

individual, corresponding broadly with the Speaker of the House of Commons, may be recognized by various titles according to the usage, rule or law that governs the various assemblies, but his rights, duties and responsibilities are in all cases similar. "President" is the term generally employed for persons appointed or elected for a fixed period as the presiding officers of societies, associations, corporate bodies and the like. "Mayor," "warden" and "reeve" are titles applied to those heading municipal or other territorial councils, while fraternal and religious organizations have designations peculiar to themselves.

While a meeting is in progress all remarks are to be addressed to the presiding officer by his appropriate title: Mr. Mayor, Mr. President, etc., although in the absence of accepted usage to the contrary it is correct to address the occupant of the chair simply as Mr. Chairman, for however named he (or she) is simply a presiding officer for the purposes of the meeting and in the general sense of the common law that governs all assemblies.

31. Absence of Presiding Officer

It is usual, and good, practice to elect or appoint a deputy (or vice-)chairman or vice-president or other officer who shall be qualified and automatically entitled to take the place of the regular presiding officer in the event of the latter's temporary absence. While occupying the chair he shall possess all the rights, duties and responsibilities of the officer he is temporarily replacing.

Should circumstances arise in which both the regular presiding officer and his deputy are unavoidably absent, the assembly may appoint a chairman *pro tem.*, This is done on motion of any member "That Mr. ____ do now take the chair." If the regular presiding officer appears in the course of a meeting at which the chair is occupied by a temporary appointee, the latter concludes the item of business under consideration, then surrenders the chair to its regular occupant.

32. Duties of Chairman

The chairman, however named, occupies an important position in any assembly. He calls the meeting to order to begin the proceedings, announces the items of business in the order in which they appear on the agenda, reads the motions to the meeting as they are put so that they may be formally debated, submits motions or

other proposals for the final decision of the meeting or assembly by their vote or other expression, and having assembled the sense of the meeting announces that the motion or proposal has been carried or lost. He will adjourn the meeting if further consecutive meetings are to be held, or finally close it if all the purposes of the present meeting have been fulfilled.

He must decide, subject to appeal, all questions of order and procedure, and he must at all times preserve that order and decorum essential to calm deliberation, effective employment of the available time, and general agreement that fair and equitable processes have led to acceptable conclusions.

In large, formal meetings the chairman officiates to ensure the efficient conduct of the business before the assembly without himself participating in debate. He remains objective and impartial, acting strictly as an umpire of proceedings, such removal from active participation being necessary in view of the authority he possesses to regulate the conduct of the gathering and his obligation to see that conflicting opinion receives equal expression. In these circumstances the chairman has no vote, but he may exercise a deciding or casting vote if the votes are otherwise equal.

In less formal gatherings and in committees the chairman, while discharging all of the usual functions in conducting the proceedings, enjoys the same right as any other member to participate in discussion and to vote on any issue. However, should a chairman himself wish to propose a motion, he should surrender the chair to the vice-chairman (or to anyone else if the latter is not present) and he should not resume the chair until his motion has been fully disposed of.

Anyone assuming a chairman's duties should:

- (a) have reasonable assurance that he has the time and inclination to play the part;
- (b) have a sufficient working knowledge of the rules of procedure to permit him to discharge his duties with confidence and to the satisfaction of his associates;
- (c) be familiar with the constitution, by-laws, rules and usages of the organization he serves: and
- (d) possess qualities of tactful decisiveness conducive to effective and controlled progress.

A principal officer may of course have many duties to perform in addition to those involved in the active conduct of meetings. He