

## Parly Notes: 2006-1

This is to be one of series of posting concerning a wide variety of topics about parliamentary procedure, Indiana Chapter Meeting CDE, and the two topics combined. The intent is to provide some basic points about parliamentary procedure. The reports will be based on Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 10<sup>th</sup> edition (2000) (RONR). (If you have older editions—don't use.) This point is important from at least three standpoints:

- a) RONR is the set “parliamentary authority”(PA) for the FFA---national and state organizations and for the Indiana Chapter Meeting CDE and the National Parliamentary Procedure CDE. This point is important because as we work in our various communities and with different organizations (civic and governmental) you may find that some have some other PA. RONR is likely used by 80% of all organizations (at least they claim too). Others used include: Sturgis/Code of Conduct, Demeter, and others. While viewing either the state or national legislative bodies handle parliamentary procedure keep in mind that neither use any of these but their own version of Johnson's or Cushing's or other. So don't be surprised to hear the presiding officer say something like: “Without objection the motion to Reconsider is Laid on the Table” after each vote.
- b) As the “ag teacher” and “FFA Advisor” you may often find you are the default parliamentarian for the community. So besides your efforts to teach this leadership skill and train a team for Chapter Meeting CDE you may find yourself being asked formally and informally about a variety of topics on conducting business at meetings or writing Bylaws or whatever.
- c) The comments contained in these various postings will attempt to be as accurate as possible with the understanding that not even all the “experts” agree on everything (check out the NAP website “question and answer forum” to see this happen.)
- d) Much of the selection of material to be covered is based on personal experience which has included over 50 years of accumulated time as president/chairman of organizations or major committees (local, district, and state---civic and governmental units), attending X many other meetings over the last many years, FFA advisor with Chapter Meeting teams which participated at the district, section, state, and national levels, member of American Institute of Parliamentarians and National Association of Parliamentarians (no special designations with either), and service as the parliamentarian for several local groups and at the state level for Indiana FFA and others and now trying to assist the National FFA as convention parliamentarian. Simple philosophy is that use of accepted parliamentary procedure practices provides for meetings that are democratic, efficient, and legally correct.
- e) In reviewing the many options for motions and acts in parliamentary procedure I find that most of them I have never ever used in the real world---and in most cases that is the way it should have been. RONR is a somewhat complex PA in that it seeks to serve the needs of everyone from a Town Council or County Commissioners with 3 members to an organization of 20 members all the way up to the National Republican or Democrat Convention (or the National FFA

- Convention) with many delegates and a complex agenda. This complicates things a bit in that many of the “possible” motions/acts are not very likely to be used. At least, not constructively (point of what sometimes is referred to as “dirty parly” which is part of why there is a bad taste in some people’s mouth for anything called parliamentary procedure---the other being that someone who is trying to “bully” their way may be cut off when correct procedures are enforced.)
- f) The materials covered in these various posting will attempt to provide basic background for usable “use” of parliamentary procedure. Since in a contest format there will be need to make situations complicated enough to challenge teams some of the more “exotic” motions will be used from time to time. Remember the rules say for the state and the national that the entire 700+ pages of RONR are possible for reference and use.
  - g) Again, any questions are welcome and will attempt to give a fact based answer--- I am still “by the owl” “—hoping my advice will always be based on true knowledge and wisdom”.