

ALL ABOUT MOTIONS

What are motions? Motions record the official actions of your PTA. Adopted motions record the decisions of the body that made them. Your PTA needs motions to adopt a budget, to release funds, to authorize spending whether to pay or to reimburse, to support a California PTA resolution, to accept a resignation, ratify appointments, and so on. The minutes of your PTA are a record of *actions* taken by the PTA, **so you must record all motions made during each meeting.** Motions made at an Executive Board meeting are not final decisions; they must be brought as recommendations from the executive board to the membership (the association) for a vote. Only the membership/association can make a binding decision to spend.

When is a motion not required? A motion is not required to adopt the agenda (the president simply declares it adopted as presented or adopted as amended if there were changes made), to approve the minutes (the president simply declares the minutes adopted as printed or adopted as corrected if corrections were pointed out), or to approve the treasurer's report (the essential details of the report are included in the minutes as well as a notation that it was filed for audit). Why do these items not need a motion? The agenda and minutes exist: either the voting body accepts them as they are or as they are amended/corrected. Similarly, reports exist and the contents are simply noted. EXAMPLE WORDING FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA: "The agenda was adopted as presented" or "The agenda was adopted as amended, with the Reflections presentation occurring after the Treasurer's Report instead of at the end of the meeting." EXAMPLE WORDING FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES: "The minutes of September 9, 2013 were adopted as presented" (not, "The minutes of the last meeting were adopted as presented").

How is a motion made and what is a second? When a motion is made, it is a proposition brought to the floor by one person. This proposition to discuss and vote must be agreed to by at least one other person present who says "I second the motion." Seconding a motion is NOT an indication of agreeing with the content of the motion. Seconding a motion simply allows discussion and a subsequent vote. If there is no second, the motion dies on the floor and there is no discussion.

What must you write down? You must record the first and last names of the person making the motion, the text of the motion, that there was a second, and the result of the vote. You do not need to write down the name of the person who seconded the motion. There is no requirement to write down any points discussed before the vote on the motion although it is recommended that you do so. Do not record who said what, just make a note of the substantive points made.

To ensure accuracy, you may have to ask the speaker to repeat the wording of the motion. Another way to ensure accuracy is for your PTA to require that motions be written out before being made. The recording secretary can have index cards or blank paper available at the meetings, or you can provide pre-printed blank motion forms to be used. [See the explanation and example at the end of this handout.] People can also write the motion at home at the computer and bring a print-out to read when making the motion.

EXAMPLE WORDING OF MOTIONS WITH AND WITHOUT DISCUSSION/QUESTIONS.

- **A motion is made and seconded, there is no discussion, and then there is a vote.**

MOTION: ANDY WARHOL MOVED TO RATIFY BILLS PAID BY CHECKS #3245-3249 INCLUSIVE, DATED FEBRUARY 9-FEBRUARY 23, 2013, FOR A TOTAL OF \$501.31. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED AND ADOPTED.

- **A motion is made and seconded, there is discussion, and then there is a vote.** There are two acceptable ways to present the discussion portion.

MOTION: PAUL KLEE MOVED THAT THE FALL FESTIVAL DATE BE CHANGED FROM SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2013 AS SCHEDULED TO SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2013. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED. Discussion covered the following points: a conflicting event at the middle school on Saturday October 21st and not enough time to prepare for the Festival after Red Ribbon Week. THE MOTION WAS ADOPTED.

OR

MOTION: PAUL KLEE MOVED THAT THE FALL FESTIVAL DATE BE CHANGED FROM SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2013 AS SCHEDULED TO SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2013. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED AND ADOPTED. Discussion covered the following points: a conflicting event at the middle school on Saturday October 21st and not enough time to prepare for the Festival after Red Ribbon Week.

