

MANAGING IDEAS CHECKLIST

The place where ideas are ultimately managed is in the meetings of a volunteer group or committee. Many committees are able to operate informally most of the time and are effective in that mode. However, every committee should have the understanding that, if things get sticky, good old Roberts Rules of Order should apply. If that understanding is in place, it then makes sense to practice for those potential "sticky" moments by following Robert's - more or less, most of the time. The following tips highlight key elements of Robert's.

TIPS FOR CONDUCTING MEETINGS

(Adapted from Public Management Institute)

1. Call for a motion so the group can discuss a certain point.
2. Motions are amended by inserting, adding, striking out, or substituting.
3. A motion can have only two amendments and the second one must apply to the first.
4. The chair should always restate the motion and any amendments.
5. Discussion comes after the motion is seconded and before any vote.
6. You may sense when the committee is through discussing and ask "Are you ready for the question?"
7. A motion postponed indefinitely is dead at least until the next meeting.
8. You can limit debate by general consent. "If no one objects, we will limit debate to 5 more minutes." An objection requires a 2/3 vote to limit.
9. A motion to reconsider a matter can only be presented by someone who voted on the prevailing side.
10. A motion to recess for a specific amount of time is not debatable and is useful to cool heavy debate or caucus to decide on the next move.
11. The chair should announce the result of a vote and the effect of the decision. "The ayes have it, and the bill will be paid."
12. Debate is always confined to pending motion; may be started by the person who made the motion; requires recognition of speaker by chair, is directed to the chair; gives all a chance to speak before someone speaks twice; prohibits the motion maker from speaking against the motion.