

1 without penalty in the form of payment of a fee. Until a
 member has paid such a fee assessed against him, he cannot
 vote or be recognized by the chair for any purpose.

5 After a *Call of the House* has been ordered, no motion is
 in order, even by unanimous consent, except motions relat-
 ing to the call. Motions to adjourn or dispense with further
 proceedings under the call, however, can be entertained
 after a quorum is present, or after the arresting officer re-
 ports that in his opinion a quorum cannot be obtained. An
 10 adjournment terminates all proceedings under the *Call of
 the House*.

15 §41. ORDER OF BUSINESS; ORDERS OF THE DAY; AGENDA OR PROGRAM

The terms *order of business*, *orders of the day*, *agenda*,
 and *program* refer to closely related concepts having to do
 with the order in which business is taken up in a session (8)
 and the prescheduling of particular business. The meaning
 20 of these terms often coincides, although each has its own
 applications in common usage.

An *order of business* is any established sequence in which
 it may be prescribed that business shall be taken up at a ses-
 sion of a given assembly. In the case of ordinary societies in
 25 which no more than a quarterly time interval (see p. 88)
 will elapse between regular meetings, an order of business
 that specifies such a sequence only in terms of certain gen-
 eral types or classes of business and gives only the *order* in
 which they are to be taken up is normally prescribed for all
 30 regular meetings by the rules of the organization. The typi-
 cal order of business of this kind is described on pages
 342-49. In other cases, such as in a convention, an order of
 business expressly adopted for a particular session frequently
 assigns positions, and even times, to specific subjects or
 35 items of business; and to this type of order of business the

terms *agenda* and *program** are applicable, as explained on
 pages 360-63. Although the terms *order of business*, *agenda*,
 and *program* relate primarily to the business of an entire ses-
 sion, the same terms are also applied to a part of the whole,
 in speaking of "the order of business," "the agenda," or "the
 5 program" of a meeting within a session.

An *order of the day* is an item of business that is presched-
 uled to be taken up during a given session, day, or meeting,
 or at a given hour (unless there is business having precedence
 over it that interferes). The methods by which orders of the
 day can be made, their division into the classes of *general or-
 ders* and *special orders*, and their treatment in cases where they
 come into conflict are explained on pages 353ff. General
 orders and special orders are also discussed with particular
 reference to making them by means of the motion to *Post-
 10 postpone* on pages 177-80 (see also *Call for the Orders of the Day*,
 18). Unless designated for particular hours or assigned posi-
 tions item by item in an agenda or program formally adopted
 for a given session, general orders and special orders are taken
 up under assigned headings or in customary positions allot-
 ted to each of these categories in the order of business. (Note
 such headings in the "standard" order of business described
 below.)

Within a meeting in which the only items of business
 that are in order have been specified and set in sequence in
 25 advance—as might occur, for example, in a particular meet-
 ing of a convention—the orders of the day are identical

*The term *program* has two senses in parliamentary usage. In the first
 sense, as used here, it refers to a type of order of business that may be iden-
 tical with an agenda, or (in a convention) may include an agenda together
 with the times for events outside of the business meetings (see also 59). In
 the second sense, as used on page 351, the term refers to a heading, often
 included *within* the order of business for meetings of ordinary societies,
 that covers talks, lectures, films, or other features of informational or en-
 ertainment value.

1 with the order of business (which, in such a case, is in the form of an agenda or program).

5 Usual Order of Business in Ordinary Societies

10 BASIC HEADINGS COVERING BUSINESS PROPER. The customary or "standard" order of business for ordinary societies that hold regular business sessions (lasting only a few hours) within at least quarterly time intervals (see p. 88), and that do not have special requirements, comprises the following subdivisions:

- 1) Reading and Approval of Minutes
- 2) Reports of Officers, Boards, and Standing Committees
- 15 3) Reports of Special (Select or Ad Hoc) Committees
- 4) Special Orders
- 5) Unfinished Business and General Orders
- 6) New Business

20 This series of headings is the prescribed order of business for regular meetings of organizations whose bylaws specify this book as parliamentary authority and which have not adopted a special order of business. It prescribes only the sequence of the headings, not the time to be allotted to each—which may vary with every meeting. Certain optional headings are also described following the detailed discussion of the regular headings below.

