Jurassic Parliament

Mastering meetings using Robert's Rules

Strengthen Your Board's Decision-Making Process Using Robert's Rules

Ann G. Macfarlane

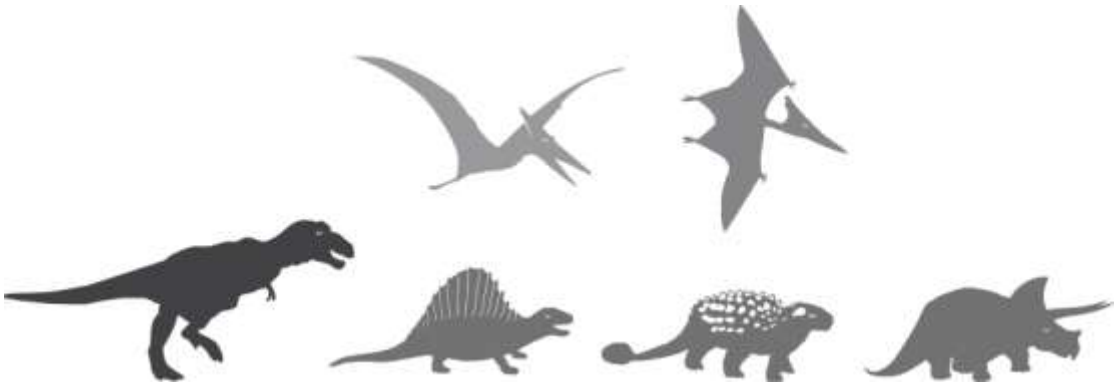
Professional Registered Parliamentarian

2019 Nonprofit Leaders Conference

September 13, 2019

Aberdeen, Washington

©2008 Jurassic Parliament



DINOVILLE SERVICE CLUB
Board of Directors Meeting

Motto: We do our best for all humanity, whether we like them or not

AGENDA

I.	Introduction	
II.	Two big challenges	*Study session*
III.	Preparing powerful agendas	**Call to order, determination of a quorum, approval of agenda**
		Staff report
IV.	Meeting discussion, Point of Order and Appeal	**Motion to raise parking fees**
	Exercise	**Summer plans for youth**
V.	Authority and role of chair, members and staff	*Study session*
VI.	Inappropriate remarks	*Study session*
VII.	Additional notes	*Study session*
VIII.	Conclusion	**Adjournment**

© Jurassic Parliament 2010-2019. All rights reserved.

Point of Order Practice Scripts

Member A: *Chair, I rise to a point of order.*
Chair: *State your point.*
Member A: *My esteemed colleague has used the term "cream-faced loon" in referring to the Mayor of Fernville. According to Robert's Rules, insults are not allowed in debate.*
Chair: *The point is well taken. Members will refrain from using improper language.*

Member B: *Chair, I rise to a point of order.*
Chair: *State your point.*
Member B: *You announced the motion that I made and then called for the vote right away. We have to have discussion on this motion before we decide what to do about it!*
Chair: *The point is well taken. As the maker of the motion, you have the right to speak first, so Member B has the floor.*

Member C: *Chair, I rise to a point of order.*
Chair: *State your point.*
Member C: *Sam Stegosaurus has spoken three times already, but other members are waiting to speak.*
Chair: *The point is well taken. Who would like to speak next?*

Member D: *Point of order, Chair!*
Chair: *State your point.*
Member D: *We voted to approve the amendment, but we haven't yet voted to approve the motion itself.*
Chair: *The point is well taken. Are you ready to vote on the motion as amended?*

Member E: *Chair, I rise to a point of order.*
Chair: *State your point.*
Member E: *My colleague has called me a "bozo." It is improper to use such personal insults during our meetings.*
Chair: *The point is well taken. Members will refrain from making personal attacks on their colleagues – or anyone else!*

Member F: *Point of order, Chair!*
Chair: *State your point.*
Member F: *You have declared the meeting adjourned, but we still have business to discuss. The chair of the meeting doesn't have the power to adjourn the meeting like that.*
Chair: *The point is well taken. Our meeting will continue. The next item of business is…*

© Jurassic Parliament 2015. All rights reserved.

SUMMER CAMP PRACTICE SCRIPT

7 attendees: chair, baker, banker, guitarist, movie fan, skateboarder, social worker

[Note that the numbers are a substitute for being recognized.]

