

Parliamentary Bingo Glossary

Agenda – A detailed and specific list containing, in proper order, items of business to be brought before an assembly at a particular or designated meeting.

Ad Hoc – A Latin term meaning “for this case alone” and used to designate a special or short term committee.

Amend – To change the wording of a motion or a resolution.

Alternate – A member authorized to take the place of another (as a delegate to a *convention or as a committee member*).

Appoint – To name or assign a person to an office or a committee.

Assembly – The members of an organization who have met for the purpose of transacting business.

Bylaws – A document, adopted by a society, which contains the basic rules for governing the society.

Chair – Chairman; the presiding officer, regardless of official title; also the station in the hall from which the chairman presides.

Credential – A certificate showing that a person is authorized to be a delegate or representative.

Debatable – May be discussed.

Ex-officio – By virtue of office. Certain offices confer membership on certain committees; therefore, persons who are committee members because of an office they hold are called “ex-officio members.”

Invocation – A prayer.

General Consent – An informal method of voting, used when it seems apparent the assembly is in agreement on a subject or decision, provided there is no objection; silence gives consent.

Germane – Closely related to, or having a direct bearing upon; used in relation to amendments which must be germane to the motion being amended or to each other.

Majority – More than half.

Meeting – A single gathering of members in one room or area to transact business for a length of time during which members do not separate for longer than a recess, after which proceedings are immediately resumed at the point where they were interrupted.

Motion – A formal proposal in a meeting by a member that the assembly take certain action.

New Business – New items of business presented to the assembly for consideration.

Obtaining the Floor – The process of receiving formal recognition from the presiding officer for the purpose of speaking or offering a motion. To do this the member rises and addresses the chair by official title (Mr. or Madam President, or Mr. or Madam Chairman), then waits until the chair recognizes the member by name, title or some other sign.

Opposed – Against the adoption of the question under consideration.

Parliamentary Authority – The particular manual of parliamentary law and procedure which the organization has adopted as containing the rules of order it shall use in the conduct of its business.

Pending – A question is said to be pending after it has been stated by the chair and until it has been disposed of either permanently or temporarily. Should several questions be pending before the assembly at the same time, the last one stated by the chair is called the immediately pending question because it will be the first one to be considered or acted upon.

Plurality Vote – The largest number of votes received when there are more than two choices.

Point of Order – An incidental motion drawing attention to an infraction of parliamentary rules.

Postpone – To defer action.

Postpone indefinitely – A subsidiary motion used to test the strength of a main motion or to “kill” it.

Precedence – Rank or order of priority of motions.

Previous Question – The motion proposing to stop further debate and amendment, and calling for an immediate vote on the immediately pending question, or the immediately pending question and such other pending questions as are specified in the motion.

Pro tem – For the time being; temporarily.

Putting the Question – Placing the motion before the assembly for a vote.

Quorum – The minimum number of members that must be present in order to transact business legally. Ordinarily an organization’s bylaws specify the number of its members that shall constitute a quorum; in the absence of such a provision, a quorum is a majority of the entire membership. A quorum refers to the number of members present, not the number voting.

Recess – A short intermission in the assembly’s proceedings which does not close the meeting, and after which business will immediately be resumed as if it has never been interrupted.

Resolution – A form of main motion usually of such length, formality and/or complexity that it should be precisely worded and submitted in written form.

Second – An indication by a second member of willingness to have a proposed motion considered, (generally, but not necessarily, made by one who favors the motion.)

Session – A single meeting or a series of connected meetings (as in a convention) devoted to a single order of business, program agenda, or announced purpose.

Standing Rules – Written rules which relate to the details of administration attached to the bylaws.

Stating the Question – Restatement by the Chair, of a motion made by a member, in order to place the motion before the assembly for debate and/or vote.

Table a motion – To lay aside a motion temporarily in order to attend to more urgent business.

Unfinished business – Matters of business from the preceding meeting’s agenda not considered or being considered when the meeting adjourned.

Viva Voce – A voice vote.

Vote by Acclamation – The approval of a candidate by voice vote.

Yields – In the precedence of motions, if one motion takes precedence over another motion, the latter motion is said “to yield” to the first.