



# Rosenberg's Rules of Order

City of South San Francisco

# Why Rosenberg's Rules of Order?

## Robert's Rules

- Complex
- Intended for Parliament
- Built for a larger body

## Rosenberg's Rules

- Simple
- Intended for 21<sup>st</sup> Century
- Built for smaller legislative bodies

# Rosenberg's Foundation



## 4 Pillars: Rules should...

- Establish order
- Be clear
- Be user friendly
- Enforce the will of the majority while protecting the rights of the minority

# Establishing a Quorum



"Well, let's get started now we've got a quorum."

## A quorum is...

- Defined as the minimum number of members of the body who must be present at a meeting for business to be legally transacted
- One more than half the body\*

*\*In a seven-member body, a quorum is four.*

# The Role of the Chair

# Role of the Chair



**The Chair is the body charged with applying the rules of conduct for the meeting**

**The Chair makes the final ruling on the rules when she or he states an action**

**The Chair's decisions are final unless overruled by the body**

# Role of the Chair



**While the Chair has the full right to participate in the debate, discussion and decision-making of the body, the Chair should...**

- Play a less active role in debate and discussion
- Strive to be last to speak
- Not make or second a motion, unless necessary.



# Basic Format for an Agenda Item Discussion

# Basic Format for an Agenda Item Discussion

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

AGENDA REVIEW

ITEMS FROM STAFF MEMBERS

- 1 [Provide an update on the status of the update to the City's website. This update is in reference to the Commission's continued dialogue about updating the Commission's webpage. \(Devin Stenhouse, DEI Officer\)](#)
- 2 [Provide commissioners with an update on current commissioner terms and any commissioners whose terms have expired. \(Devin Stenhouse, DEI Officer\)](#)

PUBLIC COMMENT

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 1 [Motion to approve meeting minutes for April 17, 2024. \(Devin Stenhouse, DEI Officer\)](#)
- 2 [Commissioners will review "takeaways" from their first tabling experience at the South City Pride event on June 1. Commissioners will also discuss potentially tabling at the Concert in the Park and Festa Italiana events in September. \(Devin Stenhouse, DEI Officer\)](#)
- 3 [Commissioners will re-evaluate their goals for the current year. This will be an opportunity for commissioners to inquire about any specific requests related to their current goals as well as inquire about any potential new goals. \(Devin Stenhouse, DEI Officer\)](#)
- 4 [Commissioners will discuss meeting dates for the rest of 2024. The purpose of this conversation is to determine if any meeting dates need to be rescheduled or canceled. \(Devin Stenhouse, DEI\)](#)

ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS, COMMISSIONERS, COMMITTEE MEMBERS

ADJOURNMENT

## Chair...

1. Clearly announce agenda item number and subject
2. Invite the presenter to report on the item
3. Ask if any questions of clarification from the body
4. Invite public comments
5. Invite a motion and announce name of member who makes the motion

# Basic Format for an Agenda Item Discussion

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

AGENDA REVIEW

ITEMS FROM STAFF MEMBERS

- 1 [Provide an update on the status of the update to the City's website. This update is in reference to the Commission's continued dialogue about updating the Commission's webpage. \(Devin Stenhouse, DEI Officer\)](#)
- 2 [Provide commissioners with an update on current commissioner terms and any commissioners whose terms have expired. \(Devin Stenhouse, DEI Officer\)](#)

PUBLIC COMMENT

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 1 [Motion to approve meeting minutes for April 17, 2024. \(Devin Stenhouse, DEI Officer\)](#)
- 2 [Commissioners will review "takeaways" from their first tabling experience at the South City Pride event on June 1. Commissioners will also discuss potentially tabling at the Concert in the Park and Festa Italiana events in September. \(Devin Stenhouse, DEI Officer\)](#)
- 3 [Commissioners will re-evaluate their goals for the current year. This will be an opportunity for commissioners to inquire about any specific requests related to their current goals as well as inquire about any potential new goals. \(Devin Stenhouse, DEI Officer\)](#)
- 4 [Commissioners will discuss meeting dates for the rest of 2024. The purpose of this conversation is to determine if any meeting dates need to be rescheduled or canceled. \(Devin Stenhouse, DEI\)](#)

ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS, COMMISSIONERS, COMMITTEE MEMBERS

