

Myths, Mistakes and Murder

Of Roberts Rules of Order With LOCAL BOARDS

Dr. Beverly Helms
Bonifay, FL

Table of Contents

A. Myths – Common Myths that take on a life of their own.

B. Mistakes – That may be costly

C. Mistakes - that don't invalidate actions

D. Mistakes- that might not come back to bite you

E. Murder- of RONR by Boards/Comittees

F. WORDS OF WISDOM

TITLE A

TITLE B

TITLE C

TITLE D

TITLE E

TITLE F

Myths – that have taken on a life of their own.

- **We don't use parliamentary procedure.**
 - Courts have held that all board meetings and annual meetings are subject to principles and rules when transacting business.
- **Parliamentary Procedure and Roberts Rules are the same.**

RONR is the most popular of many parliamentary procedure books.
- **Rules are the same for all meetings.**

Not for board meetings/committees
-Less than 12.

Myths - Continued

Rules are the same for all meetings, continued...

Members may make motions and speak while seated.

Motions need not be seconded in board meetings.

No limit to the number of times a member may speak to a question.

Motions to close or limit debate generally not used.

Chair can make motions and vote on all questions.

Some small boards should be more formal on matters with legal implications or if controversial.

Note: A board may adopt its own Rules for governing its own meetings.

Myths - Continued

Discussion first; Motion later.

Never in a formal business meeting

Vote on all reports

Only those to be published.

Auditor's Report is considered and adopted.

Treasurer's report filed for reference.

A Motion is always Necessary

Consent Agenda – non-controversial matters at top of agenda

General Consent or unanimous consent

An Agenda doesn't need to be adopted.

Myths - Continued

Anyone can speak at our meetings.

Anyone may be permitted to speak, but only members of the Board/Committee can demand it, make motions or vote.

A “friendly amendment” is okay.

Once a motion is made it does not belong to the maker. Instead use, “If there is no objection” or “general consent”.

Old Business

No such thing. It may be unfinished business. If so, the chair brings it up.

The Maker of the motion speaks first and last. (Maker speaks first.)

Mistakes – That may cost the board/committee

Allowing a motion “To Reconsider” to a decision made in a **previous** meeting and limiting the maker to someone who voted with the prevailing side. (Rather use “Rescind” or “Amend Previously Adopted” motion”).

Dispensing with the Minutes- (Does not equate to approval of minutes. May dispense with the reading of, review of the minutes until a later time.)

Not “officially” amending minutes that are inaccurate, but previously approved.

The absence of a quorum is OK if nobody says anything. (A myth and a mistake.)

Any business transacted without a quorum is null and void!

Mistakes that won't invalidate action

Not getting a second. (If a board passed a motion, at least two people wanted to discuss it. A second is not a seal of approval.)

Allowing a member to withdraw their motion.

The chair alters the agenda, and no one speaks up.

Only asking for the affirmative vote. (The chair should call for the negative votes even when it appears that all said "Aye.")

Note: if members of a board fail to "call a point of order", they waive their right to object later, unless it is a "continuing breach." In this case the ATTY should be consulted.

TITLE A

TITLE B

TITLE C

TITLE D

TITLE E

TITLE F

Mistakes that don't invalidate action continued....

Making a motion without being recognized.

Failure to confine discussion to the motion.

Voting on candidates in the reverse order from which they were nominated.

Not calling for additional nominations when a nominating committee is used. Floor should be opened. Committee selection is only its recommendation.

Using "Point of Information" to inject and not request information.

TITLE A

TITLE B

TITLE C

TITLE D

TITLE E

TITLE F

Mistakes that might not come back to bite you.

Mistakes in announcing the vote.

Silence is condoning the vote. If questions, a member must call for “division”, which automatically requires a counted vote.

Allowing a chair to “run” the meeting. (The chair can get away with only what he/she is allowed to.)

Allowing the use of “I So Move” as a motion. (A motion must be (or should be) stated exactly and specifically as voted on.)

Murder – or Big Mistakes (My biases)

Calling the Question

Yelling “Question!” is rude, inappropriate, and ig_or_nt.

No one person can stop debate.

The “Previous Question” is a Motion, requiring a second, is not debatable, and requires a 2/3rds vote.

Note: The chair may ask, “Are you ready to vote?” and if anyone appears to want to speak- without a motion, second and voting to stop debate, it should continue.

Lay on the Table – temporarily delays a matter .

If intent is to kill or avoid dealing with an item, the chair should rule it out of order. (Use Postpone Indefinitely or Postpone to a Definite Time.)

NOTE: The time to call attention to a myth, mistake or murder of a rule is at the time of the infraction. Otherwise, you waive your right to object.

WORDS OF WISDOM

Life - nor Justice - is Always Fair.

Relinquishing the Right to be Right – requires more integrity than most of us have.

All that appears to be ain't necessarily so!

Often the “guilty” win and the “innocent” lose!

Usually what goes around comes around.

You shouldn't judge a “book” by its cover.

Don't Break your Toothpick on a Marshmallow.

Focus on the “positive” or you will be swallowed by the “negative.”

Parliamentary Procedure should be used as a TOOL and not a WEAPON!

**To whom much is given,
much is required.**

(Luke 12:48)

**Thank you for your
attention and time!**

Happy Thanksgiving!