

ITEM 53 | RECEPTION OF REPORTS

When there is a place in the order of business provided for reports of committees, they are not made until they are called for by the chair. Upon the arrival of the time for these reports, the chair calls for the reports of such officers and standing committees as are required to make reports, in the order in which they are arranged in the rules; after which he calls for the reports of the special committees in the order of their appointment. When called upon, the reporting member (who is the chairman of the committee unless another member is appointed to make the report) rises and addresses the chair, and, when recognized, reads the report and hands it to the presiding officer, or the secretary, and, when necessary, moves its adoption or acceptance as explained in the next section. If the committee reports back a paper with amendments, the amendments are read with sufficient of the related parts to make them understood. If it is desired to have a report made earlier than the rules allow, it can be done, by a two-thirds vote, by suspending the rules [22] and receiving the report at once.

If the order of business makes no provision for the report of the committee, the reporting member, when ready to report, obtains the floor when no business is pending, and informs the assembly that the committee to which was referred such a subject or paper has agreed upon a report which he is now prepared to submit. If the chair thinks the assembly wishes to hear the report he directs him to proceed, whereupon he reads the report and hands it to the chairman and makes the proper motion for its disposal. If before it is read any one objects to its reception, or if the chair is in doubt as to whether it should be received now, he puts to the assembly the question, "Shall the report be received now?" It requires a majority vote to receive it, and the question is undebatable. If the vote is in the negative, a time for the reception of the report should be appointed either by a vote or by general consent. Usually no motions are made or votes taken in regard to receiving reports, these matters being all settled informally by general consent.

If the report is a final one, when the assembly has received the report the committee has completed its work, and, without any motion, it is automatically discharged from further consideration of the subject, and, if it is a special committee, it ceases to exist. If the report is only a partial one the committee is not discharged unless the assembly so votes. If the subject is



recommitted the committee is revived (unless the reference is to another committee), and all parts of the report that have not been adopted by the assembly are ignored by the committee as if the report had never been made. If any member or members wish to submit the views of the minority it is customary to receive such a report immediately after receiving the report of the committee. In such case the reporting member should notify the assembly that the views of the minority will be submitted in a separate paper. As soon as the chair has stated the question on the report, he should call for the views of the minority, which are then read for information. They cannot be acted upon unless it is moved to substitute them for the committee's report, or rather to substitute the recommendations of the minority for those of the committee.

A very common error is, after a report has been read, to move that it be received, whereas the fact that it has been read shows that it has been already received by the assembly. Another mistake, less common, but dangerous, is to vote that the report be accepted, which is equivalent to adopting it [see next section], when the intention is only to have the report up for consideration and afterwards to vote on its adoption.

