

Lesson 12: **Conducting Club Meetings**

The next three lessons are designed to provide a general overview of the procedures involved in maintaining a 4-H Club. As with starting clubs, each state has its own policies and procedures for ongoing support of clubs. The following tend to be common procedures.

1. Involve youth and leaders in planning and conducting the meetings
2. Involve club members in preparing a yearly club plan
3. Promote or market the club
4. Help youth transition to new communities when families move

Lesson 12 will focus on the first of these procedures:
Involving youth and leaders in planning and conducting the club meetings.

Planning Meetings that Reinforce Life Skills

While there are many avenues within a 4-H club that offer opportunities to learn life skills, this lesson will focus on the club meeting and the life skills that can be addressed through the club meeting. A well-planned and conducted meeting can offer opportunities to practice skills in many competency areas. These include skills leading toward mastery in

Leadership	Communication
Responsible Citizenship	Goal Setting
Decision Making	Problem Solving
Planning/Organizing	Cooperation
Managing Feelings	Character
Accepting Differences	Social Skills
Critical Thinking	Keeping Records
Learning to Learn	Teamwork
Community Service	Volunteering
Sharing	Marketable Skills
Self-esteem	

You will remember that these are skills that require sequential learning experiences and many opportunities for practice. One of the reasons 4-H clubs have proved effective in helping youth develop these life skills is that the club brings

youth together on regular basis and provides time for the interaction and practice necessary for mastery. The club meeting is the primary structure for this coming together. What happens at that meeting, then, is critical to the success of the club. And what happens at meetings will depend upon the planning that has been done before the meetings.

Supporting Youth in Planning Meetings

Youth should be highly involved in planning and conducting their club meetings. Club leaders are expected to assist youth in this planning. In order to do this effectively, leaders need to understand the role the club meeting plays in supporting life skill development, and to recognize and reinforce the skills that can be delivered through the club meeting. With this knowledge they can help youth identify the skills that they choose to target and the experiences that will support those skills. The following information regarding the planning of meetings should be a part of leader training for club leaders. It will also be helpful information for club parents.

Meetings offer a variety of experiences for youth. Meetings contain business, project work, educational programs, community service, recreation, and social activities. All of these may not be a part of every meeting, but each should be included during the year for a well-balanced program. Help youth determine what is going to happen in each segment of the meeting and who will be responsible for each of the pieces planned for those segments.

Mix meetings up with lots of variety to keep youth interested, encourage learning, and provide fun. Keep the business section of the meeting as short as possible; effective and to the point. Meetings that focus only on Robert's Rules of Order are just as boring for kids as they are for adults. Keep the age of your club members in mind when working with Parliamentary procedure. Until the age of 12 youth are very concrete thinkers and will not engage well with the abstract concepts of parliamentary, procedure. An older "business buddy" may be helpful for young members for those meetings that may require procedures more difficult than making and passing simple motions.

Adults can encourage youth to be involved in setting up the meeting space in a way that makes them comfortable and that is visually appealing to them. Their meeting space should be inviting. It should have plenty of light, be kept at a comfortable temperature, and provide adequate space and facilities for the activities that are planned. The way the room is arranged should support the activities planned for that meeting. Seating should be configured so that everyone in the group can see and hear everyone else during discus-



SECTION III:
Starting and Maintaining 4-H Clubs

sions or demonstrations. A semi circle or circle arrangement works well. Providing tables and chairs for officers may give them support and confidence. Help youth determine what equipment and supplies will be needed for the activities that they have planned and assist them in making sure that these needs are readily accessible at the meeting.

Using an Agenda for Planning

The following agenda will be helpful in planning a club meeting.

BUSINESS: No more than 1/4 the meeting time (*15-20 minutes of 90 minute meeting*)

The business section should demonstrate democracy in action. Members learn how to express themselves in a group, listen to the views of others, come to consensus and reach a decision, and abide by majority rule. It is important to keep business meetings interesting and educational. Unless it is an annual business meeting, it is important not to let the business component become the heart of 4-H club meeting.

Typical business agenda:

Call to order.

Pledge of Allegiance and 4-H Pledge

Roll call - answering in any way the group decides.

Minutes of the previous meeting.

Treasurer's report

Committee reports

Old business

New business

Adjournment

EDUCATION PROGRAM: Schedule at least half of the meeting for the Educational Program (*45-50 minutes of a 90 minute meeting*)

“Learning by doing” is one of the 4-H program’s unique strengths. This is the place for members to give demonstrations, work on projects or participate in tours, community service and other activities. Use a variety of activities to involve members in program planning, self-esteem development, and decision- making. Ingenuity and creativity can make this section of the meeting interesting and active.

