

President's Report – March, 2018



03/09/2018

Your lodge, your meeting

In a recent conversation with several of our members, it became clear to me that when they were attending our monthly business meeting that they did not fully understand the process that we use to bring issues before the membership requiring their approval.

This process typically takes place under the “unfinished business” or “new business” portion of our meeting. This process is done in accordance with the IAM constitution, our local lodge bylaws and with the use of Roberts Rules of Order.

Typically, when we reach this section of the meeting agenda you will hear me say something like “the local lodge executive board met on such and such date and the following recommendations are brought forward for the membership’s consideration”. At that point I read to the members at the business meeting the individual recommendations one at a time. If any member agrees with that recommendation they raise their hand and when acknowledge by the chair or person conducting the meeting, they say, “so moved” and that simply means the member agrees with the recommendation and proposes it to the members in attendance as a proposed motion. For that proposed motion to move forward another member must also agree, raise

their hand and after being acknowledged by the chair say, "I second the motion". At this point the recommendation becomes a legally proposed motion and the chair opens the floor for discussion on the proposed motion. This is your opportunity to ask any questions that you may have or to offer your case for or against the proposed motion. This is the most important part of the process because it is when you have a voice in the decisions that our lodge makes.

After debate is ended the chair will put the motion to a vote to the membership for approval or disapproval.

The official Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised is 716 pages long so there are many other components and nuances to this process. The most important thing to remember however is that this is your union and your lodge so do not hesitate to participate in its decision making process.

Solidarity rules the day

For those of you that follow the news, you know that 2 days ago the public school teachers of West Virginia successfully ended a nine day wildcat strike. In spite of the fact that they ranked 48th in the nation in pay, they were originally only offered 1% then finally 4% but with big additional increases to their medical cost. They teachers not only said no, but hell no. Collectively, they walked out of every classroom in the state and refused to return until a fair and equitable deal could be reached. They were visible every day around the state in meetings, protesting and marching. It was the most significant labor victory in years and what made it all possible was the incredible solidarity that they showed. Teachers from every walk of life, every corner of the state, and every grade level put aside any differences they had to stand together for a common purpose. That common purpose is dignity and respect in the work place and the fair wages and benefits that we deserve, and it's shared by every union member, by every worker, in this country. The teachers of West

Virginia showed us how to achieve these things. They showed us what solidarity means and can do. Let's not forget their inspiring example as we move forward.