25 The presiding officer may find it helpful to have at hand a memorandum of the complete order of business, listing, under headings (2) and (3) as explained below, all known reports which are expected to be presented, and under headings (4) and (5), all matters which the minutes show are due to come up, arranged in proper sequence or, where applicable, listed with the times for which they have been set. The
30 secretary can prepare, or assist the presiding officer to pre-

pare, such a memorandum. In this connection, regarding the practice in some societies or assemblies of providing each member with a copy of the expected agenda in advance of a meeting, see page 363 at the end of this chapter.

After the presiding officer has called the meeting to order as described on page 24, and after any customary opening ceremonies (see optional headings, p. 349), the meeting proceeds through the different headings in the order of business:

1. *Reading and Approval of Minutes.* The chair says, "The Secretary will read the minutes." In all but the smallest meetings, the minutes are read by the secretary standing. In organizations where copies of the minutes of each previous meeting as prepared by the secretary are sent to all members in advance, the actual reading of them aloud may be waived if no member objects. In either case, the chair then asks, "Are there any corrections to the minutes?" and pauses. Corrections, when proposed, are usually handled by unanimous consent (pp. 51–53). It is generally smoother to do the approval of minutes also by unanimous consent, although a formal motion to approve them is not out of order. Such a motion is normally unnecessary unless, for example, there has been a dispute over the accuracy or propriety of something in the minutes. Whether or not a motion for approval has been offered, the chair may simply say, "If there are no corrections. [or "no further corrections"], the minutes stand [or "are"] approved [or "approved as read," or "approved as corrected"]." The actual correction is made in the text of the minutes being approved, and the minutes of the meeting making the correction merely state that a correction was made to the minutes of the prior meeting, without specifying what the correction was. If for any reason there are minutes of other meetings in addition to the last meeting that have not been read previously, they are taken in the order of date.

1 The practice of sending to all members advance copies
of the minutes as drafted by the secretary has both advan-
tages and disadvantages. It is natural for the members to
prefer to study the minutes beforehand to be better pre-
5 pared to offer corrections; and this procedure generally
saves time when the minutes come up for approval. On the
other hand, the minutes do not become *the* minutes and as-
sume their essential status as the official record of the pro-
ceedings of the society until they have been approved; and
10 before this happens, the secretary's draft may be materially
modified in the correction process. Members may miss
some of the corrections or neglect to mark them on their
copies—or may not get them right unless the chair repeats
them very carefully—with the result that many inaccurate
15 copies of the true minutes as finally approved are likely to
remain in existence. Only the secretary's corrected copy or
a retyping of it is official in such a case. (For "dispensing"
with the reading of the minutes, see pp. 456–57.)

2. *Reports of Officers, Boards, and Standing Committees.*

20 In most societies it is customary to hear reports from all of-
ficers (47, 48), boards (49), and standing committees (50)
only at annual meetings. At other meetings the chair calls
only on those who have reports to make, as by saying (in
calling upon the secretary), "Is there any correspondence?"
25 Or, "May we have the Treasurer's report." Or, "The chair
recognizes Mr. Downey, Chairman of the Membership
Committee, for a report." If the chair is uncertain, he may
ask, for example, "Does the Program Committee have a re-
port?" *Standing committees* listed in the bylaws are called
30 upon in the order in which they are listed.

If an officer, in reporting, makes a recommendation, he
should not himself move its implementation, but such a
motion can be made by another member as soon as the of-
ficer has concluded his report. In the case of a committee
35 report, on the other hand, the chairman or other reporting
member should make any motion(s) necessary to bring the

committee's recommendations before the assembly for con- 1
sideration. A motion arising out of an officer's, a board's,
or a committee's report is taken up immediately, since the
object of the order of business is to give priority to the
classes of business in the order listed. 5

If an item of business in this class is on the table (that
is, if it was laid on the table at the present session, or at the
preceding session if no more than a quarterly time interval
has intervened [see p. 88], and if the item has not been
taken from the table), it is in order to move to take such
10 business from the table under this heading (see 17, 34).

(For procedures to be followed in making reports and
in handling recommendations arising from reports, see 51.)