1.	chair	This meeting of the Board of Directors of the Dinoville Service Club is called to order. We have a quorum present. As always, we'll begin by reciting our motto.
2.	all	*[with enthusiasm]* We strive to serve all humanity, whether we like them or not!
3.	chair	Our topic today is planning a summer camp for our youth next summer. We'll start with open discussion.
4.	guitarist	I think that music is the best way to reach our young people. I'm in favor of a music camp.
5.	movie fan	Music is not very attractive any more. Our youth are all interested in the movies. I think we ought to run a movie-making camp.
6.	guitarist	What do you mean, music isn't attractive any more?! People are rushing to the Columbia Gorge for their concerts, and the free summer concerts on the Pier are jammed.
7.	movie fan	That's not saying much! I bet everyone at those concerts is over fifty years old.
8.	guitarist	Well, look at the Block Party on Capitol Hill! There were plenty of young people there.
9.	baker	Point of Order, Chair!
10.	chair	State your point.
11.	baker	Under the rules we've just learned, no one can speak a second time until everyone who wishes to do so has spoken once. The Guitarist and the Movie Fan are monopolizing this conversation.

12.	chair	The point is well taken! No one may speak a second time until everyone who wishes to do so has spoken once. Who else would like to discuss this?
13.	baker	I'm a fan of music, but I agree that movie-making would have a wider appeal.
14.	social worker	Yes, movies are wonderful, but making them is pretty complicated. We would need a lot of experienced volunteers to carry this off.
15.	baker	Well, how about joining up with FareStart….
16.	chair	Just a moment, Baker, we haven't heard from other members of our board yet. Skateboarder, what do you think?
17.	skateboarder	I'm not quite sure. I'd like to wait and speak after everyone else has spoken.
18.	chair	Thank you, what are your thoughts, Banker?
19.	banker	Getting equipment and supplies for movie-making would be very expensive. I think we ought to look for a more affordable choice.
20.	chair	The chair will point out that we have a $50,000 grant from the Dinoville Association of Realtors that we can use for our summer program, whatever activity we choose.
21.	banker	Oh, I didn't realize that our grant application was approved! That's good news.
22.	chair	Very well, would anyone care to make a motion?
23.	movie fan	I move that we run a movie-making camp next summer for our youth.
24.	social worker	Second!
25.	chair	It has been moved and seconded that we run a movie-making camp next summer for our youth. Movie fan, since you made the motion, you have the right to speak first.

26.	movie fan	It seems like an obvious WIN to me. This will attract all our youth and give them something worthwhile to focus their energies during the summer. With the grant, we have everything we need to hire the right talent and recruit good volunteers.
27.	chair	Further discussion?
28.	skateboarder	I move to amend the motion by inserting the words “and skateboarding” after the words “movie-making.”
29.	chair	Is there a second? [pause] There being no second, the amendment will not be taken up.
30.	skateboarder	That’s not fair! I have just as much right to propose a skateboarding camp as the movie fan has to propose a movie camp!
31.	chair	Under Robert’s Rules of Order, a motion has to be “seconded” before the group can spend time on it. Since no one seconded this motion, it means that only one person wants to discuss it, which is not enough. Further discussion?
32.	guitarist	I’m worried about our capacity to take this on. Even with the money, it’s going to be quite a challenge!
33.	baker	I’m concerned about it too. I think we would be better off partnering with FareStart and teaching our youth how to cook. FareStart has some really amazing programs. I was at the Guest Chef Night last week, and believe me, the menu was OUT OF THIS WORLD! The oysters were delicious, the lamb was cooked perfectly, and for dessert they served the best chocolate éclair I’ve ever had in my life!
34.	banker	Point of Order!
35.	chair	State your point.
36.	banker	It seems to me that the menu at FareStart is not germane to our discussion about starting a movie camp.
37.	chair	Yes, the point is well taken. Members will kindly keep their remarks strictly to the topic under discussion.

