

## Local PTA Running a Meeting Basics

**Quorum:** A quorum is the minimum number of members of your board or membership that must be present for business to be conducted. For your PTA Board that number is half of your total number of board members plus one (i.e. for an 8 member board quorum is 5). A quorum for a general membership meeting is 10 paid members (can include board members).

**Minutes Approval:** The group can approve Minutes without a vote by what is call general or unanimous consent.

**General Consent:** This is a very effective way of taking care of issues or motions that are noncontroversial and for which it appears that there will be no objection. This is the presiding officer's choice.

**Consent Agenda:** At every board meeting there are at least a few items on the agenda that do not need any discussion or debate because they are a routine procedure. Approving the Consent Agenda approves all items listed on that agenda. Board members may call for an item to be removed from the Consent Agenda to be discussed in regular business. See *Consent Agenda Handout from WSPTA*.

**Principal/Staff Report:** It is a good practice to have a report from the Principal (or staff appointed to attend by the Principal). This encourages and supports a strong partnership.

**Financial Reports:** Regular monthly reports are filed with the secretary and are NOT approved by the group assembled. Each board member should receive every financial report and the Treasurer should submit a report at each meeting (board and membership).

**Motions:** A motion should be made in writing and reviewed first by the President to assure the following:

- The motion is relevant and in or out of order
- It is the correct time in the agenda to put forward the motion.
- If the motion needs to contain more information

If the President deems that the motion is valid then the motion is given back to the person making the motion to be read aloud.

Motions can die if there is a lack of a second. If the motion dies due to the lack of a second it is not reflected in the minutes of the meeting. Motions that are made by a committee chair or on behalf of a committee do not require a second.

**Motions Continued:**

The person making the motion has the first opportunity to speak to their motion after a second is given. Remember when you are speaking to a motion during discussion, you should always state if you are for or against a motion.

Motions that include a financial aspect to them should always include where the money is coming from, what budget line item is impacted and how it should be paid.

It is best practice for PTA's to use paper motions. This will ensure that the President has the opportunity to view the motion prior to it being read and the secretary will know exactly what the motion is for the minutes.

**Financial Review Report (formerly know as Audit Report):** The Financial Review Report MUST be presented and approved by the members at a general membership meeting. The Board of Directors should make it a practice to approve the report as well.

**Funds/Grant Requests:** Every PTA should have a formal way for your PTA to receive funds requests or grant requests from members of the PTA or your school. You can find samples on the WSPTA website. It is also required by the IRS that your non-profit have a formal way of receiving requests, granting money, and tracking it's use.

**Passing the Gavel:** If the President (or Co-President) presiding at a meeting wishes to participate in the discussion on a specific topic then the gavel must be passed to the Vice President (or other elected officer). The person receiving the gavel presides over the meeting until the issues is acted on in some way.

**Presidential Voting:** The President may vote only to break or cause a tie or if voting is done by ballot. The President is counted in the number for quorum. This helps to maintain impartiality.

**Call for the Question:** This is a motion to end discussion on a motion that has been made before the group. A Motion to Call for the Question must be seconded and voted on separately. To pass this vote needs 2/3 affirmative. If the group votes to approve the Call for the Question motion then discussion about the issue is ended. The vote is then taken on the original motion before the group.

**Time expired for agenda item:** The presiding officer can end discussion on an issue or motion if the time allotted in the agenda for the issue has expired. This makes it important to provide a timed agenda.

**Adjournment:** The presiding officer can adjourn the meeting without a vote at the close of business. If a member makes a motion to adjourn before the business is completed, it must be seconded and passed by the majority of the group.