RECREATION AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES: Approximately 1/4th the meeting time (*20 minutes of 90 minute meeting*)

A variety of physical activities add enthusiasm and enjoyment to the meetings. Some clubs have a different recreation

committee for each meeting, while others elect recreation officers for the year. A few ideas include: games, charades, relays, sports, puzzle challenges, parties for parents or families, picnics, and hikes. Refreshments can be a part of recreation, with different members responsible through the year.

Support materials to help officers plan the club meeting and conduct the business of the club are found in Lesson 12.

Creating a Meeting Environment that Meets the Needs of Youth

The primary role of adults in the club is to assure that the environment of the club meets the needs of youth. Youth Development professionals must help adult leaders understand these needs and implement these elements into their clubs. The list of developmental needs from our review of youth principles will provide a guide for this role.

- Safety and structure
- A sense of belonging and membership
- Closeness and several good relationships
- Experience with gaining competence and mastering skills
- Independence and control over some part of their lives
- Self awareness and ability to act on that understanding
- Self worth and the opportunity to contribute

Club meetings provide environments that meet the basic needs of youth when they:

Promote Feelings of Acceptance and Belonging

Youth join clubs and organizations because they want to be an active part of a group, but sometimes they need help in finding their niche. If they do not feel they are welcome or that they “fit in” they will very quickly stop coming. Often, groups do not intentionally leave out members, but simply overlook new or quieter members. Provide group-building activities at every meeting. Through these activities, young people can be pulled into the group without feeling singled out.

Provide Opportunity to Develop Relationships

It is impossible to develop relationships without talking to one another. Club meetings that do not provide lots of opportunities for youth to talk with one another do not take advantage of one of the unique learning opportunities a club meeting can provide. Some simple ways to provide structured interaction beyond get-acquainted activities are team-building activities, small group discussions, and committee work. Remember to include unstructured interaction time as well.



SECTION III:
Starting and Maintaining 4-H Clubs

Provide Safety and Structure

Youth feel safe in a group when they know the behaviors that are expected of them. To clarify these behaviors it will be important to lead the club through a process of identifying the standards of behavior they all agree they want for their club. These can be written in the form of Club Rules and posted in a place where everyone can see them.

Club rules help members monitor their own behaviors and decrease the need for the adult leader to control behavior. Posted rules also help prevent misunderstandings between members and adults and leaders about appropriate behavior at club meetings and events.

In addition to club standards, 4-H members must be informed of and agree to any Code of Conduct that the state 4-H office requires for state and national events and activities.

Provide Opportunities to Contribute to the Group

A sense of belonging to any group, whether family, school, community, or club, is formed when there are opportunities to contribute to that group and when it is clear that those contributions are essential to the group. Clubs meetings must offer ways for all members to contribute and see themselves necessary to the success of the club.

Adult leaders can be vigilant in identifying the skills and talents of all members that can be employed to help the club. If youth are given new responsibilities, it is up to adult leaders to make sure they are properly prepared to fulfill them. Training and mentoring are often needed for new leadership positions.

Before electing club officers, allow the youth to get a taste of the 4-H Club experience. The first meetings should help members get a sense of what the 4-H Club will be like, and whether or not they would even like to be an officer. Some clubs ask several youth to assume leadership responsibilities and rotate them through different positions fairly often.

Promote Competence and Independence

Help youth plan and conduct their meetings. Provide opportunities at age appropriate levels to have input into the design of the meeting and to provide leadership for the meeting. Prepare youth for the leadership roles they assume and provide support as they practice these roles. Help members evaluate their plans and use that information in future plan-

ning. Assist youth in developing plans for future meetings. The initial work for a 4-H meeting takes place long before the actual gathering.

Lesson 13 will focus on helping youth and their adult leaders prepare an annual club plan for all of the opportunities that will be offered during a club year.



Adapted from: Effective 4-H Club Meetings, Chuck Hill and Molly Gregg, 4-H Program Specialists, Alabama Cooperative Extension.

4-H MEETING GUIDE

Pre-Meeting Activity:

Have something for the early arrivals to do.

Opening Activity:

The purpose of this activity is group building. The Pre-Meeting activity can lead right into this or one activity can sometimes serve both purposes. This is especially important with new groups, but still important for a continuing 4-H Club to do.

Business Meeting:

The organizational leader (or leader in charge of the business meeting) should meet or speak with the President ahead of the meeting so that the President has an agenda prepared. Give the president as much information as you can so he (or she) can run the meeting. Use the 4-H Club Agenda sheet for help in making out an agenda. The agenda should include:

Call to Order	Treasurer's Report
Pledges	Reports
Communications	Leader's Report
Roll Call	Old Business
Introduction of guests	New Business
Minutes of the last meeting	

Educational Program or Activity:

The educational program at regular club meetings can be one of the most important parts of the 4-H meeting for members. This part of the meeting provides an opportunity for the members to join in a group learning experience. The learning experiences may take many forms including demonstrations, guest speakers, movies, tours, learning games and hands-on doing activities, such as crafts and project related activities. The program or activity should be fun, interesting and a learning experience for the members. Well planned programs and activities take into account the needs, ages and interests of young people and contribute greatly to the value of the meeting.