38.	banker	Chair, I just made a Point of Order, so do I have to wait to make my comments about the movie-making camp until everyone else has spoken?
39.	chair	No, a Point of Order doesn't count against your chances to speak. Go right ahead.
40.	banker	Thank you. I was worried about the expense before, but since we have this large grant, I'm in favor of this proposal.
41.	chair	Thank you. Who else would like to comment?
42.	social worker	It's going to be FABULOUS! I can hardly wait to enroll my teenage daughter in this program.
43.	chair	Well, since it's my turn to speak as your chair, I would like to say that while it's true we have a large grant, we have to prudent in how we spend it. It seems to me that it would be wildly extravagant to waste expensive cinema equipment on inexperienced youth who don't really know what they're doing! I'm surprised that my colleagues on this board should demonstrate such poor judgment in supporting this.
44.	guitarist	Point of Order, Chair!
45.	chair	State your point.
46.	guitarist	The chair has to follow the same rules as the rest of us! It's improper for the chair to be criticizing our judgment like that. Robert's Rules says, "Speak to issues, not to personalities."
47.	chair	*[looking down and frowning]* Oh, that's correct, and the chair apologizes for getting carried away and breaking our rules of order. Let's have one more round of discussion. Movie fan?
48.	movie fan	Like I said, it's a great idea and I think we should go all out for it!
49.	skateboarder	Well, I still think we should include skateboarding, but since you're going to be such bozos about it, I won't object.
50.	social worker	Point of Order, Chair!
51.	chair	State your point.

52.	social workers	The word “bozo” is an insult!
53.	chair	The chair isn’t sure about that, so we will ask the board to decide. All those who believe that word “bozo” is an insult, please say “aye.”
54.	baker, banker, guitarist, movie fan, social worker	Aye!
55.	chair	All those who believe that it is not an insult, please say “no.”
56.	skateboarder	No!
57.	chair	The “ayes” have it, the word “bozo” is an insult, and members may not use this term. Is there further discussion?
58.	guitarist	It’s not my favorite idea, but I’ll go along with it if it’s what everybody wants.
59.	social worker	I’m all for it!
60.	baker	I don’t like the idea, and I’m going to vote against it.
61.	banker	This will be a big investment, but I’m in favor.
62.	chair	Your chair will vote against this motion, for the reasons previously stated. Is there any further discussion? [pause] Hearing none, we’ll take the vote. All those in favor, please say “aye.”
63.	banker, guitarist, movie fan, skateboarder, social worker	Aye!
64.	chair	All those opposed, please say “no.”
65.	chair, baker	No!
66.	chair	The “ayes” have it, the motion passes, and we will run a movie-making camp for our youth next summer. Thank you all for this discussion. There being no further business, this meeting is adjourned.

What's wrong with these remarks?

Some of these remarks are wrong in more than one category. Indicate the numbers that apply.

1. Personal remarks about other members
2. Discourteous remarks – insulting language, attacks, profanity
3. Inflammatory language
4. Referring to another member's motives (except in case of conflict of interest)
5. Criticizing past actions of the group (unless subject is under discussion, or you are going to propose a change at the end of your speech.)
6. Remarks that are not germane (relevant) to the discussion

REMARK	NUMBER
The Chair is a senior citizen.	
I think that the vote we took earlier today was very unfortunate and will come back to bite us. A huge increase like that will hit our stakeholders hard. We're going to pay an economic price for this.	
Did you see that article in the paper about the Distinguished Mustache Society? They looked so cute in their fancy mustaches and straw hats! They reminded me of my grandpa and the happy days when I was a young tyke.	
I was shocked to learn that we don't have a centralized "Accounts Receivable" function in our organization. There could be EMBEZZLEMENT going on, and we would never know it!	
I am sick and tired of the negative attitude you bring to our issues. It's people like you who keep us from attracting the best and the brightest to run for this Board.	
Only people aiming for higher office would vote for something like that.	

© Jurassic Parliament 2019. All rights reserved.

Use Board Action Request form to make better decisions for your nonprofit

By Ann G. Macfarlane, PRP

When I was serving in the U.S. Department of State, I sometimes felt in danger of becoming too wrapped up in bureaucratic machinations. There were so many angles to foreign policy, and so many different folks were involved! One could spend a lifetime trudging through the corridors of power getting clearances...the Near East South Asia Bureau, the regional office, the legal department, the United States Information Agency, the Agency for International Development...and of course Secretary Kissinger's office.

Today I want to recommend a small degree of bureaucratization to all you folks serving on nonprofit boards of directors. I am proud to report that the American Translators Association is still using a form that I created during my time as president. The "Board Action Request" form, or BAR, allows a board member to propose a motion to the board. It includes space for policy implications, financial impact, budgetary status and the background/rationale for the motion. See sample on next page.

By using this form, boards go into their meetings with a clear sense of what is being proposed and why, and what it might mean for their organization.

