

The President's Guide

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x Detailed Steps for Conducting A Meeting

(Please refer to **PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE .. BASIC AGENDA FOR REGULAR BETA SIGMA PHI MEETINGS**. It is the best script to follow and includes more explanation than what is written below. However, there is additional and good explanatory information here too. It is highly recommended you follow the above referred to **BASIC AGENDA FOR REGULAR BΣΦ Meetings**.)

1. "The meeting will please come to order. May we stand, join hands and repeat together the Opening Ritual." **Note:** Some chapters do not join hands for the Opening Ritual, others do. *Your own chapter/council determines whether you join hands or not.* Either is acceptable, i.e., whatever your tradition is.
2. "The Secretary will call the roll." (If the Recording Secretary is absent, the President *appoints* someone to call the roll and take minutes.)
3. "The Secretary will read the minutes of the last meeting."
 - a. Minutes are read.

"Are there any corrections?" (Pause long enough to allow corrections to be made if necessary.)

"If not, they stand approved as read."

(If there are corrections, after they have been made, the statement by the President is:

"The minutes are approved as corrected."
4. "Is there any official communication from International?" (Though the President receives the correspondence, she *gives it to the Corresponding Secretary to be read*. If any action needs to be taken, it is done so now, or referred to one of the Standing Committees.)
5. "Is there any other communication to be brought before the chapter?"

- a. If there is, it is read at this time.
6. "The Vice-President, who is the official hostess of the chapter, will introduce our guests and transferees."
7. "May we have the Treasurer's report."

After this is given, the President *does not ask for approval* but states:

"Are there any corrections?"

If there are none, she says:

"If not, the report will be placed on file subject to audit."

If there are corrections, after being made, she says:

"The report, as corrected, will be placed on file subject to audit."

8. "May we have the report of the Executive Board meeting?"

The minutes are *not* read -- **only a report is given**. The Board can and should make recommendations for the efficient operation of the chapter. The entire chapter makes the final decision after careful consideration, or any necessary revisions, of the proposed recommendations. The member giving the report can place the recommendation in the form of a motion and does not require a second. Since it is coming from the Board, it is already understood that at least two people want to have it placed on the floor – which is the purpose of a second. The member reading the report would state at the conclusion, "*Madam President, by direction of the Executive Board, I move the adoption of the following recommendation*" It is then discussed and voted upon by the entire membership present.

Following this report of the Executive Board (and action, if any is necessary), the President asks:

"Are there reports from any other officer?"

If the chapter is a member of a City Council, at this time the President asks:

"May we have the report from the Council representative on the City Council meeting?"

9. “May we have the report from the Program Committee?”

Following this report, she calls upon all of the other Standing Committees in order . . . Membership, Social, Publicity, Ways and Means, Service, Yearbook, Scrapbook, Telephone/Web, Secret Sister/Sunshine and so forth.

If a committee makes a recommendation when giving its report and action needs to be taken, the member giving the report would move for its adoption as outlined in step #8.

10. “Are there reports from Special Committees?”

11. “Is there any unfinished business?” (It is not called ‘old business’.)

12. “Is there any new business?”

13. How meeting is adjourned.

“Is there any further business to be brought before the meeting?” (Pause long enough to allow anyone to speak who might have something to present. If no one speaks, the President states:

“The meeting is adjourned.”

14. In a newly organized chapter, the Pledge Training conducted by the chapter Vice President (*or Pledge Trainer*), is held at this time. For an established chapter, the Pledge Training is conducted at times other than the regular chapter meetings.

15. For a new chapter, following completion of Pledge Training, the President states:

“The Program Committee will now conduct the program.”

NOTE – Step 14 would be omitted for an established chapter.

16. Following the program presentation and discussion, the Program chairman would advise, “This concludes the program for the evening.”

The President would lead the chapter in the Closing Ritual by saying:

“May we now stand and join together in repeating the Closing Ritual.”

Helpful suggestion: Printout the *Basic Agenda of A Regular Beta Sigma Phi Meeting*. Make enough copies to last the entire sorority year. Having this agenda in front of you will help you plan your next meeting, assuring you won't exclude anything or anyone! It will ensure an efficient, well-planned and organized 30-45 minute business meeting.

Note: Career Chapters adapt accordingly.

x *Suggestions for President*

1. It is important to announce when and where the next meeting will be held. We recommend this be announced just prior to adjourning the meeting.
2. If the President and Vice-President are unable to attend a meeting, the Recording Secretary serves as Chairman long enough for the members to choose a chairman for that meeting only. She is addressed as "Madam Chairman" and not as "Madam President" when any member wishes to speak and be recognized by the chair. The Recording Secretary should not be chosen to serve in this position, since it is important that she be free to take the minutes of the meeting.
3. A quorum is always expressed as a fraction of the active membership but never less than 1/3. It is never expressed in an actual number of members because the size of the membership changes. The quorum decided on by the individual chapter is written in its own chapter bylaws. A quorum means the number of active members of a chapter who must be present before any business may be conducted.

In a newly organized chapter, before the quorum has been established, the quorum is automatically a majority of the active members of the chapter.