3. *Reports of Special Committees.* The special commit-
tees (50) that are to report are called on in the order in 15
which they were appointed. Only those special committees
that are prepared, or were instructed, to report on matters
referred to them should be called on. Business incident to
reports of special committees that is on the table can be
taken from the table under this heading (17, 34). 20

4. *Special Orders.* Under this heading (referring to
the explanation of *Orders of the Day* beginning on p. 353)
are taken up the following in the order listed:

- a) Any unfinished special orders (that is, special orders that 25
were not disposed of at the preceding meeting)—taken in
sequence beginning with the special order that was pend-
ing when that meeting adjourned if it adjourned while
one was pending, and continuing with the remaining un-
finished special orders in the order in which they were 30
made (that is, were set by action of the assembly).
- b) Items of business that have been made special orders for
the present meeting* without being set for specific
hours—taken in the order in which they were made.

*But not *the* special order (see pp. 359–60).

1 Regarding the interruption of business under this heading by special orders that have been set for particular hours, see pages 358ff.

5 Normally—unless an order of the day was made as a part of an agenda for a session—no motion is necessary at the time the order comes up, since the introduction of the question has been accomplished previously, as will be seen from the description of the methods by which orders of the day are made, on page 354. When a special order that was so introduced comes up, the chair announces it as pending, thus: “At
10 the last meeting, the resolution relating to funds for a new playground was made a special order for this meeting [or, if the special order was made by postponement, “. . . was postponed to this meeting and made a special order.”]. The res-
15 olution is as follows: ‘Resolved, That . . . [reading it].’ The question is on the adoption of the resolution.”

Matters that the bylaws require to be considered at a particular meeting, such as the nomination and election of officers, may be regarded as special orders for the meeting
20 and be considered under the heading of *Special Orders* in the order of business. If a special order is on the table, it is in order to move to take it from the table under this heading when no question is pending (17, 34).

5. *Unfinished Business and General Orders.* The term
25 *unfinished business*,* in cases where the regular business meetings of an organization are not separated by more than a quarterly time interval (p. 88), refers to questions that have come over from the previous meeting (other than special orders) as a result of that meeting’s having adjourned without complet-
30 ing its order of business (pp. 228–29) and without scheduling an adjourned meeting (9, 22) to complete it.

*The expression “old business” should be avoided, since it may incorrectly suggest the further consideration of matters that have been finally disposed of.

A *general order* (as explained under *Orders of the Day*, below) is any question which, usually by postponement, has been made an order of the day without being made a special order.

The heading of *Unfinished Business and General Orders* includes items of business in the four categories that are listed below in the order in which they are taken up. Of these, the first three constitute “Unfinished Business,” while the fourth consists of “General Orders”:

- a) The question that was pending when the previous meeting adjourned, if that meeting adjourned while a question other than a special order was pending. 10
- b) Any questions that were unfinished business at the previous meeting but were not reached before it adjourned—taken in the order in which they were due to come up at that meeting as indicated under (a) and (c). 15
- c) Any questions which, by postponement or otherwise, were set as general orders for the previous meeting, or for a particular hour during that meeting, but were not reached before it adjourned—taken in the order in which the general orders were made. 20
- d) Matters that were postponed to, or otherwise made general orders for, the present meeting—taken in the order in which they were made. 25

Regarding the relationship between this heading in the order of business and general orders for particular hours, see pages 355–57.

The chair should not announce the heading of *Unfinished Business and General Orders* unless the minutes show that there is some business to come up under it. In the latter case, he should have all such subjects listed in correct sequence in a memorandum prepared in advance of the meeting. He should *not* ask, “Is there any unfinished busi- 35

1 ness?" but should state the question on the first item of
 business that is due to come up under this heading; and
 when it has been disposed of, he should proceed through
 the remaining subjects in their proper order. If a question
 5 was pending when the previous meeting adjourned, for ex-
 ample, the chair might begin this heading by saying,
 "Under Unfinished Business and General Orders, the first
 item of business is the motion relating to use of the parking
 facilities, which was pending when the last meeting ad-
 10 journed. The question is on the adoption of the motion
 'That . . . [stating the motion].'" Later under the same
 heading, in announcing a general order that was made by
 postponing a question, the chair might say, "The next item
 of business is the resolution relating to proposed improve-
 15 ment of our newly purchased picnic grounds, which was
 postponed to this meeting. The resolution is as follows:
 'Resolved, That . . . [reading the resolution].' The question
 is on the adoption of the resolution."

