

General Rules & Decorum: Meeting Debate/Discussion on Business Items

- No members may speak until recognized by the chair.
- All discussion must be relevant to the immediately pending question.
- No member may speak a second time until every member who wishes to speak has had the opportunity to do so.
- No member can speak more than twice on a motion.
- No member can speak for more than ten (10) minutes. Councils may have other rules regarding time.
- All remarks must be addressed to the chair – no cross debate is permitted.
- It is not permissible to speak against one's own motion (but one can vote against one's own motion.)
- The debate must address issues, not personalities – no one is permitted to make personal attacks or question the motives of other speakers.
- The presiding officer must relinquish the chair to participate in debate and cannot resume the chair until the main pending question is disposed of.
- When possible, the chair should let the floor alternate between those speaking in support and those speaking in opposition to the motion.
- When many people wish to speak to a motion, it may be advisable for the chair to make a speakers' list.
- Members may not disrupt the assembly.
- Rules of debate can be changed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote.

Meetings should run on a “Fixed Order of Business.” Consistent meetings allow members to view your organization as organized, timely, and trustworthy. Consistent meetings are crucial in the recruitment and retention of members.

Order of Business

- Reading and Approval of the Minutes
- Report of the Officers and Standing Committees
- Report of the Special Committees
- Special Orders – Important business that is to be considered at this meeting (elections)
- Unfinished Business – Postponed or pending at the last meeting that needs to be voted on at this meeting
- New Business

Optional Headings: Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call, Approval of the Agenda, Announcements