4. The President is an ex-officio member of all committees. (**Ex-officio means "by virtue of office."**) As an ex-officio member, she is not counted in the quorum of the committee but has all privileges of membership of the committee. The quorum for a committee is a majority unless otherwise specified in the chapter bylaws.
5. A Standing Committee performs a continuing function and the term of its members corresponds to that of the elected officers.

A Special Committee, appointed by the President, is designated to carry out a specific task which is not covered by a Standing Committee. A Special Committee may carry over from one administration to another.

6. It is the responsibility of the President to see that the discussion of any pending motion be sufficient to allow all who wish to speak on the motion to do so. The maker of a motion has the privilege of speaking first on it. She may vote against the motion, if points during the discussion make her change her mind, but she may not speak against her own motion. No member should be allowed to speak more than twice on the pending motion, unless permission is granted by the members present to do so. To bring the discussion to an end and get the opinion of the members by their vote, the President asks: “**Are you ready for the question?**” She then restates the motion and calls for the vote.

NOTE – See “Proper Steps of a Motion”

7. Specific rules and regulations governing a chapter are given in the *Book of Beta Sigma Phi*. It is important that the President becomes familiar with these and with the use of the index in the back of the book. Special points to check are:
 - a. Filling a vacant office: see “vacancy” in index.
 - b. Methods of voting: see “voting” in index.
8. **Pledges are active members and have the right of voice and vote, of holding office and working on committees.**

x Fundamental Principles of Parliamentary Law

Parliamentary Law is a code of rules for working together in a group. They were founded on principles developed in the British Parliament – based on:

1. Equality for all.
2. Right of the majority to decide.
3. Freedom for everyone to speak.

Parliamentary rules exist to facilitate the transaction of business and to promote co-operation and harmony.

The rights of the minority to be heard, to express opinions and to dissent must be protected.

The presiding officer should encourage full and free discussion of every proposition presented for a discussion.

The simplest and most direct procedure for accomplishing a purpose should be used.

A definite and logical order of procedure governs the introduction and processing of motions.

1. Only one question can be considered at a time.
2. Every member has the right to know what the question before the assembly means before voting.
3. Membership may delegate duties and authority but retains the right of final decision.
4. Parliamentary rules must be administered impartially.

x DEFINITIONS OF MOTIONS

Main Motion – a motion to bring a subject before the group for its consideration and action. Lengthy motions should be in writing.

Example: *“I move that the chapter purchase a notebook for the Recording Secretary.”*

Subsidiary Motion – a motion that can be on the floor at the same time as the main motion and still be in order. An amendment to the main motion is an example of a subsidiary motion.

Example: *“I move to insert ‘8 ½ by 11 three ring, loose leaf’ before the word notebook.”*

Privileged Motion – is not debatable or amendable. While a main motion and one or more subsidiaries are pending, there must be some method of closing the meeting (if it is running past the stated time for the length of a meeting), taking a recess, and appointing the time for an adjourned meeting. Or if there is a question which arises as to the rights and privileges of the group or individual member, that requires immediate attention, though other questions are pending, by use of privileged motion, these matters can be handled.

Example: *“I move that the speaker move to the front of the room so the membership can hear her better.”*

Incidental Motion – is not debatable except on appeal under certain circumstances.

Example: *“I move that we suspend our order of business temporarily so the guest speaker may present her program as she must leave early.”*

PLEASE REFER TO ROBERTS RULES OF ORDER FOR EXPLANATION ON MOTIONS.

x Proper Steps of A Motion

Member:

1. Rises, addresses the Chair: "Madam President."
2. President recognizes member.
3. Member states motion: "Madam President, I move that"
NOTE: Do NOT say, "I make a motion"
4. Another member seconds the motion. She does this while seated and no Recognition from the Chair is needed.

Note: If there is no second, this means that only one member (the maker of the motion) is interested in the subject so the motion stops there.

Chair:

5. President states the motion: "It has been moved and seconded that"
6. President opens the floor for discussion: "Is there any discussion?"
7. President takes vote when all who wish to speak have done so and she restates the motion. If there has been no discussion then the first part of this step is omitted and the President states: "The motion is that"
8. President asks for vote.
"All in favor say 'aye'."
"Those opposed say 'no.'"
Note: Do not forget to ask for those opposed, even though the vote was obviously passed.
9. President announces the result of the vote. If it passes she states: "The ayes have it and the motion is carried."

If it fails to pass she states: "The noes have it and the motion is lost."

Note: A tie vote is a lost motion.

The President votes only once when vote is by:

1. Secret Ballot or
2. Roll call and her name is called last or
3. to make or break a tie.

Elections should be by secret ballot vote. If there is a topic for discussion needing the true expression of the feelings of the members, it is wise to take the vote by secret ballot.

x Suggested Bylaws

Article I

The name of this Chapter, by authority of the Executive Council, shall be _____ Chapter of Beta Sigma Phi.

(Your State and Chapter Name)

Article II

Regular meetings shall be held semi-monthly (*or monthly if you are a Career Chapter*) at times and places fixed by a majority vote of the Chapter.