Mooch Bacak, the ATA's superb executive director, has been kind enough to say that the governance patterns we jointly established during my term twenty years ago still guide the ATA. It gives me joy to share an idea that has had great results for my favorite professional association. Another past president once told me, "Ann, you are a poet with administration." I hope that this form will bring an extra bit of order and poetry into your board discussions!

ata
American Translators Association
The Voice of Interpreters and Translators

➥ over

SAMPLE BOARD ACTION REQUEST FORM

AMERICAN TRANSLATORS ASSOCIATION
REQUEST FOR ACTION BY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DATE: June 22, 2017
PROPOSED BY: David Rumsey
TITLE: President
E-MAIL: president@atanet.org

Subject of motion: Record date for eligibility to vote.

Text of motion: ***That the Board fix September 22, 2017, as the record date for eligibility to vote in the American Translators Association's 2017 election.***

POLICY IMPLICATIONS:
In the judgment of the proposer this action would have these policy implications:

__x__ This action is in accord with current policies and procedures.

_____ This action would represent a new departure for the ATA.

_____ This action requires the Board to decide among competing points of view.

_____ This action may involve the ATA in internal or external controversy (please explain in background/rationale below.)

FINANCIAL IMPACT:
Amount of proposed expenditure: None.

BUDGETARY STATUS:

_____ Funds have already been authorized in this year's budget.

_____ This is an extra-budget expenditure.

_____ Funds will be requested for this action, if approved, in next year's budget.

_____ This action will bring in additional income.

__x__ This action has no budgetary implications.

_____ This action will reduce expenditures.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

ATA Bylaws Article XI, "Meetings of Voting Members"

Section 5 – Record Date for Eligibility to Vote
For the purpose of determining the members entitled to vote at any meeting of voting members or any adjournment thereof, or for the purpose of any other action by the voting members, the Board of Directors shall fix, in advance, a date as the Record Date for any such determination of voting members. Such Record Date shall not be more than fifty nor less than ten days before the date of such meeting.

The 2017 Meeting of Voting Members will be held Thursday, October 26, 2017.

Use Board Action Request form to make better decisions for your nonprofit
© Jurassic Parliament 2019. All rights reserved.

P.O. Box 77553, Seattle, WA 98177
TEL 206.542.8422 | EMAIL *info@jurassicparliament.com*
www.jurassicparliament.com

SAMPLE DISCUSSION GUIDELINES FOR NONPROFIT BOARDS

Permission is granted to modify these guidelines as your organization prefers.

1. The chair of the meeting runs the meeting in the service of the body. The chair serves as the facilitator for the meeting and has the primary responsibility for maintaining order. The chair may take part in discussion, but may not answer each individual speaker back, nor lecture or criticize the members. When discussing substantive questions, the chair will usually speak and vote, if entitled to do so, after others have spoken.
2. Members will give their full attention to their colleagues and will put away their cell phones, unless in an emergency situation.
3. All members have equal rights, privileges and obligations. To ensure this, no one may speak a second time until everyone who wishes to do so has spoken once.
4. Members will seek recognition from the chair before speaking. In general, interrupting is not allowed. If necessary to enforce a guideline, the chair may interrupt a member. A member may interrupt a speaker in order to make a Point of Order, which should be done infrequently.
5. Members may address presenters directly once recognized by the chair. Questions for presenters or staff may not become lengthy exchanges.
6. Discussion should be focused on the issues at hand and remarks must be relevant. Members may not paraphrase other members. The body is the final authority as to whether remarks are permissible.
7. Remarks must be courteous and respectful. Personal remarks about other members are not allowed, except for conflict of interest issues. Insults, personal attacks, vulgarity or obscenity, impugning other members' motives, or inflammatory language are not allowed. Members may not criticize the body.

8. Remarks criticizing past actions of the body are not allowed, unless the body as a whole is discussing the topic, or the member is about to introduce a motion to change or cancel the action at the end of their speech.

9. If a guideline is broken or a question arises as to whether a remark is allowed under the guidelines, a member may make a Point of Order. The chair rules, subject to Appeal. The chair may also turn to the body immediately to decide the matter. A Point of Order must be made at the time of the offense.

10. Individual speeches are limited to a maximum of 5 minutes. The body may adopt a shorter limit, or an overall time limit for a given topic, by a two-thirds vote without debate. If a speaker runs over the limit, the chair will interrupt and request that they conclude their remarks.

