“Playing Nicely with Others”

or,

A Primer on Parliamentary Etiquette
Be Frugal

➢ “The clock upbraids me with a waste of time.” W. Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*

➢ Don’t use more Rules of Order than you need.
  – Amount Used ~ Group Size
  – Amount Used ~ Amount of controversy
Be A Clockwatcher

➢ Your Mother always told you to “Be On Time”—
  – If you’re the Chair, Start on Time
  – Don’t punish those who are on time
    • People stop doing things they’re punished for, like being on time.
Be A Clockwatcher

- More importantly, **End On Time**
  - If members know that the ending time is reliable, they can plan their day and will be more willing to participate fully
  - If the group needs more time
    - Take a vote to extend the meeting
    - Have another meeting, later
Honor the Boss

- ALL comments and discussion should be addressed to the Chair, and only the Chair, never to another member.
- The Chair’s job is to be in Control, Impartial, On Time and Considerate.
- The Member’s job is to be Prepared, On Time, Attentive and Considerate.
Be Focused

- Every Spouse has heard it: “Don’t change the subject!!”
  - Confine your remarks to the merits of the pending question
- Get a little thrill
  - Put your cellphones, computers and pagers on vibrate, silent or off
Honor Your Colleagues

- Refrain from attacking a member’s motives, age, intellect or driver’s license photo—speak only to the issue.
- The maker of a motion is not allowed to speak against the motion. (If he doesn’t like the motion, he can ask to withdraw it)
The Art of Being Rude
(Speaking without being recognized by the Chair)

- Normally, when a speaker has the floor, he or she may **not** be interrupted, except in eight cases:
  - To call for a Division of the House
    - (A show of hands or a standing vote)
  - To Object to consideration of an issue
  - To Rise to a Point of Order
  - To Rise to a Point of Parliamentary Inquiry
  - To Appeal from a decision of the Chair
  - To Reconsider a motion
  - To Rise to a question of privilege
  - To Call for the Orders of the Day
The Art of Being Rude
(Speaking without being recognized by the Chair)

- We have very few of those eight, but
- Our most common error:
  - The member who “Calls the Question” to ask for an immediate vote must be recognized by the Chair and obtain the floor.
  - A vote to Call the Question must pass by a 2/3 majority of those voting
Stop Violent Agreement

- As a Chair or Participant:
  
  • If your point of view has been stated, even by someone else, it’s not necessary that it be stated again and again and again and again....
  
  • If you have nothing new to add, don’t.
Roadblocks and Obstacles

- Remember, empty barrels make the most noise
  - Don’t be afraid, as Chair, to cut off discussion if it seems to be serving no purpose other than a speaker listening to his/her own voice
  - As a group, set prior time limits for debate if it looks as if you’ll need them (controversy, etc.)
Roadblocks and Obstacles

- Your Mother always told you to take turns-
  - No one gets to speak to an issue the second time until everyone who wishes to has spoken a first time
At the end of the meeting, watch out for AOB

- "Is there Any Other Business"
- May become “Any Old Bull"
No Bull—Any Questions?