- **A motion is made and seconded. There is a question and answer, and then there is a vote.**

MOTION: ANDY WARHOL MOVED TO CHANGE THE RED RIBBON WEEK EXPENSE BUDGET FROM \$150.00 TO \$130.00 AND TO CHANGE THE YELLOW RIBBON WEEK EXPENSE BUDGET FROM \$150.00 TO \$170.00. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED AND ADOPTED. Before the vote, in answer to a question Andy explained that the YRW chairman forgot to include the shipping cost for pencils; the money left over from RRW last fall will cover the shortage.

OR

MOTION: ANDY WARHOL MOVED TO CHANGE THE RED RIBBON WEEK EXPENSE BUDGET FROM \$150.00 TO \$130.00 AND TO CHANGE THE YELLOW RIBBON WEEK EXPENSE BUDGET FROM \$150.00 TO \$170.00. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED. In answer to a question, Andy explained that the YRW chairman forgot to include the shipping cost for pencils; the money left over from RRW last fall will cover the shortage. THE MOTION WAS ADOPTED.

How often will I have to write up motions? Is there special wording?

Some motions are made at almost every meeting: Ratification of bills already paid and approval of bills to be paid should come up at almost all, if not every, meeting. EXAMPLE WORDING: "I move to ratify bills paid by checks #234-236 inclusive, dated March 10-March 18, 2013, for a total of \$255.66." "I move to approve the payment of a bill for \$23.56 to be paid to Marlene Dietrich as reimbursement for Reflections expenses and a bill for \$67.00 to "PopuptentsRus" for rental of sunshades for the Spring Sports Day, for a total of \$90.56."

Some motions are made two to three times a year: At least two times a year, the auditor makes a motion to adopt the audit (the auditor can make the motion). *If a bank signer resigns, there has to be an audit immediately unless the resignation coincides with a regularly scheduled audit.* EXAMPLE WORDING: "I move to adopt the audit for the period July 1, 2012 to December 31, 2012."

Some motions are made occasionally:

- **Bylaws adoption:** If your association has bylaws to adopt, the parliamentarian will make a motion to adopt the bylaws. EXAMPLE WORDING: "I move to adopt the bylaws as presented" or "I move to adopt the bylaws as presented and signed by the State Parliamentarian on May 12, 2013."
- **Committee appointments:** The president appoints chairmen and committee members; the association votes to ratify (or not) the appointments. EXAMPLE WORDING: "I move to ratify the appointments made by the president" or "I move to ratify the president's appointments of the following: Sally Mann as Membership Chair, Cy Twombly as Fundraising Chair, and Georgia O'Keefe as Hospitality Chair."

- Elections at the executive board to fill a vacancy: If a member of the board resigns after being duly elected, or if an elected position was not filled at the time of the regular election, as per unit or council bylaws, the vacancy is filled by the Executive Board at a meeting (regularly scheduled or specially called following the bylaws for special Executive Board meetings) with a motion to elect the officer or officers. EXAMPLE WORDING: "I move to elect Sally Mann as Treasurer and Paul Klee as Second VP for membership."
- Resignations: If someone resigns, the president announces the resignation. Someone other than the president makes a motion to accept the resignation which you will record in the minutes. EXAMPLE WORDING: "I move to accept with regret the resignation of Paul Klee as Treasurer."

Some motions are made once a year:

Changing bank signers: In May or June of each year, the minutes must contain the necessary motions concerning the bank signers for your PTA. **Do not put all the actions for changing bank signers into one motion. Put all the removals in one motion, all the additions in another motion, and all the confirmations in another. If none of the current signers will be serving another term, you need only two motions.**

MOTION: JOHN BROWN MOVED TO REMOVE JOE GREEN, CURRENT PRESIDENT, ANNE BLACK, CURRENT FIRST VICE PRESIDENT, AND RICHARD WHITE, CURRENT TREASURER, FROM THE APPROVED CHECK SIGNERS ON THE SELENA SLOAN BUTLER MIDDLE SCHOOL PTA BANK OF AMERICA CHECKING ACCOUNT FOR THE 2013-2014 TERM, BEGINNING ON JULY 1, 2013. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED AND ADOPTED.