Any item of business (in whatever class) that is on the
 20 table can be taken from the table under this heading at any
 time when no question is pending (17, 34). To obtain the
 floor for the purpose of moving to take a question from the
 table at such a time, a member can rise and address the
 chair, interrupting him as he starts to announce the next
 25 item of business after the previous one is disposed of.

It should be noted that, with the exception indicated in
 the preceding paragraph, a subject should not be taken up
 under Unfinished Business and General Orders unless it has
 acquired such status by one of the formal processes (a), (c),
 30 or (d) listed on the preceding page. If brief consultation
 during a meeting leads to an informal understanding that a
 certain subject should be "brought up at the next meet-
 ing," that does not make it unfinished business. Instead, the
 matter should be introduced at the next meeting as new
 35 business, as explained below.

6. *New Business.* After unfinished business and general
 orders have been disposed of, the chair asks, "Is there any new
 business?" Members can then introduce new items of busi-
 ness, or can move to take from the table any matter that is on
 the table (17, 34), in the order in which they are able to ob-
 5 tain the floor when no question is pending, as explained in 3
 and 4. So long as members are reasonably prompt in claiming
 the floor, the chair cannot prevent the making of legitimate
 motions or deprive members of the right to introduce legiti-
 mate business, by hurrying through the proceedings. 10

OPTIONAL HEADINGS. In addition to the stan-
 dard order of business as just described, regular meetings of
 organizations sometimes include proceedings of the type
 listed below, which may be regarded as optional in the
 order of business prescribed by this book. 15

After the call to order and *before the reading of the min-
 utes*, the next two headings may be included:

Opening Ceremonies or Exercises. Opening ceremonies
 immediately after the meeting is called to order may include
 20 the Invocation (which, if offered, should always be placed
 first), the singing of the National Anthem, the reciting of
 the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag, a ritual briefly recalling
 the objects or ideals of the organization, or the like.

Roll Call. In some organizations it is customary at
 meetings to call the roll of officers in order to verify their
 attendance—or, sometimes in very small societies, even to
 call the roll of members. If there is a roll call of this nature,
 it should take place at the end of the opening ceremonies
 unless a special rule of the organization assigns it a different
 30 position in the order of business. The chair announces it by
 saying, "The Secretary will call the roll of officers [or "will
 call the roll"]."

Consent Calendar. Legislatures, city, town, or county
 councils, or other assemblies which have a heavy work load 35

1 including a large number of routine or noncontroversial matters may find a *consent calendar* a useful tool for disposing of such items of business. Commonly, when such a matter has been introduced or reported by a committee for
 5 consideration in the assembly, its sponsor, or, sometimes, an administrator, may seek to have it placed on the consent calendar. This calendar is called over periodically *at a point established in the agenda by special rule of order, at least preceding standing committee reports*. The matters listed on it
 10 are taken up in order, unless objected to, in which case they are restored to the ordinary process by which they are placed in line for consideration on the regular agenda. The special rule of order establishing a consent calendar may provide that, when the matters on the calendar are called
 15 up, they may be considered in gross or without debate or amendment. Otherwise, they are considered under the rules just as any other business, in which case the "consent" relates only to permitting the matter to be on the calendar for consideration without conforming to the usual, more
 20 onerous, rules for reaching measures in the body.

After the completion of new business—that is, when no one claims the floor to make a motion in response to the chair's query, "Is there any further new business?"—the chair may proceed to one or more of the following headings, in an order that may be subject to variation determined by the practice of the organization.

Good of the Order, General Good and Welfare, or Open Forum. This heading, included by some types of societies in their order of business, refers to the general welfare of
 30 the organization, and may vary in character. Under this heading (in contrast to the general parliamentary rule that allows discussion only with reference to a pending motion), members who obtain the floor commonly are permitted to offer informal observations regarding the work of the or-
 35 ganization, the public reputation of the society or its mem-

bership, or the like. Certain types of announcements may tend to fall here. Although the Good of the Order often involves no business or motions, the practice of some organizations would place motions or resolutions relating to formal disciplinary procedures for offenses outside a meeting (61) at this point. In some organizations, the program (see below) is looked upon as a part of the Good of the Order.

