

## PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE BASICS

The following are the foundational concepts upon which parliamentary procedure is based:

- **One thing at a time.** Only one main motion is allowed on the floor at a time, but there is a system to put that motion aside if something more urgent comes up.
- **One person, too.** Only one person may talk at a time.
- **And only one time per meeting.** The same motion, or practically the same motion, can not be made more than once per session (the only exception is if a member changes his or her mind).
- **Enough of us have to be here to decide.** The group determines the minimum number of people (called a quorum) that must be present to make a decision for the whole group.
- **Protected even if absent.** The rights of the members who are absent are protected.
- **Vote requirements are based on members' rights.** The determination of what kind of vote is needed (such as majority, two thirds, and so on) is based on members' rights. If an action gives rights to the members, it requires a majority vote to pass. If an action takes away rights from members, it requires a two-thirds vote to pass.
- **Silence = consent.** If a member chooses to abstain from voting, that member is giving his or her consent to the decision made by the group.
- **Everybody is equal.** All voting members have equal rights. The majority rules but the minority has the right to be heard and to attempt to change the minds of the majority.