

# Running a meeting using Rosenberg's Rules of Order

Presented by Ashle Crocker  
Assistant City Attorney



# Rosenberg's Rules

- Procedures to guide the decision-making process for decision-making bodies. The Rules are guided by the following four principles:
  - Rules should establish order
  - Rules should be clear
  - Rules should be user-friendly
  - Rules should enforce the will of the majority while protecting the rights of the minority.

# Quorum

- ❑ More than half the body; quorum required for the body to conduct business
- ❑ The body can lose a quorum during the meeting if a member departs or leaves the dais



# Basic Procedure for Meetings

**Item Agendized.** The item is placed on the agenda.

- A body's rules of procedure usually say how items get placed on the agenda;
- The Brown Act open meetings laws forbid off-agenda items from being discussed and acted upon.

**1. Item Called.** At the appropriate time on the agenda, the presiding officer takes up the item for discussion;

- Disqualification by recusing

**2. Report/Presentation.** An agency staff member or other person presents an overview of the item, together with a recommendation to approve or deny the item;

# Basic Procedure for Meetings (continued)

**3. Questions.** Members of the decision-making body ask questions to the presenter;

**4. Public Comment.**

- Public hearings
- Time limits



**5. Motion.** A member of the decision-making body makes a motion to approve, amend, or deny the item.

- Staff recommended motion
- Focus on the substance of the desired action

# Basic Procedure for Meetings

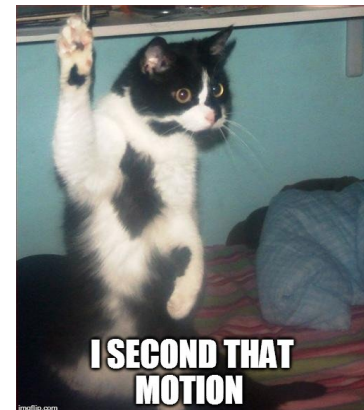
## (continued)

6. **Second.** Another member of the decision-making body “seconds” the motion;
7. **Understanding.** Chair ensures body understands the motion on the floor;
8. **Discussion.** Chair invites discussion of the motion;
9. **Vote.** The body votes; and
10. **Announcement.** The chairperson or secretary announces the result of the vote.



# Motions

- ❑ **Basic Motion:** "I move we ....." (majority vote)
- ❑ **Motion to Amend:** "I move we amend the motion..." This takes the basic motion and amends it in some way (majority vote)
- ❑ **Motion to Substitute:** "I move a substitute motion..." This eliminates the basic motion and puts a new motion before the body. (majority vote)
- ❑ **Motion to Continue:** "I move we continue this item". This stops debate and sets a time for the body to hear the item at a later date or time. Can be to a date certain (no new notice required) or not.



# Friendly Amendment

- ❑ Alternative to motions to amend or substitute.  
    "I suggest a friendly amendment"
- ❑ If the maker of the original motion and the person that seconded the original motion agree, the new amended motion becomes the pending motion on the floor.
- ❑ If either the maker or the person who seconded rejects the friendly amendment, the original motion remains. The proposer can then formally move to amend.



# Withdraw a Motion

- ❑ Maker of the motion may at any time interrupt a speaker and withdraw his/her motion.
- ❑ The motion is immediately deemed withdrawn, although the chair may ask the person who seconded the motion if he/she wishes to make the motion and any other member may also make the motion. (no vote)

**WITHDRAWN**

# Multiple Motions (up to 3 at one time)

- ❑ Vote should proceed first on the last motion that is made
- ❑ If the third or second motion passes, the remaining motions are moot



# Voting

- ❑ City ordinance requires a majority of the entire body
- ❑ Voting options: yes, no, recuse, and abstain.
  - ❑ Recuse vs Abstain

**Table A: Recusal and Abstention Compared**

	<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Defined</b>	<b>Participate</b>	<b>Quorum</b>	<b>Exceptions</b>
<b>Recusal</b>	Mandatory	Readily identifiable, direct economic interest; must declare before an action item is discussed	May not discuss or vote upon at all	Not counted towards a quorum on that item	May make presentation
<b>Abstention</b>	Voluntary	Legitimate, non-financial interest, appearance of impropriety; must declare as soon as it becomes self-apparent	Depends when declared, but no participation after declared	Counts towards a quorum on that item	If direct economic conflict becomes apparent after start of action item, abstention is required



# Voting Continued

- ❑ If one member is absent, recuses or abstains, and the vote is tied 3-3, the motion fails.
- ❑ Simple majority vote.
- ❑ Roll call vote.



# Questions?



*any  
questions?*