11. The motion "Previous Question" or "Call the Question" requires a second and a two-thirds vote, without debate, in order to cut off discussion and vote immediately on the pending motion. Members may not call out "Question!" but must be recognized in order to make this motion.

12. These guidelines are in effect unless superseded by law, the bylaws, or adopted policy. *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 11th edition* is the parliamentary authority.

Sample Discussion Guidelines for Nonprofit Boards

© Jurassic Parliament 2019. All rights reserved.

P.O. Box 77553, Seattle, WA 98177
TEL 206.542.8422 | EMAIL *info@jurassicparliament.com*
www.jurassicparliament.com

Follow four fundamental guidelines for successful meetings

Gig Harbor, Washington City Council. ©Jurassic Parliament 2018.

Robert's Rules of Order includes **four fundamental guidelines** that will create successful meetings. They are easy to say but take some effort to apply, since prevailing culture is often very different. Run your meetings according to these guidelines so your meetings—and your organization—will flourish.

I. The person running the meeting is the servant of the group, and the group is the final authority.

We are so used to our work situation, where the "boss" is in charge of the "employees," that we often bring the same habits of mind to meetings of nonprofit boards, city councils, and other volunteer organizations. But in a board of directors or a council, all the members have equal standing. They are peers, and **the leader is one among equals**.

The chair has special duties to RUN the meeting, but does not determine the OUTCOME of the meeting. It is the group that must decide what it wishes to do. It is the chair's duty to assist the group in this task. And the group has the ability to overturn a decision or ruling made by the chair. Read about Point of Order and Appeal on our website to learn how this is done.

➡ *over*

II. All members have equal rights, privileges and obligations. To ensure this, no one may speak a second time until everyone who wishes to do so has spoken once.
Every member of a board has an equal right to speak. In practice, however, boards often discuss their affairs in conversational mode. And in conversations, dominant people tend to dominate, and agreeable people tend to let them.

This often leads to a few people dominating the discussion, which is not fair and can lead to poor outcomes. Your quiet, introverted members have important insights that need to be heard.

If you adopt and apply the rule that **no one may speak a second time until everyone who wishes to do so has spoken once**, you will find that your meetings take on an entirely different nature—for the better!

III. Courtesy and respect are required at all times.
In these difficult times, people can be loud, rude and disorderly at meetings. Your chair and your members must insist on **courtesy and respect at all times**. These are not frills, but vital to the democratic process. No personal remarks, no insulting language, no attacks, no interrupting, no sidebar conversations, no disrespectful body language. If this happens, gently but firmly put a stop to it. Read about inappropriate remarks on our website (local government here and nonprofit boards here).

IV. One thing at a time
When a group is discussing a certain item, it must stick with that item, or make a conscious decision to set it aside to deal with something else. **You can't slip from one topic to another**, but must be deliberate in how and when you address each issue. Create a thoughtful agenda, time each item, and follow the agenda with flexible care.

Try these four guidelines, which we explain in greater detail in our book, and see what a difference they make to your meetings.

Follow four fundamental guidelines for successful meetings
© Jurassic Parliament 2019. All rights reserved.

TERMS OF USE
This article is provided for personal use. The user may not modify, publish, license, create derivative works from, transfer or sell any information or services contained in this publication or obtained from our website, or use the content of our website for public or commercial purposes, including any text, images, audio or video, without the written permission of Jurassic Parliament. Jurassic Parliament reserves the right to update our website at any time without notice to you. If you would like to use or quote this material for any purpose other than expressly as authorized herein, contact the Jurassic Parliament office.

DISCLAIMER
This material is provided for general educational purposes. Jurassic Parliament makes no representation about the suitability of the information contained in the documents and related graphics published as part of these services for any purpose. All such documents and related graphics are provided "as is" without warranty of any kind. Jurassic Parliament hereby disclaims all warranties and conditions with regard to this information, including all warranties and conditions of merchantability, whether express, implied or statutory, fitness for a particular purpose, title and non-infringement. Nothing written here constitutes legal or business advice. Readers with specific questions are advised to seek an appropriate credentialed authority to address their issues.

P.O. Box 77553, Seattle, WA 98177
TEL 206.542.8422 | EMAIL *info@jurassicparliament.com*
www.jurassicparliament.com

Essential Guidelines for Nonprofit Boards

©Rotary Club of Madison 2018. All rights reserved.