MOTION: CINDY WHITE MOVED TO CONFIRM ANN ORANGE, INCOMING PRESIDENT, LUCY LAVENDER, INCOMING EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, AND ALICE GREEN, INCOMING TREASURER, AS CHECK SIGNERS ON THE SELENA SLOAN BUTLER MIDDLE SCHOOL PTA BANK OF AMERICA CHECKING ACCOUNT FOR THE 2013-2014 TERM, BEGINNING ON JULY 1, 2013. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED AND ADOPTED.

However, if you have new and returning officers, you need three motions.

MOTION: JOHN BROWN MOVED TO REMOVE ANNE BLACK, CURRENT FIRST VICE PRESIDENT, FROM THE APPROVED CHECK SIGNERS ON THE SELENA SLOAN BUTLER MIDDLE SCHOOL PTA BANK OF AMERICA CHECKING ACCOUNT FOR THE 2013-2014 TERM, BEGINNING ON JULY 1, 2013. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED AND ADOPTED.

MOTION: JOHN BROWN MOVED TO ADD PETER PINKWATER, INCOMING FIRST VICE PRESIDENT, AS A CHECK SIGNER ON THE SELENA SLOAN BUTLER MIDDLE SCHOOL PTA BANK OF AMERICA CHECKING ACCOUNT FOR THE 2013-2014 TERM, BEGINNING ON JULY 1, 2013. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED AND ADOPTED.

MOTION: JOHN BROWN MOVED TO CONFIRM EDWARD EBONY, CURRENT AND INCOMING PRESIDENT, AND CINDY IVORY, CURRENT AND INCOMING TREASURER, AS CHECK SIGNERS ON THE SELENA SLOAN BUTLER MIDDLE SCHOOL PTA BANK OF AMERICA CHECKING ACCOUNT FOR THE 2013-2014 TERM, BEGINNING ON JULY 1, 2013. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED AND ADOPTED.

Please note that if a bank signer resigns, a new officer once elected by the executive board must be approved as a signer by the association with a motion.

What are amendments to motions? Amendments are the **only** way to change the wording of a motion once it has been made and seconded. Not even the maker of the motion can change the wording except by an amendment. Why? Once a motion has been seconded, it no longer belongs to the maker. An amendment reads much like a motion except that the amender says "I move to amend the motion" and then states specifically what changes are proposed. The amendment must also say specifically what words are to be inserted and where, or what words are to be deleted and what if anything is to be inserted. The amendment must be seconded (or it dies on the floor), discussed if necessary, and then voted on *BEFORE* returning to vote on the main motion as amended (if the amendment was adopted) or as it was made originally (if the amendment was not adopted). As a rule, amendments are not made using a motion slip so you must be sure to get the name of the person making the amendment and you must be sure to get the precise wording of the amendment accurately.

EXAMPLE WORDING OF MOTIONS WITH AMENDMENTS UNDER DIFFERENT SITUATIONS

- **The least controversial situation is one in which everyone, including the maker of the motion, realizes something essential was missing in the motion as presented and seconded. Anyone,**

including the maker of the motion, can make the motion to amend. Despite the "friendly" atmosphere, there still needs to be a formal amendment and vote on that amendment before proceeding to vote on the amended version of the motion. Include only substantive discussion points about the amendment if there were any. Here's how you would record the proceedings.

MOTION: GEORGIA O'KEEFE MOVED THAT THE OBAMA MIDDLE SCHOOL PTA SPONSOR A COLLEGE NIGHT ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2013 FROM 4:30 TO 6:30 P.M. THE MOTION IS SECONDED. Discussion covered the problem for college representatives being able to set up in time and working parents to bring their students.

MOTION TO AMEND: GEORGIA O'KEEFE MOVED TO REPLACE THE WORDS "FROM 4:30 TO 6:30 P.M." WITH "FROM 6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.". THE MOTION TO AMEND WAS SECONDED AND ADOPTED.

THE MOTION AS AMENDED WAS ADOPTED WITH THE FOLLOWING WORDING: THAT THE OBAMA MIDDLE SCHOOL PTA SPONSOR A COLLEGE NIGHT ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2013 FROM 6:30 TO 8:30 P.M.

