Nancy Sylvester, MA, PRP, CPP-T

Professional Registered Parliamentarian
Certified Professional Parliamentarian
Professional Speaker/Trainer/Mentor

nancysylvester.com

4826 River Bluff Court
Loves Park, IL 61111

Business & Fax: 815.877.5290
Home: 815.877.2666
nancy@nancysylvester.com

Script of a Main Motion

Ever wonder how in the world presiding officers remember every step in the motion making process? While it's certainly the case that many presiding officers have a complete understanding of parliamentary procedure and know exactly what to say in almost every circumstance, a lot of presiding officers rely on what some might call "cheat sheets" but in the parliamentary world are called "scripts." That's right – they read from a prepared document which tells them exactly what they need to say and do for any particular motion. Here is a script of what you should say in processing a main motion. It is meant to make you more comfortable in a meeting. Take it to meetings with you that you chair so you are prepared to say it correctly!

Script: Main Motion

Member: I move that . . .

Chair: Is there a second to the motion? [This statement is eliminated if a member calls out "second" or if the motion is made on behalf of a committee.]

Second member: I second the motion.

Chair: It is moved and seconded that [state the motion]. Is there any discussion? [Since the maker of the motion has first right to speak on the motion, the chair should call on the maker of the motion first.]

[It is during this time that a motion is considered pending and secondary motions may be applied to it.]

[After discussion] Is there any further discussion? Are you ready for the question? [Pause] The question is on the adoption of the motion to [clearly restate the motion].

Voice vote:
Those in favor, say aye. [Pause for response]

Those opposed, say no. [If the chair is in doubt of the results of a voice vote, the chair should state "The chair is in doubt, therefore a rising (or counted) vote will be taken." Then proceed with a rising or counted vote.]

Script of a Main Motion

Show of hands vote:
Those in favor of the motion, please raise your hand. [Pause] Please lower your hand.
Those opposed to the motion, please raise your hand. [Pause] Please lower your hand.

Rising vote:
Those in favor of the motion, please stand. [Pause] Please be seated. Those opposed
to the motion, please stand. [Pause] Please be seated.

Ballot vote:
Please mark your ballots clearly, fold them one time, and hand them directly to a teller.

Roll call vote:
The clerk will now call the roll.

Chair: [Announces the voting results]

Uncounted voice, rising, or show of hands vote:
The affirmative has it, the motion is adopted, we will [state the effect of the vote] and the
next business in order is . . .

or

The negative has it, the motion is lost and [state the effect of the vote]and the next
business in order is . . .

Counted majority vote:
There are _____ votes in the affirmative and _____ votes in the negative. There is a
majority in the affirmative and the motion is adopted. We will [state the effect of the vote]
and the next business in order is . . .

or

There are _____ votes in the affirmative and _____ votes in the negative. There is less
than a majority in the affirmative and the motion is lost [state the effect of the vote] and
the next business in order is . . .

Counted two-thirds vote:
There are _____ votes in the affirmative and _____ votes in the negative. There is a
two-thirds vote in the affirmative and the motion is adopted. We will [state the effect of
the vote] and the next business in order is . . .

or

Script of a Main Motion

There are _____ votes in the affirmative and _____ votes in the negative. There is less than a two-thirds vote in the affirmative and the motion is lost [state the effect of the vote] and the next business in order is . . .

_____

Rules for a Main Motion:

- Needs a second
- Is debatable
- Is amendable
- Needs a majority vote