Follow these essential guidelines of parliamentary procedure to take the pain out of your meetings, hold productive discussions, and serve your organization better.

BASICS

A quorum must be present for business to be done. Usually a quorum means a majority (more than half) of the voting board members in office.

The chair runs the meeting in the service of the board. He is not the "boss" but serves as a facilitator, helping the board to hold free and fair discussion and make good decisions.

On small boards (up to about 12 members) it is acceptable to have discussion before proposing a main motion (a proposal for the board to take action).

If a member makes a motion to amend the main motion, it is discussed and voted on before the main motion. After amending a motion, a vote must be taken on the main motion as amended.

After discussion, the chair calls for the vote and announces the result. The motion passes when a majority of those voting vote in favor, unless state law or your bylaws require a higher vote. This is different from the requirement for a quorum.

If someone "calls the question," the chair must take a vote on whether to vote now or continue discussion. It takes a 2/3 vote to cut off discussion.

➡ *over*

DISCUSSION

All board members have equal rights, privileges and obligations. This means that discussion is not a conversation, but follows some important rules:

- The chair recognizes speakers in turn.
- No one may speak a second time until everyone who wishes to do so has spoken once.
- Interrupting is not allowed.

Board members must be courteous and respectful. They may not make inappropriate remarks such as personal remarks, insulting language, or comments that are irrelevant.

If a board member breaks the rules, the chair may correct him, or another board member may raise a point of order. The chair rules as to whether the point is correct, or not. A board member who disagrees with a ruling of the chair may appeal it. If another member seconds the appeal, the board decides.

The minority must be provided equal opportunity to debate, even if their views are unpopular. However, the decision of the majority voting at a meeting is the decision of the board as a whole.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Know your state law about voting requirements on nonprofit boards, and read your bylaws.

Proxy voting is not allowed on nonprofit boards.

In most states, email voting is not allowed on nonprofit boards unless certain very specific procedures are followed for each vote. Telephone meetings are acceptable as long as all participants can hear and be heard.

Under Robert's Rules of Order, members of the organization who are not board members may be excluded from board meetings. We recommend allowing members to observe board meetings except in special cases where an executive (secret) session is necessary.

Essential Guidelines for Nonprofit Boards
© Jurassic Parliament 2018. All rights reserved.

TERMS OF USE
This article is provided for personal use. The user may not modify, publish, license, create derivative works from, transfer or sell any information or services contained in this publication or obtained from our website, or use the content of our website for public or commercial purposes, including any text, images, audio or video, without the written permission of Jurassic Parliament. Jurassic Parliament reserves the right to update our website at any time without notice to you. If you would like to use or quote this material for any purpose other than expressly as authorized herein, contact the Jurassic Parliament office.

DISCLAIMER
This material is provided for general educational purposes. Jurassic Parliament makes no representation about the suitability of the information contained in the documents and related graphics published as part of these services for any purpose. All such documents and related graphics are provided "as is" without warranty of any kind. Jurassic Parliament hereby disclaims all warranties and conditions with regard to this information, including all warranties and conditions of merchantability, whether express, implied or statutory, fitness for a particular purpose, title and non-infringement. Nothing written here constitutes legal or business advice. Readers with specific questions are advised to seek an appropriate credentialed authority to address their issues.

P.O. Box 77553, Seattle, WA 98177
TEL 206.542.8422 | EMAIL *info@jurassicparliament.com*
www.jurassicparliament.com

Action Items List will improve board followup

At a recent nonprofit board workshop, someone asked, "How can you get board members to do what is agreed upon by the group at large?" One of the best tools to improve board followup is an Action Items List.

This is a simple document, maintained by the secretary, that lists each action a board member has agreed to undertake. We recommend a table in landscape format, with columns for the task, the date assigned, the date due, who is responsible, and the status. Ideally, an updated list goes out with each agenda, so everyone knows where things are. See sample on next page.

It's remarkable how easily tasks can slip between the cracks. By using an Action Items List, all board members can keep focused, accomplish their tasks, and better serve your nonprofit organization.

➡ *over*

SAMPLE ACTION ITEMS LIST

The Dinoville Service Club planned its annual Halloween Party at its meeting on October 1. Here is the Action Items List from its October 15 board meeting.

