

## Organization Meeting

Arrange to **have someone arrive early** to check physical arrangements such as chairs, heat and lighting, and to greet everyone. Encourage the parents to stay for the meeting.

1. Begin with the 4-H pledge.
2. Have an experienced 4-H leader, member or your key leader explain each of these:
  - ◇ the 4-H emblem, motto and pledge
  - ◇ the local 4-H club and council organization
  - ◇ the member's responsibility
  - ◇ the roles of the parents, leaders, key leader and regional 4-H specialist
3. Selecting Projects:
  - ◇ Circulate sample materials of projects that members are interested in taking, and for which project leaders are available.
  - ◇ Discuss requirements of the project. Explain the value of choosing a project that fits the interests, ability and resources of the member and his or her family.
  - ◇ It may be useful to break into small groups based on project interests. Following the discussions, select the appropriate project(s).
4. Find out what club members want to do during the year. Suggestions can be collected for the program planning committee.
5. If this is a new club, ask members to think about a **club name**. A final decision can be made at the next meeting, if necessary.
6. Election of Officers
  - ◇ Explain the duties of club officers (see page 58). Outline the importance of electing each officer according to his or her abilities.
  - ◇ Guide the club through the election of officers, beginning with the president. The election of officers may be postponed until the second meeting, to allow members more time to consider who is best suited to fill executive positions.
  - ◇ If the new president is prepared, turn the meeting over to him or her.
7. Set up committees needed such as: recreation, community service, fundraising, and program planning.
8. Leaders must be elected or approved by the club members.
9. Future Meetings
  - ◇ Set a time and place for the next full membership meeting.
  - ◇ Have the program planning committee make arrangements for a meeting before the next club meeting.
  - ◇ The club leader and president should arrange to meet to plan the agenda for the next club meeting.
10. Collect the information and fees needed to complete the **Alberta 4-H Club Registration Form**.
11. Have a song, a few games or refreshments to end the meeting.
12. Remind new and returning leaders(who must be screened every 5 years) to watch for an email with a link that will guide them through the online Leader Screening Process.

Allow for the unexpected and flexibility to change what you had planned. You don't have to do everything at one meeting. It will be a much more enjoyable meeting when you can take the time to listen to what is being brought up.

## Effective Meetings

Meetings should have four components:

- Recreation
- Business
- Social
- Education

For more on effective meetings check out "Meeting Pack" which can be ordered with your 4-H Club Supplies.

### Getting Started

One of the first decisions your club will make is when and how often to hold meetings. There are two kinds of meetings: business and project. These may be held on the same day or on different days. A minimum of six meetings per year should be held, but the actual number depends on the amount of business and number of projects. However, it is best to have a regular meeting date at least once a month with all members in attendance.

Your club can work out an arrangement to suit its members. The most common meeting patterns are:

- One regular meeting at which both business and projects are covered. Generally, this suits a club carrying only one project. Extra project meetings may occasionally be necessary.
- Two meetings a month - one for business and perhaps some project teaching, and one for projects only. This is better for multi clubs because each project group can arrange a separate time and place for the second meeting.

### Suggestions for Effective Meetings:

1. Let members run the meeting on their own and offer a 15 minute limit at the end for parents/leaders to offer direction.
2. Spend most of the time asking questions, listening and helping the members to think for themselves. The less work you do for them, the better. Encourage your members to *"learn to do by doing"*, even if they make mistakes.
3. Limit meeting length to 1 hour.
4. Work with the president to develop an agenda before each meeting. The following sample agenda is a good place to start:

Check out the Appendix for 4-H club Meetings At A Glance, samples of Parliamentary and Agenda

#### Sample Business Meeting Agenda

1. Call to order
2. 4-H Pledge
3. Roll Call
4. Additions to the Agenda
5. Minutes
6. Business arising from the minutes.
7. Correspondence - Include information leader received
8. A) Reports of Officers  
B) Reports of Committees
9. New Business - Topics should be on agenda prior to meeting
10. Announcement of dates and program for next meeting
11. Nominations and Elections - generally done once a year; see constitution
12. Adjournment

continued . . .

After the meeting include:

- ◇ **Program** - project work, guest speaker, discussion group, demonstration, or workshop.
- ◇ **Social Activity** - a mixer, game or refreshments.

5. Help your president to chair an effective meeting.
  - ◇ Discuss the duties of the president (page 50) with him at the beginning of his term.
  - ◇ At the end of each meeting give him praise and suggestions for improvement.
  - ◇ Stress that meetings must start on time and to keep discussions on track.
  - ◇ Remind him to encourage all members to participate.
  - ◇ Ensure President is aware of all items on the agenda so he/she can run the meeting.
  
