size
- Any group type – Council, Congress, Fire Department, School Board, Tribal Council

Public Hearing

- Legal requirements/public input
- It is a *HEARING* not a *TALKING*

Let the public talk
*Protect the record
*Reduce debate

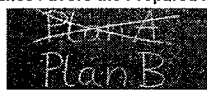


Save your comments for action items



Contingency Plan

- The “What ifs”
- The Practical to the Political

“Chance Favors the Prepared Mind”




Taking Minutes

- Minutes not hours 
- What was done, not what was said
- Legal requirements
Open Meeting Law 

Conclusion:

The better prepared YOU are, the more effective and efficient your meeting will be



Resources:

- ABC of Parliamentary Procedure
- National Association of Parliamentarians
- Jack A. Gullo Jr., Esq.
javgullo@gullofirm.com/410-875-5344

Motions listed in order of precedence – a new motion can be made if higher on the chart than the current one

YOU WANT TO:	YOU SAY:	INTERRUPT	2ND	DEBATE	AMEND	VOTE
Close meeting	I move to adjourn	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Take break	I move to recess for	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
Register complaint	I rise to a question of privilege	Yes	No	No	No	None
Make/follow agenda	I call for the orders of the day	Yes	No	No	No	None
Lay aside temporarily	I move to lay the question on the table	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Close debate	I move the previous question	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
Limit or extend debate	I move that debate be limited to ...	No	Yes	No	Yes	2/3
Postpone to a certain time	I move to postpone the motion to ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Refer to committee	I move to refer the motion to ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Modify wording of motion	I move to amend the motion by ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Kill main motion	I move that the motion be postponed indefinitely	No	Yes	Yes	No	Majority
Bring up business (a main motion)	I move that [or "to"] ...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

Incidental Motions – No Order of precedence. Arise incidentally and are decided immediately.

YOU WANT TO:	YOU SAY:	INTERRUPT	2ND	DEBATE	AMEND	VOTE
Enforce rules	Point of order	Yes	No	No	No	None
Submit matter to assembly	I appeal from the decision of the chair	Yes	Yes	Varies	No	Majority
Suspend rules	I move to suspend the rules which ...	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
Avoid main motion altogether	I object to the consideration of the question	Yes	No	No	No	2/3
Divide motion	I move to divide the question	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
Demand rising vote	I call for a division	Yes	No	No	No	None
Parliamentary law question	Parliamentary inquiry	Yes (if urgent)	No	No	No	None
Request information	Request for information	Yes (if urgent)	No	No	No	None