Recreation:

Youth (and most adults) come to meetings to have fun and get something done. Include some recreation in every meeting. The recreation can be placed anywhere in the meeting schedule. Just be sure it is there someplace. Ideas for recreation include:



Games
Music
Stunts

Group Activities Thought for the Day
Stories and Story Telling
Drama Activities

Refreshments:

Youth like to eat, so be sure to have refreshments. If the meeting is right after school, refreshments should be the first activity on the agenda.

Delegation:

Almost all of these parts of the meeting can be delegated to teens, parents and other interested adults. The more people you can get involved contributing to and feeling a part of the club, the better the club will function and then better you will feel about it.



4-H CLUB MEETING AGENDA WORKSHEET

_____ 4-H CLUB
_____ DATE

Pre-Meeting Activities

Business Meeting

Call to Order

Pledge to the Flags

American

4-H pledge

Roll Call

Welcome and Introduce Guests

Reading and Approval of Minutes

Other Officer Reports

Announcements and Other Communication

Committee Reports

Project Reports

Leader Report (Optional)

Unfinished (Old) Business

New Business

Adjournment of Business Meeting

Educational Program

Program / Demonstrations / Presentations

Social/Recreation/Program

Refreshments



4-H Club Meeting Check List

Use this checklist to do a quick evaluation of your 4-H Club's meeting

	<i>GOOD</i>	<i>AVERAGE</i>	<i>NEEDS IMPROVEMENT</i>
1. The meeting was well planned.	___	___	___
2. Each officer did his/her job well.	___	___	___
a. The President used an agenda.	___	___	___
b. The Vice-President organized the program.	___	___	___
c. The Secretary had minutes prepared.	___	___	___
d. Other officers had reports prepared.	___	___	___
3. The business meeting moved along well.	___	___	___
4. All members took part in discussion.	___	___	___
5. The meeting place was set up for the meeting before members began to arrive.	___	___	___
6. The meeting place was comfortable.	___	___	___
7. A program of presentations and/or other activities were part of the meeting.	___	___	___
8. The program or activity was interesting.	___	___	___
9. Recreation was part of the meeting.	___	___	___
10. The recreation was well led.	___	___	___
11. Refreshments were served.	___	___	___
12. Each member participated in the meeting.	___	___	___

Adapted from materials developed by Colorado State University Cooperative Extension , Southeast Area.





PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE FOR 4-H CLUBS

Why Do We Use Parliamentary Procedure?

We use parliamentary procedure in 4- H business meetings because it provides:

- an orderly way to conduct a meeting.
- a fair way to make a group decision.
- a method that respects everyone.
- a means for everyone to have a chance to speak.
- a method that allows majority rule while protecting the minority.
- a way to learn a method of business that is common to many groups.

Business Meeting Procedure:

Conducted by the President or Presiding Officer.

Members must be “Recognized” by the President before speaking.

Members must stand up to speak.

Only one person may speak at a time.

Only the subject under discussion may be addressed by the speakers.

Decisions are made through “Motions”.

Motions require a second.

Motions will be discussed until all members have had a chance to speak.

Decisions will be made by voting using; Voice Vote, Show of Hands or Secret Ballot.

Motions:

Main Motion

To start a discussion about some proposed action, a main motion is used. It is the type of motion you will use most of the time in your 4-H club. There can be only one main motion at a time. It is made by saying, “I move....” For instance, “I move our club visit the Nursing Home on the day before Thanksgiving” or “ I move we donate \$50.00 to Special Olympics.”

Someone must SECOND the motion by saying “ I second the motion” before it can be discussed. No thirds, fourths or fifths are required or desired.

At this time the presiding officer will say “ It has been moved and seconded that ____ (state the motion again). Is there any discussion?”

At the conclusion of the discussion the group will vote on the motion.

Other Types of Motions:

There are over 30 different types of motions. The main motion and the following two motions are the basic ones you need to know for a 4-H club. Contact the 4-H office if you want to learn more about Parliamentary Procedure.

Motion to Amend

To amend means to change. The motion to amend is made if you want to change the main motion. You can change the main motion by adding something to it, changing some words or taking something out of the motion. For example, “I move to amend the motion by [adding][changing][deleting] what you want changed.” The motion to amend requires a second. Discuss the amendment only. Vote on the amendment only.

If the amendment passes then the main motion is changed—if it does not, then the main motion is not changed. Then discuss the main motion (as amended if the amendment passed). Vote on the main motion.

Motion to Adjourn:

To end the meeting, a motion to adjourn is needed. It is worded “I move to adjourn this meeting.”

