

TRPPOA Bylaws Article I, Section 8 stipulates “*The Board may prescribe reasonable rules for the conduct of all meetings of the Board and Members and in the absence of such rules, Robert's Rules of Order shall be used.*”

With this in mind, the Board, at the 11/17/2021 Annual Directors’ meeting, selected “*American Institute of Parliamentarians Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure*” to be the standard for Parliamentary Procedure for all Board and Members meetings. This is to continue until such time as the Board votes to make a change.

The comments following in this document and the other documents posted in this section of the TRPPOA website are based on the above mentioned book.

What Is Parliamentary Law?

Parliamentary law is the code of rules and ethics for working together in groups. It has evolved through centuries out of the experience of individuals working together for a common purpose. It provides the means of translating beliefs and ideas into effective group action. It is logic and common sense crystallized into law, and is as much a part of the body of the law as is civil or criminal procedure. The rules of parliamentary procedure are found both in common law and in statutory law.

The common law of parliamentary procedure is the body of principles, rules, and usages that has developed from court decisions on parliamentary questions, and is based on reason and long observance. The common law of parliamentary procedure applies in all parliamentary situations except where a statutory law governs.

The statutory law of procedure consists of statutes, or law, relating to procedures that have been enacted by federal, state, or local legislative bodies. These rules of parliamentary procedure apply only to the particular organizations covered by the law.

What Organizations Must Observe Parliamentary Law?

Deliberative bodies, such as business, cultural, religious, social, fraternal, professional, educational, labor, civic, scientific, medical, and governmental organizations, are subject to the principles of common parliamentary law. All profit and nonprofit corporations and associations and the boards, councils, commissions, and committees of government must observe parliamentary law.

When Must Organizations Observe Parliamentary Law?

The courts hold that all deliberative groups, with the exception of state, national, and international governmental bodies, must follow general parliamentary law whenever they are meeting to transact business. If, however, a group meets solely for other purposes—for example, social or educational—it is, of course, not subject to parliamentary rules.

Even a small group—for example, a finance committee or a board of education—must observe parliamentary law. However, the procedure in such groups is usually more informal than it is in a large convention.

When a group meets for the purpose of presenting proposals, discussing them, and arriving at democratic decisions, parliamentary procedure is not only helpful but indispensable. In all organizations the rules of procedure must be observed if the actions of the assembly are to be legal.

Where Parliamentary Rules Are Found

The four basic sources of the parliamentary rules governing a particular organization, arranged in the order of their rank, are:

1. **Law.** The law, consisting of the common law of parliamentary procedure and the statutes enacted by federal, state, or local governments, is the highest source of parliamentary rules for any organization.
2. **Charter.** The charter granted by government to an incorporated organization ranks second as a source. The charter granted by a parent organization to a constituent or component unit of the organization ranks next to its charter from government.
3. **Bylaws and Rules.** Any provisions of the bylaws of a parent organization that regulate the constituent or component units of the organization rank ahead of the bylaws adopted by the units. The bylaws, or the constitution and bylaws, and other adopted rules of an organization rank next.
4. **Adopted parliamentary authority.** The book adopted by an organization as its authority on all procedural questions *not* covered by the law or its charters, bylaws, or adopted rules completes the sources of the parliamentary rules governing an organization. A parliamentary authority is a compilation of the parliamentary rules from all of these sources, assembled and organized for convenient reference.