Announcements. The chair may make, or call upon other officers or members to make, any necessary announcements; or, if the practice of the organization permits it, members can briefly obtain the floor for such a purpose. The placing of general announcements at this point in the order of business does not prevent the chair from making an urgent announcement at any time.

Program. If there is to be a talk, film, or other program of a cultural, educational, or civic nature, it is usually presented before the meeting is adjourned, since it may prompt a desire on the part of the assembly to take action. Although the program is commonly placed at the end of the order of business in such cases, it can, by special rule or practice, be received before the minutes are read; or, by suspending the rules (25), it can be proceeded to at any time during the meeting. If, in courtesy to a guest speaker who is present, the chair wishes the talk to be located at an unscheduled point within the business portion of the meeting, he can usually obtain unanimous consent for a suspension of the rules by simply announcing, "If there is no objection, we will hear our speaker's address at this time."

Taking Up Business Out of Its Proper Order

Any particular item of business can be taken up out of its proper order by adopting a motion to suspend the rules (25) by a two-thirds vote, although this is usually arranged

1 by unanimous consent (pp. 51–53). Hence, an important
committee report or an urgent item of new business can be
advanced in order to assure its full and unhurried consider-
ation. If desired, before the completion of the advanced
5 question the regular order of business can be returned to by
a majority vote—by adopting a motion to lay the pending
question on the table (17).

To take up a motion out of its proper order—for exam-
ple, to introduce an item of new business before that head-
10 ing is reached—a member who has obtained the floor can
say, “I ask unanimous consent to introduce at this time a
resolution on financing better schools.” If there is any ob-
jection, or the member anticipates that there may be, he can
say, “I move to suspend the rules that interfere with the in-
15 troduction at this time of . . .” If unanimous consent is
given or if this motion is adopted by a two-thirds vote, the
member is immediately recognized to introduce the resolu-
tion. If only one or two items stand ahead of the item it is
desired to reach, it may be just as simple to lay the inter-
20 vening items on the table individually (17), or to postpone
them as they arise (14). It is not in order to lay on the table
or postpone a *class* of questions, like committee reports, or
anything but the question that is actually before the assem-
bly (see pp. 176–77, 203, 207–208, 351–52).

25 The chair himself cannot depart from the prescribed
order of business, which only the assembly can do by at
least a two-thirds vote. This is an important protection in
cases where some of the members principally involved in a
particular question may be unable to be present through an
30 entire meeting. When such a departure from the order of
business is justified, however, it is usually easy for the chair
to obtain the necessary authorization from the assembly.
He can say, for example, “The chair will entertain a motion
to suspend the rules, and take up . . .”; or (for obtaining
35 unanimous consent), “If there is no objection, the chair

proposes at this time to proceed to take up . . .” (see also
illustration under the heading *Program* above). 1

Orders of the Day 5

An *order of the day*, as stated above, is a particular sub-
ject, question, or item of business that is set in advance to
be taken up during a given session, day, or meeting, or at a
given hour, provided that no business having precedence
over it interferes. In cases where more than a quarterly time
10 interval (p. 88) will elapse before the next regular business
session of the organization, an order of the day cannot be
made for a time beyond the end of the present session. If
the next regular business session will be held within a quar-
terly time interval, an order of the day cannot be made be-
15 yond the end of that next session. An order of the day
cannot be taken up before the time for which it is set, ex-
cept by reconsidering (37) the vote that established the
order (so long as a reconsideration is possible), or by sus-
pending the rules (25) by a two-thirds vote. 20

Orders of the day are divided into the classes of *general*
orders and *special orders*. A special order is an order of the
day that is made with the stipulation that any rules interfer-
ing with its consideration at the specified time shall be sus-
25 pended except those relating: (a) to adjournment or recess
(8, 20, 21); (b) to questions of privilege (19); (c) to spe-
cial orders that were made before this special order was
made; or (d) to a question that has been assigned priority
over all other business at a meeting by being made *the spe-*
30 *cial order* for the meeting as described on pages 359–60.
An important consequence of this suspending effect is that,
with the four exceptions just mentioned, a special order for
a particular hour interrupts any business that is pending
when that hour arrives. Since the making of a special order
35 has the effect of suspending any interfering rules, it requires