Article III

A quorum shall be _____ of the active Chapter membership.
(should not be set lower than one-third)

Article IV

Section 1. The monthly dues of this Chapter shall be fixed by a majority vote of the Chapter each year.

(a) Members on leave-of-absence _____ pay Chapter dues.
(shall – shall not)

Section 2. A member of this Chapter will be fined an amount determined by a majority vote of the Chapter for:

- (a) Not wearing pin to meetings
- (b) Being late to meetings. (*After meeting is called to order.*)

Article V

Members of this Chapter are expected to attend all meetings. When unable to do so because of illness, illness in family, being out-of-town, or having to work, a member will call a member of the Executive Board to request an excused absence.

Article VI

A member shall be declared inactive by the Executive Board when absent from three consecutive meetings without sufficient excuse.

Note: She may not be declared inactive for nonpayment of chapter dues, but her voting privileges may be withdrawn until such time as any chapter dues or assessments have been brought to date. Usually a stated time is given for paying these – such as two or three months delinquency.

Article VII

Elections. Nominations for chapter officers shall be made from the floor at the second regular meeting in March each year. The President shall call for nominations for each office in order: President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer, and Extension Officer. City Council representatives should be nominated at this time also, although they are not Chapter Officers.

Elections shall be held at the same meeting immediately following nomination for each office. Election of City Council representative (or representatives) and alternate should take place immediately following the election of Chapter Officers. A majority of those present and voting shall elect.

Article VIII

The Executive Board of _____ Chapter shall consist of
(Your Chapter Name)

the elected officers of the Chapter and shall meet at regular intervals, preferably once each month, on dates fixed by it or upon call of the President.

Article IX

Committees. The Standing Committees of this Chapter shall be: Program, Membership, Social, Publicity, Ways and Means and Service. The duties and functions of these Committees are set forth in the Standing Rules. The members of the Standing Committees of the Chapter shall be appointed by the President to serve on such committees during the same term of officer as her own.

Special Committees

See explanation under #5 "Suggestions for President".

Article X

Amendments or additional bylaws, not in conflict with the Constitution of Beta Sigma Phi or Rules and Regulations of The Executive Council, may be passed by a two-thirds vote of the Chapter.

Such amendments or bylaws must be presented in writing to the Chapter thirty (30) days before adoption. Amendments as well as any additional bylaws must be sent to the International Office for approval by the International Executive Council.

x Suggested Chapter Budget

Following are some *suggestions* of items to be considered when the Executive Board prepares a proposed budget to meet the Chapter's annual financial needs.

Each chapter should be guided by its own activities. The budget is adopted by the membership. The *budget adopted should be attainable*

without becoming a burden to the members. Some of the suggestions may not pertain to your chapter so feel free to omit those not applicable and to add others more suited to your needs.

CHAPTER BUDGET

BALANCE ON HAND (date)	_____
ESTIMATED CHAPTER DUES	_____
ESTIMATED MISCELLANEOUS INCOME (fines, etc.)	_____
TOTAL	_____

PROPOSED EXPENDITURES

Program Committee***	_____
Yearbook Committee	_____
Flowers	_____
Stationery and Postage	_____
Other Committee Expenditures	_____
Socials***	_____
Service and Charitable Donations	_____
Guest Speakers***	_____
Council Dues or Meeting room rent	_____
Miscellaneous	_____
TOTAL	_____

With this total minus the total of expected income, it will be possible for the Ways and Means Committee to plan a calendar of activities to raise the necessary amount for planned Chapter activities.

[\(Refer to Committees – Ways and Means Committee Avoid Excessive Expenses for helpful tips and ideas.\)](#)

*** See following explanation on recommendations for a budget.

***Program Committee

Examples of needs of this committee: Best Program of the Year Award, rental of equipment for use with audio or visual aids

[\(Refer to Program Committee Encourages Cultural Enrichment\)](#)

***Socials

Some of their needs include: decorations, favors, gratuities.

If expenses of rush parties and rituals are considered in the budget, it should be remembered that the Chapter receives an expense allowance for each new pledge added by the Chapter. Rush parties should be inexpensive and the expense allowance usually more than covers the cost.

[\(Refer to Social Committee plans for economy and enjoyment\)](#)

***Guest Speakers

Some charge for their services or the chapter may wish to give a gift to those who present a program free of charge.

Before drafting a proposed budget, the Executive Board should review and carefully consider:

1. Last year's budget and annual summary reports.
Note: This could not be done by a newly organized chapter.
2. Consider the tabulated results of the Chapters' Individual Member Interest Survey. (This is a questionnaire prepared by the Executive Board, giving each member the privilege of expressing her wishes about all chapter activities for the coming year.)
[\(Refer to Member Interest Survey – this is a suggested one. Chapters may create their own.\)](#)
3. The Executive Board will want to look over the Standing Committees' report of their proposed plans for the coming year. We recommend that enough copies of the final proposed budget be made so that each member will have it to refer to when discussing the budget.

Note: All members' suggestions should be heard and considered before the chapter acts on the proposed budget.