



# How to Participate in Local Union Meetings

A Brief Guide Prepared for IATSE Local 728 Members, Page 1 of 2



## Q: What's the Purpose of Local Membership Meetings?

The local union meeting serves a lot of important purposes. It allows for democratic discussion and vote on the Local's direction and actions that are needed. Meetings give the Local a sense of unity and purpose by:

- Keeping members current on opportunities and problems facing the Local and other unions, and allowing them to authorize appropriate action
- Informing members of the activities of union staff and officers
- Allowing timely and orderly conduct of essential Local business: approving expenditures, setting policies; constitution, dues and fee changes; electing officers, political endorsements, and mobilizing member action.

## Q: Are There "Rules" for Participation?

Healthy discussion and participation from members is critical to the vitality and relevance of any local union. *As a Local 728 member, your participation in membership meetings is both invited and needed;* you can raise issues to be considered, and speak on any issue that allows discussion, like every other member. However, successful meetings require some rules, and like most locals, membership meetings of IATSE Local 728 are governed by three documents:

### *The Local 728 and IATSE International Constitutions:*

- Set the order of business for each regular Local meeting (see below)
- Specify any unusual conditions that apply to consideration/voting on certain matters for this Local:
  - Items requiring a 2/3 vote to pass (such as constitution changes, changes in work fees, special assessments)
  - Items requiring notice to the membership before they can be acted on (such as nomination and election of officers, constitution changes, special assessments)

**Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised:** Where the constitutions don't set specific rules, Robert's Rules are named as the authority for conduct of business and sets standard rules for motions, debate and voting.

## Q: What's the Order of Business for Local 728 Regular Meetings?

	Agenda Item	Explanation
1	Opening/Call to Order	<i>President gavels the meeting to order/announces any special orders of business</i>
2	Salute to the Flag/ Moment of Silence	<i>The Local honors the flag and the members who have recently passed on</i>
3	Roll Call	<i>The Recording Secretary reads the names of the Officers of the Local and marks their attendance</i>
4	Oath of Obligation	<i>President swears in new members or new officers</i>
5	Special Presentations	<i>Special orders of business (i.e. presentation of awards, charges, speakers)</i>
6	Reading & Approval of Minutes	<i>The President reads the record of prior regular or special meetings</i>
7	Treasurer/Call Steward Reports	<i>The Treasurer/Call Steward Reports on the finances and activity of the Call Board</i>
8	Safety & Training Director Report	<i>The Training Director reports on the activity of the Safety &amp; Training Program</i>
9	Unfinished Business & General Orders	<i>Items previously discussed at Membership Meetings</i>
10	New Business	<i>Items not previously discussed</i>
11	Report of Committees	<i>Committee Chairs report of the activity of their committees</i>
12	Good & Welfare	<i>Items of General Interest of the Local</i>
13	Adjournment	<i>President gavels the meeting to a close</i>



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## Q: When Are Local Meetings Held?

**Regular Meetings** – Regular meetings of Local 728 occur on the second Saturday of every other month at 9:00AM, and generally last 3 ½ - 4 hours

**Special Meetings** – A meeting to conduct a specific item of Local business may be called by the President or Executive Board OR 10 members in good standing may submit to the President a written request for a special meeting, specifying the cause (business to be conducted). There is notice in advance of any special meeting, and only the business specified can be conducted.

A **quorum** (number which must be in attendance to conduct a meeting) is: **25 members in good standing.**

## Q: How Can I Speak at a Local Meeting, or Raise My Issue?

Like all other members, you can speak on any issue that allows discussion, or propose action by the Local, if you:

- **Raise your hand and are recognized by the Chair** (President or other individual who is conducting the meeting) to speak. **Example:** Member Jones: "...we can turn out 5 members for this rally." (you raise your hand) President: "Brother Dunn?" You: "I believe we can turn out more than 5 members; I suggest we set the goal at 15."
- **Stay on the subject of the motion or subject being considered** to avoid being ruled "out of order." **Example:** If the motion on the floor is to add to the Steward duties, a question about the *current* Steward duties is relevant and helpful, but a complaint about the Holiday Party is not. (*It's totally off the subject*).
- **Raise the action you want the Local to take under the proper item in the Local's "order of business"** (see reverse). **Example:** On the Treasurer's report, a question (about interest earnings, for instance) or a motion to accept or correct is in order, but a motion to endorse Jo Hill for Assembly can't be considered under this agenda item. Here is generally what you can do:

**Under Reports** - (for instance Minutes, Executive Board, Treasurer or Committee reposts) - You can ask questions, get clarification, or point out errors or omissions. If the report requires approval by the membership, you can move to approve or correct the report, participate in discussion/ debate, and vote on acceptance.

**Under Unfinished Business and New Business** – These are normally the main "action" portions of any agenda, and are where members can raise issues or actions they want the Local to take. Often the first issues that are considered are ones that have been sent to the membership by the Board or a Committee, *then items that are raised by members from the floor.*

## Q: What Are the Types of Actions I Can Take beside speaking, asking questions, and voting?

Action	Explanation (these matters require only a majority vote unless indicated)
Make a <b>Motion</b>	(You want the Local to take an action, or set a policy) Say: "I move that..." (then say what you want the Local to do). Requires a second to be considered, and debate is allowed.
Move an <b>Amendment</b>	(A motion is on the floor and you want to add detail to – or slightly change - that motion). The amendment can't contradict the motion it amends, requires a second, debate is allowed, and is voted on before a vote on the motion that it amends.
Move to <b>Commit (or Refer)</b>	(Send this matter to committee or E Board for study). No second needed, debate is allowed.
Move to <b>End Debate (or "Call the Question")</b>	(You want to vote on this matter now, or we have heard enough opinion and information to vote). Requires a second, no debate is allowed, requires a 2/3 vote.
Motion to <b>Table OR Postpone Indefinitely</b>	<u>Table</u> – (You want to postpone action on this item; the item can be "taken off the table" later in the meeting or at a subsequent meeting). Requires a second and debate is not allowed. <u>Postpone Indefinitely</u> – (You don't want to act on this item at this meeting; item then cannot be considered again until a subsequent meeting). Requires a second and debate is allowed.
Move to <b>Reconsider</b>	(You want the Local to reverse an action previously taken) You must have voted with the winning side when the issue was originally decided. Requires a second, debate allowed
Rise for <b>Point of Information</b>	Member raises hand, stating "point of information," (You need clarification or have a question). You will be heard and answered immediately, no vote required.
Rise for <b>Point of Order</b>	You raise your hand, stating "point of order" (You question if the correct process is being followed). You will be heard and responded to immediately; no vote required.
Ask for <b>"Division of the House" on a Vote</b>	(A voice vote was taken and you want to make sure the vote is counted correctly. Members must then raise hands or stand to register their vote). Chair must comply, no vote required.