- **A more typical situation is one in which discussion of the motion reveals mixed feelings about the motion as presented. Someone makes a motion to amend which is seconded and thus gives everyone a chance to weigh in on a specific suggestion. In this case the amendment is not adopted and there are no further amendments to the original motion so it is voted on as originally presented. Here's how you would record the proceedings.**

MOTION: PAUL KLEE MOVED THAT THE FALL FESTIVAL DATE BE CHANGED FROM SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2013 AS SCHEDULED TO SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2013. Discussion covered the following points: There is a conflicting event at the middle school on Saturday October 21st and not enough time to prepare for the Festival after Red Ribbon Week. Others brought up competing festivals at other elementary schools on October 28th. There was also mention of Saturdays being difficult in general and Friday evenings being better.

MOTION TO AMEND: SALLY MANN MOVED TO DELETE THE WORDS "SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2013" AND INSERT THE WORDS "FRIDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2013" AT THE END OF THE MOTION. THE MOTION TO AMEND WAS SECONDED.

Discussion covered more problems with Friday night than with Saturday. THE MOTION TO AMEND WAS NOT ADOPTED.

THE MOTION AS ORIGINALLY PRESENTED WAS ADOPTED.

- **In another example of mixed feelings about the motion, the first amendment is not adopted but when discussion returns to the original motion, another amendment is made which is voted on and adopted. The original motion as amended is then voted on. Here's how you would record the proceedings.**

MOTION: PAUL KLEE MOVED THAT THE FALL FESTIVAL DATE BE CHANGED FROM SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2013 AS SCHEDULED TO SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2013. Discussion covered the following points: There is a conflicting event at the middle school on Saturday October 21st and not enough time to prepare for the Festival after Red Ribbon Week. Others brought up competing festivals at other elementary schools on October 28th. There was also mention of Saturdays being difficult in general and Friday evenings being better.

MOTION TO AMEND: SALLY MANN MOVED TO DELETE THE WORDS "SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2013" AND INSERT THE WORDS "FRIDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2013" AT THE END OF THE MOTION. THE MOTION TO AMEND WAS SECONDED.

Discussion covered more problems with Friday night than with Saturday. THE MOTION TO AMEND WAS NOT ADOPTED. Discussion returned to the original motion.

MOTION TO AMEND: GEORGIA O'KEEFE MOVED TO INSERT THE WORDS "STARTING AT 4 P.M" AT THE END OF THE MOTION. THE MOTION TO AMEND WAS SECONDED AND ADOPTED.

THE MOTION AS AMENDED WAS ADOPTED WITH THE FOLLOWING WORDING: THAT THE FALL FESTIVAL DATE BE CHANGED FROM SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2013 AS SCHEDULED TO SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2013 STARTING AT 4 P.M.

SAMPLE MOTION FORM

- The information you need on the motion form is the date, the person's name printed clearly, the person's signature, and the text of the motion written out clearly.
- Have a number of forms on hand at the meeting. You should provide the financial team with an electronic version so that they can bring their motions pre-written to the meeting. To save on paper, format two motion forms to a page and then cut to make half-sheet forms.
- Make sure that your membership is aware that motions need to be written out in advance of being made.
- It is appropriate for the president to hand a motion form to someone who starts to make a motion and then come back to that person when the motion is ready to be read out.
- The president uses that motion form to read back the motion after the motion has been seconded. The president then gives you the motion form to use when you write up the minutes for the permanent record.
- When you receive the motion form from the president after the motion is read out, it is highly recommended that you number it, write down on the form that the motion was seconded and what the outcome of the vote was. Save the motion form in your 3-ring binder until the end of the year should there be any question about what the maker of the motion wrote.

SUNSHINE ELEMENTARY PTA MOTION FORM

DATE: _____ **NAME (PRINTED CLEARLY):** _____

TEXT OF MOTION:

I MOVE THAT _____

SIGNATURE: _____