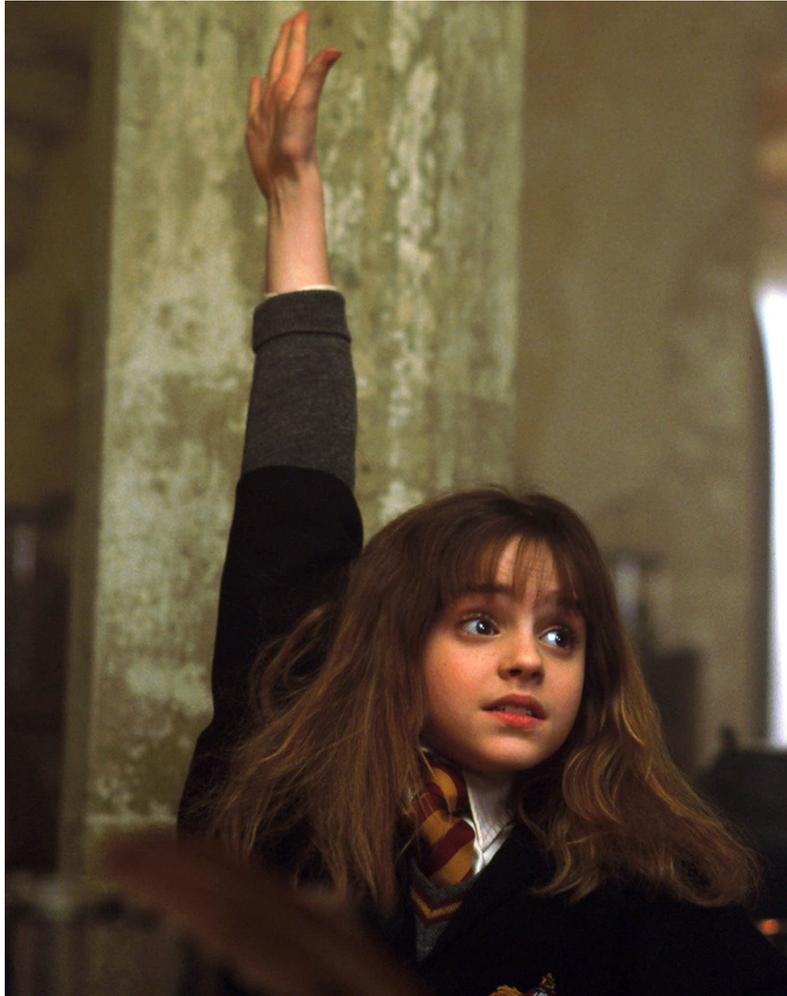
ADJOURNMENT

## Chair...

6. Determine if a member would like to second the motion and announce name of member who seconds the motion
7. Ensure everyone understands the motion
8. Invite discussion of the motion
9. Take a vote
10. Announces the result