A motion to adjourn needs a second but does not have a discussion. It must be voted on as soon as it is made.



President's Guide to Conducting Business Meetings

Use these phrases to conduct a 4-H Business Meeting.

AGENDA ITEMPHRASE

- Call to Order "The meeting will come to order."
- Pledge to the Flags "Name and name will lead the pledges."
- Roll Call "The Secretary will please call the roll."
- Reading of the Minutes ... "The Secretary will read the minutes of the last meeting."
- Approval of the Minutes ... "Are there any additions or corrections to the minutes?" If not, "The minutes stand approved as read." OR
"Is there a motion to approve the minutes?"
- Treasurer's Report "The Treasurer will present the treasurers report." Does not need a motion to approve.
- Committee Reports..... "The _____ Committee will report."
- Leader's Report (Optional)
Project Reports (Optional)
- Unfinished (Old) Business..Present any old business you know about.(You have that information from the secretary) Then ask, "Is there any more old business?"
- New Business Present any new business you know about. Then ask, "Is there any more new business?"
- Adjournment "Do I have a motion to adjourn the meeting?"
- Take a vote and declare the meeting adjourned if the motion is passed
- Voting Repeat the motion and call for a vote.
"It has been moved and seconded to..."
"All those in favor say 'Aye'."
"Those opposed, 'Nay'."
State the motion again and add,
"The motion passed." or "The motion carried." Or "The motion is defeated."
or "the motion did not pass."

Adapted from materials developed by Colorado State University Extension, Southeast Area.

Secretary's Guide for Recording Minutes

The secretary is the record keeper of the club. The secretary records and keeps information about attendance and about the business conducted by the club. These minutes are the official record of decisions made by the club. They become official when they are “approved” at the next meeting.

It will be important to take complete and accurate minutes of each club meeting. During the meeting, the secretary should make a note about everything that happens. It is not a good plan to trust memory for accurate records as it is easy to forget details. The minutes written from these notes will provide the record of what happened at each meeting so that when people forget, or remember things differently, there is a clear and accurate record to refer to. Here is a sample outline for the Minutes:

BUSINESS MEETING

CALL TO ORDER:

Who called the meeting to order? When was the meeting held and where was it held?

ATTENDANCE:

How many members and guests were present?

PLEDGES:

Were the Pledge of Allegiance and 4-H pledge made? Who led them?

MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING:

Were the minutes read? What action was taken (were they approved or changed and then approved)? Was there a motion to approve? If so, who made it and who seconded it? Did it pass?

TREASURER'S REPORT:

How much money does the club have? (You may want to ask the treasurer to have this information in written form for you rather than trying to copy it all down as it is read.)

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Record a brief summary of any announcements.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Did any committees report? If so what did they say? (Briefly record the major points)



OLD BUSINESS:

What was the old business? What motions were made? Who made and seconded the motions and were they passed? Put in all motions. You may include key discussion points, but this is optional.

NEW BUSINESS:

What was the New Business? What motions were made? Who made and seconded the motions and were they passed? You may include key discussion points, but this is optional.

ADJOURNMENT:

Who moved and who seconded the motion to adjourn. Note that the motion passed and record the time the meeting was adjourned by the president.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

PROGRAM OR ACTIVITY:

What was the program and who lead it? These notes can be brief.

SOCIAL/RECREATIONAL PROGRAM

RECREATION:

What was the recreation activity and who lead it? Can be brief notes.

REFRESHMENTS:

Who provided the refreshments?

Adapted from materials developed by Colorado State University Extension, Southeast Area.

TIPS FOR CONDUCTING EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

- Have fun.
- Start and stop on time.
- The club officers and leaders set the standard for the group. Well-planned activities can hold interest, reach goals, and be fun.
- Have a clear agenda for the meeting.
- Let the officers fulfill their responsibilities.
- The president calls the meeting to order and is in charge. Let other officers and committee chairpersons do their assigned jobs.
- Leaders should help officers develop confidence in their abilities by providing guidance, while remaining in the background.
- Encourage the use of parliamentary procedure. Democratic participation takes place when members have a chance to express themselves. Basic parliamentary procedure is an orderly way of making this possible.
- Communicate upcoming events, dates, and responsibilities.
- Provide opportunities for all youth to be involved in the program and recreational parts of the meeting – and have refreshments available, too.
- Be well prepared – have all the necessary supplies for project activities.

Use a variety of methods to communicate with to members and parents including phone, personal visits, media, written notes, newsletters, and phone chains. Keeping everyone well informed about meetings and upcoming events is very important.

Know what needs to be accomplished at each meeting. Make sure each member has a chance to do and learn something at every meeting. Keep youth involved and include lots of variety to help them learn and grow through club work. And most importantly, **HAVE FUN!!**

