Model Illinois Government

Office of Management and Budgeting

Section 1 – Introduction

The primary function of the Office of Management and Budgeting (OMB) is to provide analysts with a general overview of the balancing process for the Illinois State Budget. Further, analysts will be familiarized with the rules of debate as per Robert's Rules of Order.

The OMB has two divisions, each of which is run by a Director and overseen, in general, by the Treasurer. The divisions are NOT in competition, the objective is to balance the budget. A division averages 8-12 members and thus uses small committee format to foster debate and discussion. Each division has four Areas of Responsibility (AOR). The debate format in OMB uses a relaxed version of Parliamentary Procedure (Parley Pro) with some internal terminology that is not standard to the remainder of the simulation. Divisions within the OMB have several unique features not found in other parts of the Model Illinois Government (MIG) simulation.

These features are as follow:

- The chair person in an OMB committee is nonpartisan and may not participate in debate. The chair may not vote save in the event of a tie.
- The members of an OMB committee are nonpartisan. Their function is to represent the budget making process. This consists of balancing the Governor's priority with the inflated requests of the various departments within the particular division.
- Each analyst has an AOR. It is the analysts' responsibility preserve as much of their particular AOR while reducing funding to other AORs, in order to balance the budget.
- Analysts debate line-items as opposed to bills. In the legislative section of the MIG simulation, bills are debated in committee and then sent to the floor of the legislative house, where the bills may be on the agenda or not as per the leadership. In the OMB all line-items are open to debate and the analysts are responsible for bringing items to the floor

Section 2-Making a Motion

Analysts will be expected to present line items specific to their AOR. All line-items must be stated to the letter in the initial motion. If the AOR states that the Department of Veterans' Affair needs $8 million dollars for the Illinois Veterans' Assistance Fund, then the motion must be presented as follows:

"I move that we allocate $8 million dollars to the Illinois Veterans' Assistance Fund"

At this point the motion should include the original monetary amount as listed, regardless of the analyst's stance regarding the line-item.

For the motion to be admitted to the floor, it requires a "second." The analyst who makes the motion may not provide the "second." In order to "second" a motion the analyst must say "Second." If there is no "second", then the motion dies.

The most important part of the OMB is the debate leading up to the balancing of the budget. Towards this end, most motions will have a second unless it is apparent that no one is willing to debate a particular item.

Analysts have to be, not only able, but willing to make deals. While the official OMB simulation ends earlier than most other sections of the simulation, the unofficial business of politics never sleeps. Many analysts choose to make deals during this time so that the next day's simulation runs more efficiently.

Notes on Making Motions

- After a motion has been made and "seconded", the analysts must wait for the chair to repeat the motion back before debate may commence. Here is an example, "It has been moved and seconded that we allocate $8 million dollars to the Illinois Veterans' Assistance Fund. The floor is now open for debate."
- Once the floor is open to debate on a particular motion, nothing else may be discussed until all debate has been exhausted and the votes on the motion have been tallied by the chair. As an example, "Seeing there is no further debate, at this time the chair declares debate to be ended and we will now move to an immediate vote upon the line item." (Once the vote has been tallied, the chair will open the floor again)

Section 3 - Changing the Dollar Amounts

The primary objective of the OMB as previously stated is to balance the budget. However, when the budgetary requests are compared to the amount on hand a severe deficit is immediately apparent. The key to solving this dilemma is the essence of politics - compromise. The budget analysts' function is to determine how to remove enough funds from the requests of the myriad departments within the state budget to keep them and the Governor satisfied with the overall outcome. Dependent on the AORs, analysts will not agree on how much to allocate on particular items. Analysts have several questions they need to ask such as: How much? Why? Who does it impact? Remember that all amounts are negotiable, but keep in mind that the motion itself is not amendable save the monetary sum. Questions can be directed to the Governor's Representative, Department Representative, and/or a fellow analyst. Such questions can be crucial towards helping the analysts with the decision making process. Another point to remember, always follow the rules of debate.