# Motions in General

# Motions in General

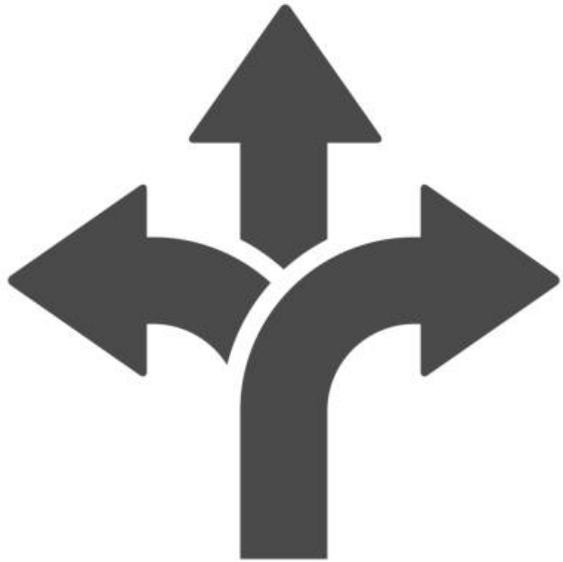


**Motions are the vehicles for decision making by a body.**

## **Two-Step Process:**

1. Chair recognizes the member.
2. Member makes a motion with the words, "I move..."

# Motions in General

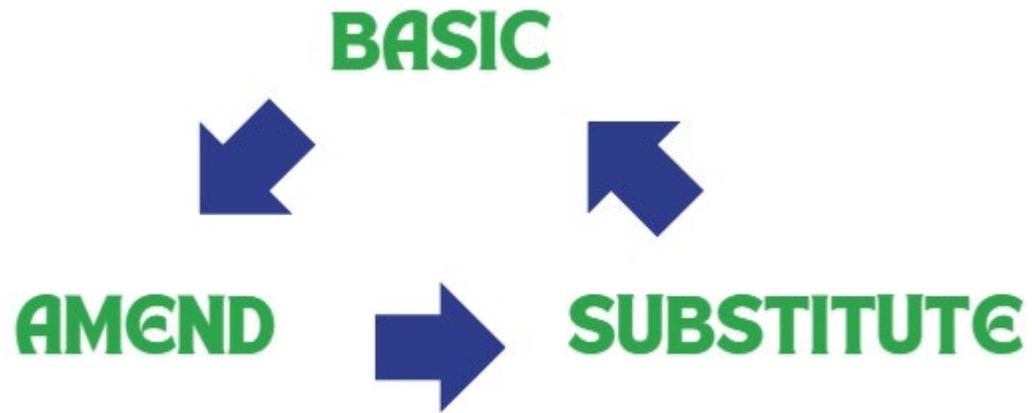


## **The Chair initiates the motion in one of three ways:**

1. Invite the members to make a motion
2. Suggest a motion to the members of the body
3. Make the motion.

# The 3 Basic Motions

# The Three Basic Motions



## Three most common motions:

1. The basic motion
2. The motion to amend
3. The substitute motion

# Amend vs. Substitution

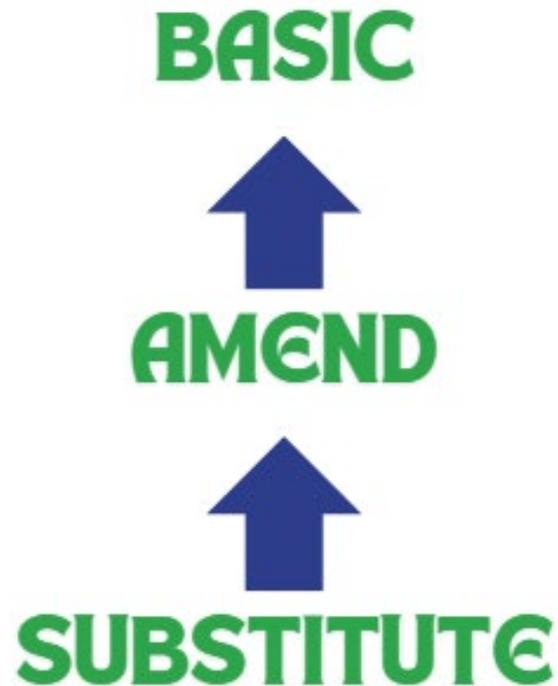
## AMEND VS. SUBSTITUTE

- Motion to **amend** seeks to retain basic motion, but modify in some way
- **Substitute** motion seeks to throw out basic motion and substitute a new and different motion
- Decision of whether motion is to “amend” or “substitute” is left to the chair

The background features a series of soft, flowing, wavy lines in shades of light blue and pink, creating a sense of motion and depth. These lines are layered and semi-transparent, giving the overall appearance of a dynamic, ethereal environment.

# Multiple Motions Before the Body

# Multiple Motions Before the Body



**There can be up to three motions at a time.**

1. Chair deal with the third (last) motion first
2. If the substitute motion fails, then deal with motion to amend
3. Finish with the initial motion (amended or not)



# To Debate or Not to Debate

# To Debate or Not to Debate



## **Basic Rule: Motions are subject to discussion and debate.**

- All types of motions are eligible for full discussion before and by the body
- Debate can continue as long as members wish to discuss an item, subject to decision by the chair to move on and take action

