

## Albuquerque Model City Council Curriculum

### “Cheat Sheet” Parliamentary Procedure

A City Council meeting follows an **agenda**, a list of what will happen.

Someone writes down what happens at the meeting, called the **minutes**.

Nothing gets discussed at the meeting without a **motion being on the floor**:

- A member raises hand when no one else has the floor.
- The chair\* **recognizes** the member by name.
- The member makes the **motion**: I move that (or "to") \_\_\_\_\_."
- Another member **seconds** the motion: "I second the motion or I second it or second."
- Consideration of the Motion.
- Vote on the Motion.

*\*In the case of the City Council, the chair is the president of the council.*

#### HOW TO ACCOMPLISH WHAT YOU WANT IN MEETINGS

**Let's say you want to propose a new idea or action for the group.**

- Raise your hand and address the chair, then wait for her to recognize you.
- State the motion. Say, "Madame President, I move that \_\_\_\_\_."
- Wait for someone to second it. He says "I second that motion."
- The chair states the motion: "It is moved and seconded that \_\_\_\_\_. Are you ready for the question?" (The word *question* can be used for the word *motion*.) If no one raises his hand, the chair takes the vote.
  - If someone wants to discuss the motion, he raises his hand and waits for the chair to recognize him.
  - The person who proposed the motion has the privilege of opening and closing the debate on it.
  - A councilor who is speaking can **yield the floor** to let another councilor speak.
  - Debate on a motion should be polite.
- If no one seeks the floor for further debate, the chair says, "Are you ready for the question?"
  - The chair says: "The question is on the adoption of the motion that \_\_\_\_\_. As many as are in favor, say 'Aye'. (Pause for response.) Those opposed, say 'Nay'. (Pause for response.) Those abstained please say 'Aye'."
  - If a motion ends in a tie vote, the motion loses.
  - The chair announces the result of the vote. "The ayes have it, the motion carries, and \_\_\_\_\_" or "The nays have it and the motion fails."

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### **You want to change some of the wording that is being discussed.**

- After recognition, "Madame President, I move that the motion be amended by adding the following words \_\_\_\_\_."
- After recognition, "Madame President, I move that the motion be amended by striking out the following words \_\_\_\_\_."
- After recognition, "Madame President, I move that the motion be amended by striking out the following words, \_\_\_\_\_, and adding in their place the following words \_\_\_\_\_."

### **You want to move the discussion to later in the meeting.**

- After recognition, "Madame President, I move that the motion be **tabled**."

### **You want the council to have more time than this meeting to consider the question.**

- After recognition, "Madame President, I move to postpone the question until \_\_\_\_\_."

### **You feel that an idea or proposal being discussed needs to be studied more before voting.**

- After recognition, "Madame President, I move that the question be referred to a committee made up of members Jones, Chavez and Begay."

### **You want to kill a motion that is being discussed.**

- After recognition, "Madame President, I move to postpone the question indefinitely."

### **You think discussion has gone on for too long and you want to stop discussion and vote.**

- After recognition, "Madame President, I move to the previous question."

### **You think discussion is getting long, but you want to give a reasonable length of time to consider the question.**

- After recognition, "Madame President, I move to limit discussion to two minutes per speaker."

### **You want to take a break for a while.**

- After recognition, "Madame President, I move to recess for ten minutes."

### **You want the meeting to end.**

- After recognition, "Madame President, I move to adjourn."

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### **You have made a motion and after discussion, are sorry you made it.**

- After recognition, "Madame President, I ask permission to withdraw my motion."

### **The noise outside the meeting has become so great that you are having trouble hearing.**

- Without recognition, "Point of personal privilege."
- Chair: "State your point."
- Member: "There is too much noise, I can't hear."

### **It is obvious that the meeting is not following proper rules.**

- Without recognition, "I rise to a point of order," or "Point of order."

### **You are wondering about some of the facts under discussion.**

- Without recognition, "Point of information."

### **You are confused about some of the parliamentary rules.**

- Without recognition, "Point of parliamentary inquiry."

### **You want to appeal the president's decision about something.**

- After recognition, "Madame President, I move to appeal that decision because \_\_\_\_."
- The president responds.
- The council votes. If a majority agrees with you, the president's decision is overturned.