

Parliamentarian Tips: General Consent

During a business meeting, the chair may decide, in the interest of expediency, to use the procedure of adopting a motion by general consent (or unanimous consent). This can save time and speed up a meeting when business is minor or routine.

This procedure would not be used when there is even a hint of disagreement among members. If someone objects, then the motion is treated in the normal manner and put to a vote.

Examples:

The presiding officer says, "If there is no objection....." and pauses to allow any possible objection, then proceeds to declare the decision.

"If there is no objection, the minutes will stand approved as read." (Pause) "Hearing none, the minutes will stand approved as read."

"Without objection, we will stand adjourned." (Pause) "Meeting adjourned."

Basic Parliamentary Procedure

Parliamentary procedure requires that all members have equal rights; that there be mutual respect among board members; that the rights of the minority to initiate motions, debate, and have their votes counted be protected, while at the same time the will of the majority governs.

Only one item may be under consideration at a time.

The majority vote decides the question.

Any question that limits board members' rights of discussion or changes the agreed order of business requires a 2/3 vote of the members present.

Any matter once decided cannot be brought up again at the same meeting, except by a motion to reconsider.

The simplest, clearest and most expeditious way to conduct business is considered proper, as long as it does not violate the rights of any member.