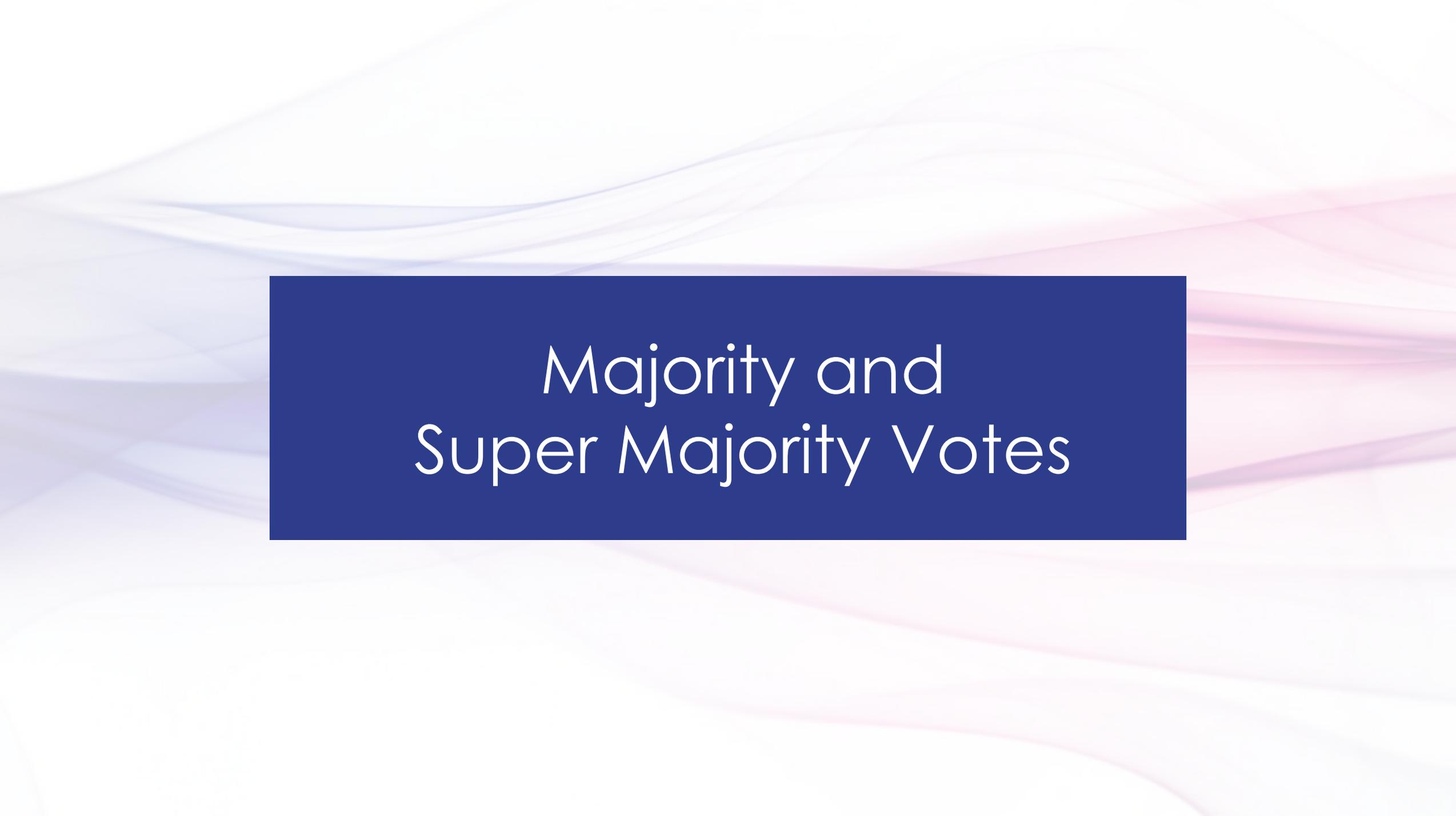
# To Debate or Not to Debate



## Exceptions to free and open debate on motions

- Motion to adjourn
- Motion to recess
- Motion to fix the time to adjourn
- Motion to table
- Motion to limit debate\*

*\*May include time limit*



# Majority and Super Majority Votes

# Majority and Super Majority Votes



**Simple Majority = more than half**

**Super Majority = two-thirds vote  
(5/7)**

**Exceptions to a simple majority:**

- Motion to limit debate
- Motion to close nominations
- Motion to object to the consideration of a question
- Motion to suspend the rules