Some of the basic rules:

- Analysts are not allowed to speak until they are recognized by the chair. To be recognized, the analyst must raise their hand. Keep in mind that recognition may not be verbal (especially when another analyst is speaking) it may be a simple nod from the chair.
- The chair will wait until an analyst is done speaking before recognizing the next analyst. When recognized begin like so: "Thank you Mr. /Madame Chair…." End comments by thanking the chair.
- Always direct comments to the chair. Be direct, concise and above all else respectful.
- Analysts must stand when speaking to ensure that all persons may hear what has been said.
- When in doubt ask for help. OMB is relatively informal compared to the remainder of the simulation and if a situation is confusing, ask to have it cleared up right away.

Think back to the example motion:

"I move that we allocate $8 million dollars to the Illinois Veterans' Assistance Fund"

Not every analyst will agree with the amount in question. Some may say $5 million, some $7 million, and maybe some $10 million. These are widely varied amounts and have relatively little time for debate. This leads to one of the more unique aspects of the OMB.

Creating a Blank

When debate appears to have been exhausted, the chair will "entertain a motion to create a blank." When a motion is "entertained" the chair is suggesting that an analyst make a motion in the format stated. The analyst will now say "I move to create a blank," which will then be seconded by another analyst. The example motion now reads:

"I move that we allocate _____ dollars to the Illinois Veterans' Assistance Fund"

Filling a Blank

Now the analysts must fill the blank. This is done in the same fashion as making a motion; however this motion does not require a second. As an example:

"I move to fill the blank with $5 million dollars"

This motion does not stand within the normal range of motions common to the debate process. A motion to fill a blank is non-debatable; however several motions may be filed provided they each have a different amount to allocate. Once all the amounts have been motioned, the chair will arrange the amounts from largest to smallest (For example, let's say that $12, $8, and $5 million are suggested). At this point voting will commence on each amount until a simple majority (half of the committee plus one) is reached. The chair will not vote during this process. The analysts will have the opportunity to vote on each amount. The amounts will have various amounts of support but, let's say $5 million receives 55% of the vote. The motion will now read:

"With majority having been reached, $5 million dollars will be allocated to the Illinois' Veterans Assistance Fund"

Section 4 – Closing Debate

There are two primary methods used when ending debate.

1. There is no further debate (or debate has become cyclical) and the Chair moves to an immediate vote on the issue.
2. An analyst may choose to make a motion to end debate

For an analyst to make a motion to end debate, the proper wording is as follows:

"Call to question"

This phrase states a desire to end debate and may be called without recognition from the chair provided that no one else is speaking and the chair has not recognized anyone at present. The motion must have a second and the analyst making the motion may not interject any point other than the motion itself. This motion requires a 2/3 majority to pass. Assuming that a 2/3 majority has been reached, debate will be closed and an immediate vote will commence on the line item as it was last read.

Section 5 – Bringing an item back to the Floor

There will be times when certain analysts may feel dissatisfied with the outcome of a line item. A "Motion to Reconsider" may be called by an analyst who was on the prevailing side of the vote regarding the line item's previous turn at the Floor. Let's say an analyst was not pleased by the outcome of the vote because the committee removed all funding for the line item entirely. Said analyst's vote was in opposition but not of the majority. This analyst must work to convince another analyst in the majority voting bloc that this item needs to come back to the Floor. If the majority analyst agrees they must be the one to call a "Motion to reconsider line item ____."

Section 6 – Commonly used terminology for OMB

For Chairs:

"The chair will now entertain a motion to…. (Close debate, create a blank, adjourn)"

"State your point (In response to points of order, clarification, personal privilege)"

"Analyst… (State the last name of the analyst)" (To recognize the analyst)

"Blank has been created" (In response to motion to create a blank which is followed by a second)

"Question has been called and seconded and we will now vote to end debate (Hand count only)"

"With ___ in favor, ___ opposed, and ___ in abstention this motion (passes or fails)"

"Will the ___ (analyst, representative, Treasurer) yield to questions?"

For Analysts:

"Thank Mr. /Madame Chair…. (To begin and end a comment after being recognized.)"

"I move to create a blank. (Used to erase the amount allocated to the item prior to amendment)"

"I move to fill the blank with ___ (Standard amendment to funds allocation for item in OMB)"

"Point of Personal Privilege (Used to ask permission to remove jackets, use restroom, etc...)"

"Will the ___ (analyst, representative, Treasurer) yield to questions?"