



Lessons for Leaders

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About Us

Jurassic Parliament was created in 2000 by Ann Macfarlane. In 2008 she and Andrew Estep joined in partnership to expand the endeavor. The partners, both with decades of experience in nonprofit board and association management, recognized the need for approachable and inspiring leadership and board management training tailored to public and nonprofit organizations.

As a registered parliamentarian and a gifted speaker, Ann has developed a series of classes that offer positive, upbeat, encouraging instruction to energize clients and help them improve their organizations. Jurassic Parliament began as a fun, engaging way to learn parliamentary procedure and has expanded to provide lessons for leaders, beyond the boardroom.

Ann Macfarlane



PRP—Professional Registered Parliamentarian
CAE—Certified Association Executive

An inspirational, energetic and enthusiastic trainer, Ann Macfarlane presents parliamentary procedure in an engaging fashion that turns a dry subject into a lively experience. Her career as a diplomat with the U.S. Department of State, a Russian translator, and the volunteer president of a 10,000-member professional association has given her insight into how board members can work together effectively to achieve a common purpose, and enjoy doing it. Her credentials assure that the training is founded on professional expertise.

Andrew Estep



CAE—Certified Association Executive

Andrew Estep enjoys mathematics and working with people in equal measure. His passion for efficient and productive association management has led him to serve associations with regional, national and international scope. Andrew's experience in board development, strategic planning, and nonprofit communications informs his work as a partner in Jurassic Parliament.

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In-person Training

We are pleased to offer these workshops in April.
Click for details:

[April 11 Advanced Training for Clerks](#)
[April 18 Fundamentals of Jurassic Parliament](#)

For those who would like a more hands-on approach in a group setting, in-person training is available. Fees vary depending on topic, time and travel required. Following is a list of in-person training offered by Jurassic Parliament. Please contact us if you are interested at info@jurassicparliament.com or 206-542-8422.

Meeting Management

Jurassic Parliament: Running Great Meetings Using Parliamentary Procedure

Many people are daunted by parliamentary procedure and would like to understand it better. This workshop makes use of a whole cast of toy dinosaurs to teach the essentials of parliamentary procedure. In this class, participants practice making motions, amending motions, and voting. We cover the role of the presider and the three "golden rules" to make group discussion productive and pleasant. One participant commented, "This is the only time Robert's Rules of Order has been fun, believe me!"

This workshop is offered in three lengths:

- Essence of Jurassic Parliament, 1 hour
- Fundamentals of Jurassic Parliament, 3 hours
- Complete Jurassic Parliament, 6 hours

Bad Bylaws and Ways to Fix Them

Bylaws are not always the most stimulating reading, but you need to know if your bylaws are the source of some of the challenges your nonprofit is facing, or if they hold the key to resolving problems. This workshop offers practical guidance for board members who want to ensure that their nonprofit follows best practices. Participants receive a short set of bylaws for an imaginary organization and analyze them to find the hidden booby traps.

Better than Consensus: Making Casual Meetings Efficient and Fair

Consensus seems like a nice idea, but often it's not a very efficient method of decision making. Groups that dislike formality can have fair, efficient and enjoyable meetings by following the simple guidelines offered in this presentation.

City and County Councils or Special Districts: How Formal Should We Be?

It is vital for public bodies that do their work in the public eye to know when to use formal procedure and when to loosen up. This presentation clarifies which rules are essential to successful functioning, and which ones don't matter so much. We cover the role of the mayor or the chair and provide a checklist for effective presiding.

Do We Have to Use Robert's Rules?

A nonprofit organization is a legal entity and must follow certain procedural requirements. This presentation describes how a board that finds the complexity of Robert's Rules of Order formidable can establish useful and efficient procedures to guard against liability.

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Keeping Things on Track When Folks Are Rude, Crude or Confused

Knowing how to deal with difficult people is one of the key skills of a good presider. This interactive workshop demonstrates how to handle obnoxious people (or dinosaurs) at your meetings, and defines the authority of the presider in challenging situations.

Voting and Quorum

Proxy, plurality, mail or absentee ballot, voting by email ... if you are serving on a nonprofit board, you need to know the specifics that make voting methods legal or not for your organization. This session defines the jargon, reviews state law and offers insight into common voting problems encountered by voluntary organizations.

We've Made a Mistake, Now What?

This interactive workshop presents effective methods to change a decision once made, to take it back, or to start the discussion all over again. We'll compare when to table and when to postpone a motion, how to vote a motion down, and how to kill it quietly, without a fuss.

Leadership**Inspired Leadership**

Elected leaders of civic bodies and nonprofits want the best for their organizations, yet sometimes are tripped up by the process of achieving their goals. This presentation offers specific and practical insights into how to get the most out of your meeting time and allow the creative energy in your city or organization to flourish.

Boards, Commissions and Committees

Communities sometimes struggle with the proper role and function of their appointed boards, commissions and committees. This presentation covers the role of the advisory groups to a city or other civic body, how they can function effectively, and how to avoid some of the pitfalls this group may encounter. Real-life questions and examples are encouraged.

The City Clerk—Lurker or Leader?

City clerks are sometimes placed in a difficult position when they are better informed about what is correct in a given situation than the individuals they work for. This interactive presentation addresses ways to deal with the difference in professional ranking between clerk and elected officer, and provides suggestions on how to raise challenging questions when necessary. Real-life questions and examples are encouraged.

The Hidden Side of Leadership: Fear, Shame and Guilt in Voluntary Organizations

Recent research shows that emotions and reason are interdependent. Leaders need to be able to recognize and respond to negative emotions that may surface in themselves and others if they are to achieve their goals. This session offers insight and guidance on how to do this in an appropriate and professional way.

I've Just Been Elected President—Help!

Serving as president of a voluntary organization offers special rewards—and special challenges. This session provides clear and pragmatic guidance on what your job actually is, how to be clear about your responsibilities and how to chart a path for success.

I've Just Been Elected Secretary—Help!

The secretary holds a vital office in the organization, yet many secretaries never receive clear guidance on what the job entails. Learn about different types of minutes, what your role is during meetings and how to handle the approval of minutes in the electronic age.

What Every Board Member Needs to Know

It has been said that there are two jobs in life for which we receive no training: parenting and serving on a nonprofit board. Review a director's legal responsibilities and learn your rights and obligations as a member of a charitable, educational or professional board. Enjoy the confidence of understanding your role and being prepared to take an active part in discussion.

Who's in Charge Here Anyway?

Leaders and their board members sometimes clash over who has authority to do what. This interactive presentation discusses what to do when the presider is too authoritarian or too wishy-washy. Does the president or the mayor decide what's on the agenda? What can you do if the presider talks all the time? What about a presider who isn't fair to the members? Real-life questions and examples are encouraged.