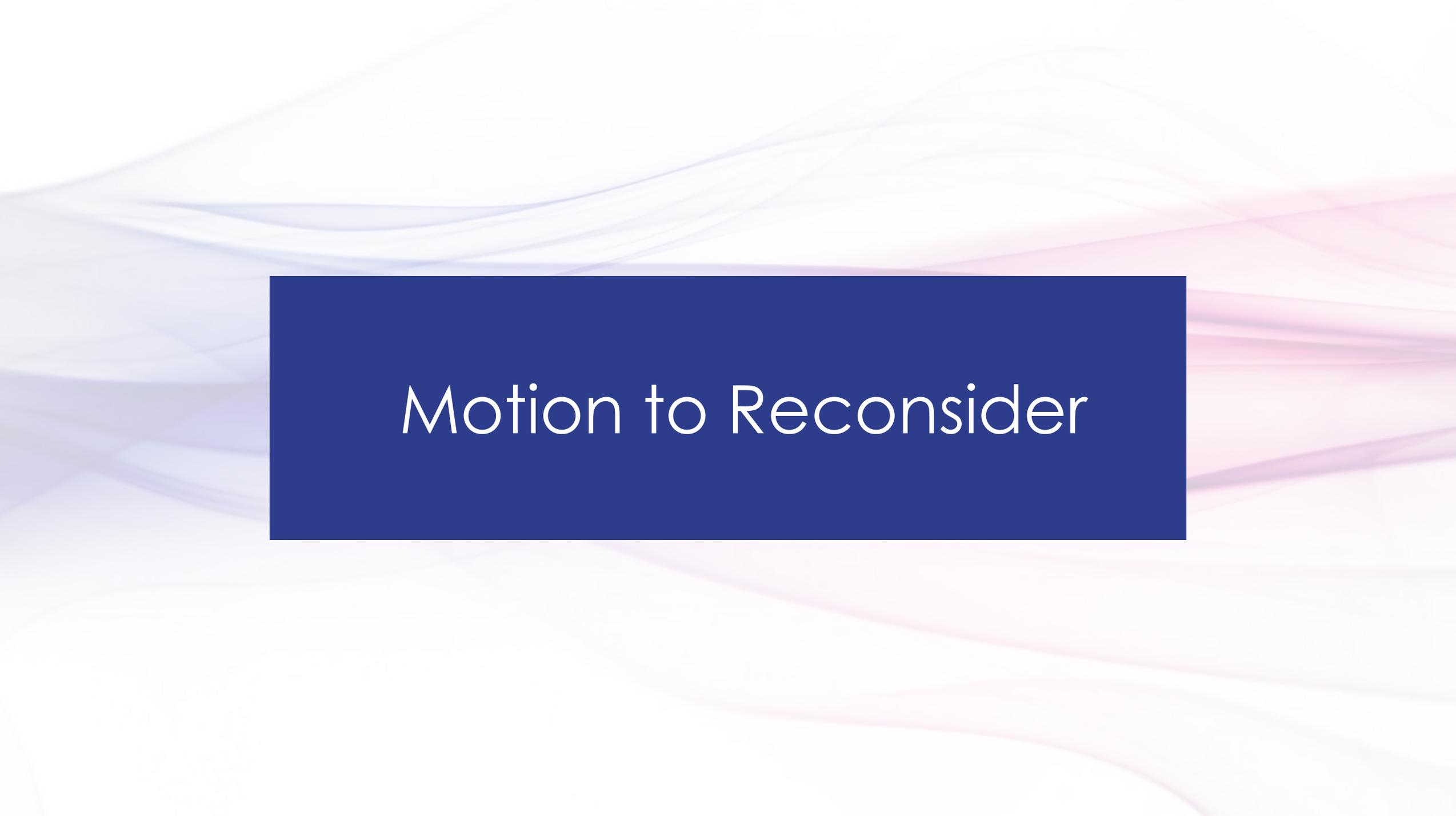
# Counting Votes

# Counting Votes

## Present and Voting Rule Applies

*For Two-thirds Requirement*

- No rule: 4-2-1 = passes
- Rule: 4-2-1 = no pass



# Motion to Reconsider

# Motion to Reconsider

## **Two special rules:**

- Must be made at the meeting where the item was voted on
- Must be made by a member who voted in the majority