DINOVILLE SERVICE CLUB BOARD
ACTION ITEMS LIST as of October 15, 2018 Board Meeting

Date assigned	Task	Responsible	Date due	Status
Oct. 1, 2018	Confirm venue	Social Chair	Oct. 10, 2018	complete
Oct. 1, 2018	Buy balloons	Party Guy	Oct. 31, 2018	complete
Oct. 1, 2018	Buy candy	Active Dad	Oct. 31, 2018	in process
Oct. 1, 2018	Create costumes	Board members	Oct. 31, 2018	in process

INTEGRATE ACTION ITEMS LIST INTO THE AGENDA

At some point near the beginning of the meeting, the secretary should review the list with the board noting any status changes. While completed items can be dropped off the list, a record of them should be kept and can be used in communications with nonprofit stakeholders via a newsletter, annual report, or some other communication channel.

At the end of the board meeting, the secretary should review any additions to the Action Items List that were made during the meeting. This way any errors can be corrected, and all responsible parties are clear on their tasks.

IMPROVE BOARD FOLLOWUP

We also recommend keeping a separate list of all motions passed by the board. Using an Action Items List and a list of motions passed will improve board follow up and strengthen your nonprofit board's significant work for your community.

Action Items List will improve board followup

© Jurassic Parliament 2019. All rights reserved.

TERMS OF USE

This article is provided for personal use. The user may not modify, publish, license, create derivative works from, transfer or sell any information or services contained in this publication or obtained from our website, or use the content of our website for public or commercial purposes, including any text, images, audio or video, without the written permission of Jurassic Parliament. Jurassic Parliament reserves the right to update our website at any time without notice to you. If you would like to use or quote this material for any purpose other than expressly as authorized herein, contact the Jurassic Parliament office.

DISCLAIMER

This material is provided for general educational purposes. Jurassic Parliament makes no representation about the suitability of the information contained in the documents and related graphics published as part of these services for any purpose. All such documents and related graphics are provided "as is" without warranty of any kind. Jurassic Parliament hereby disclaims all warranties and conditions with regard to this information, including all warranties and conditions of merchantability, whether express, implied or statutory, fitness for a particular purpose, title and non-infringement. Nothing written here constitutes legal or business advice. Readers with specific questions are advised to seek an appropriate credentialed authority to address their issues.

P.O. Box 77553, Seattle, WA 98177
TEL 206.542.8422 | EMAIL *info@jurassicparliament.com*
www.jurassicparliament.com

Jurassic Parliament

Mastering meetings using Robert's Rules

CHEAT SHEET

LANGUAGE TIPS FOR MEETING MANAGEMENT

SITUATION	CHAIR CAN SAY
Call to order	*This meeting of the [name of organization] is called to order.*
Unanimous consent	*Without objection... If there is no objection...*
To begin discussion	*It has been moved and seconded that... Is there any discussion?*
If there is no second	*Since there is no second, the motion will not be considered.*
To end discussion	*Is there any further discussion?* or *Are you ready to vote?*
Process Point of Order	1. Member says, *"Point of Order."* 2. Chair says, "*State your point.*" 3. Member explains issue. 4. Chair says, "*The point is well taken,*" or "*The point is not well taken.*"
When someone says "Point of Order" but can't explain what they mean	*What rule has been broken?*
Process Point of Information	1. Member says, "*Point of Information.*" 2. Chair replies, "*State your question.*" 3. Member states question. 4. Chair can respond three ways: ▸ Respond yourself. ▸ Ask someone else to respond. ▸ Say, "*We'll get back to you later.*"
When "Point of Information" is misused to give information	*What information does the member need in order to decide how to vote?*
If someone is dominating the meeting	*No one may speak a second time until everyone who wishes to do so has spoken once. Does anyone else wish to speak on this topic?*
When comments are not germane (relevant)	*Members will kindly keep their remarks strictly to the topic under discussion.*
If people are whispering	*Members will kindly refrain from sidebar conversations.*
Adjourning the meeting	*There being no further business, this meeting is adjourned.*

- Strive to be firm, fair and friendly.
- Use the "third person" to keep things neutral and lessen conflict.
- Give up on the word *but*. Always say *and*.
- Say *kindly*, not *please*, which sounds like pleading.
- Say *very well* and move on.
- Beware of "negativity bias." No frowning, no sarcasm, no eye-rolling.
- Keep an emotional connection with the members by emphasizing what we have in common.

www.jurassicparliament.com

© Jurassic Parliament 2018. All rights reserved.