# Courtesy and Decorum

# Courtesy and Decorum



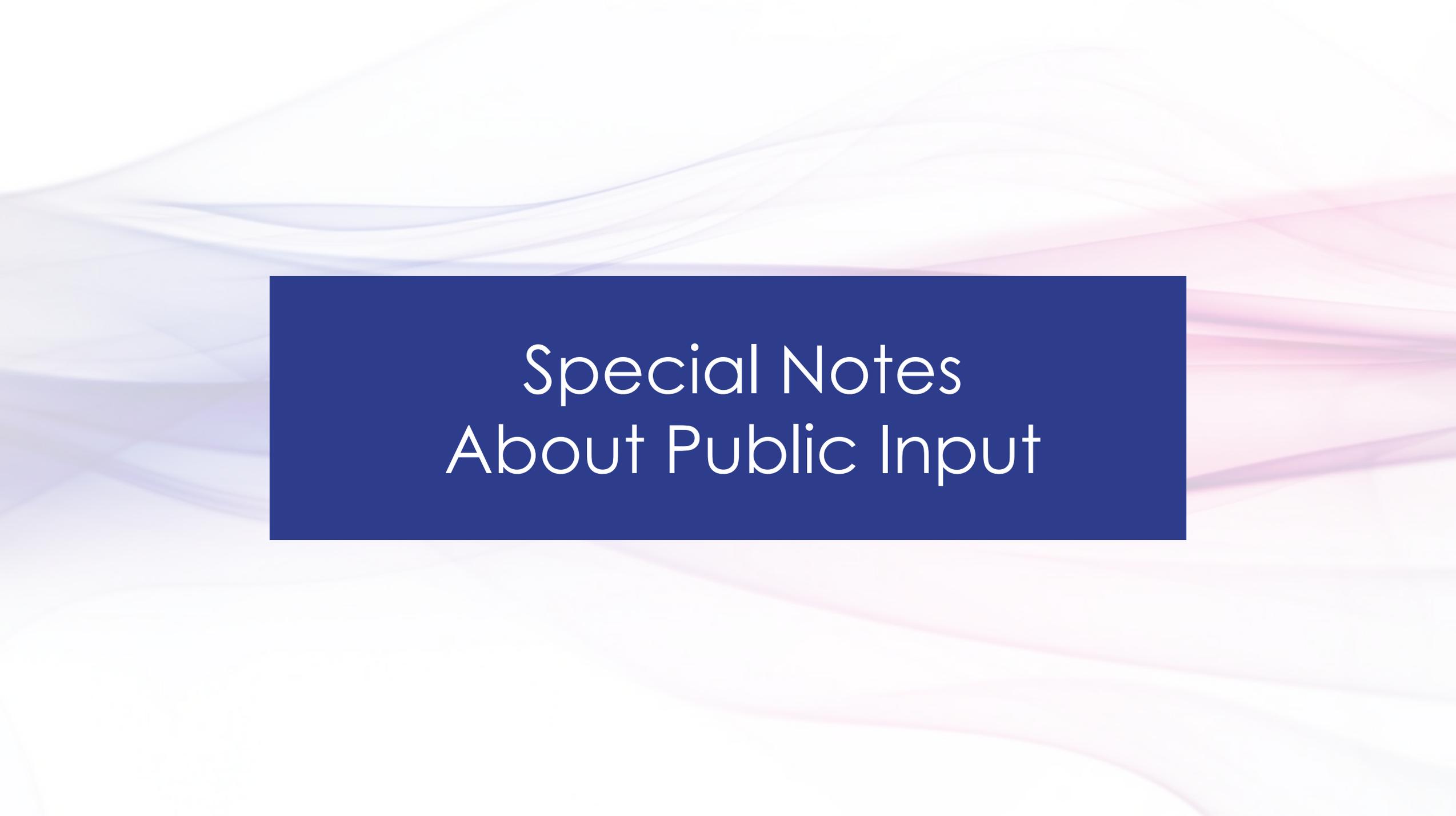
**Members of the body/public can attend to business efficiently, fairly and with full participation**

- Chair recognize members before speaking
- One person should speak at a time
- Focus on the item/policy in question (not personalities)

# Courtesy and Decorum

**Members of the body should not interrupt, but there are exceptions:**

- Privilege
- Order
- Appeal
- Call for orders of the day
- Withdraw a motion



# Special Notes About Public Input

# Special Notes About Public Input

## **Recommended rules to each agenda item:**

- Tell the public what the body will be doing
- Keep the public informed while doing it
- When the body has acted, tell the public what the body did

THANK YOU



Rosenberg's Rules of Order  
City of South San Francisco