6. **Taming the Meeting Monsters.** Help your president to recognize and deal with the different “personalities” who may disrupt the club meetings:
  - ◇ If a member is **overtly talkative**, don't be embarrassing or sarcastic. The member may be trying to show-off their knowledge, or just being themselves. Interrupt with something like “That's an interesting point, now let's see what the group thinks of it.” In general, try to let the group take care of the member as much as possible.
  - ◇ If a member is **argumentative**, keep your own temper in check. The member may naturally be combative, or may be justifiably upset about something. Try to find merit in one of their points and then move on. If they make an obvious misstatement, turn it over to the group and let them turn it down. As a last resort, talk to them privately and try to find out if something else is bothering them or if there is something you can do to win their cooperation.
  - ◇ If a member is **so helpful** that others never get a chance, thank them for volunteering but suggest that others be put to work, question others, or use this member for summarizing.
  - ◇ If a member **won't budge on an issue** they may not have seen the points others mentioned, or they may naturally be prejudiced on the issue. Throw the member's view to the group and try to let them sway the opinion, or explain that in the interest of time you are willing to discuss it later if they will accept the group viewpoint for the moment.
  - ◇ If a member is always involved in **side discussions** don't embarrass them. The discussion could be related to the subject, or it may be personal, but the bottom line is it distracts everyone from the meeting. Call one of the members involved in the discussion by name and ask an easy question, or restate the last opinion or remark and ask their opinion.
  - ◇ If a member **can't articulate their opinions** they may lack the ability to put their thoughts in the proper order to convey their ideas. They need help. Don't say ‘what you mean is . . .’ Instead say something like, ‘let me repeat that’ and then put it in better language, or say ‘what I think you mean is . . . Is that right?’
  - ◇ A member who comes up with a **comment that is obviously incorrect** must be handled delicately. Don't say “You're wrong”. Instead say something like, “*That is one way of looking at it*” or, “*I see your point, but can we reconcile that with the . . .*”
  - ◇ If a member **rambles about everything** but the subject, or uses analogies that get lost; grin, tell him his point is interesting, then in a friendly manner indicate that he is a bit off subject. When they stop for breath you can also refocus attention by restating the relevant points and moving on. As a last resort, glance at your watch.
  - ◇ When two or more members in the group **clash**, it can divide the group into factions. If possible, emphasize points of agreement and minimize points of disagreement. Draw attention to your objectives with a direct question to cut across their discussion. A neutral member being brought into the discussion can also be effective. Sometimes you just have to ask frankly that personalities be left out of it.

### Effective Meetings (continued)

- ◇ If a member **won't talk**, they could be bored, indifferent, timid, insecure, or feeling superior. Your action must depend on what is motivating them. Ask for opinions to try and stimulate interest or draw them out. If they are the "*superior*" type, ask for their view after indicating the respect held for this person's experience. (Be careful not to overdo this as the group will resent it.) Ask a provocative question to combat indifference. Compliment (be sincere) the timid or insecure person the first time they talk.

#### Checklist for an Effective 4-H Meeting

- \_\_\_\_\_ has a good balance between business, social and project
- \_\_\_\_\_ offers a chance for everyone to participate
- \_\_\_\_\_ has creative ways to get business done
- \_\_\_\_\_ offers new learning and opportunities for members
- \_\_\_\_\_ recognizes members for ideas, accomplishments and so on
- \_\_\_\_\_ offers challenging and interesting project programs for all ages that allows for "hands-on" participation
- \_\_\_\_\_ members are enthusiastic, interested and attentive
- \_\_\_\_\_ members work well together
- \_\_\_\_\_ business starts and ends on time
- \_\_\_\_\_ an agenda is prepared ahead of time
- \_\_\_\_\_ committees are used for planning
- \_\_\_\_\_ reports are complete but brief
- \_\_\_\_\_ uses a "workable" form of parliamentary procedure
- \_\_\_\_\_ members seem excited about their involvement in 4-H
- \_\_\_\_\_ all business gets completed
- \_\_\_\_\_ several members have the opportunity to lead social activities
- \_\_\_\_\_ social time is something other than a traditional sport (like basketball)
- \_\_\_\_\_ no one is put on the spot or embarrassed
- \_\_\_\_\_ encourages involvement and communication

## Challenging Members

Even with the best leadership training and the most sincere intentions, volunteering with 4-H can be difficult if challenges arise among members or at meetings. Lack of participation, declining membership, disorderly meetings and poor group relationships are common challenges faced in 4-H. The following are factors and suggestions are how to improve your club setting!

Be innovative . . . use these ideas and think up new solutions and remember you are not alone and that there are resources available if challenges do arise.

### Challenge: Declining Membership

#### - Members are dropping out and club is not attracting new members

Factors	Suggestions
Present members may be cliquish and fail to welcome prospective or new members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage members to bring a friend to a certain club activity.</li> <li>• Strive to improve atmosphere - make it more friendly and welcoming.</li> <li>• Help cliquish members to recognize the results of their behaviour and to work at making new members feel welcome.</li> <li>• Make a list of prospective members and extend friendly, personal invitations.</li> </ul>
The program may not be of interest to current or prospective members or they may not know enough about it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure present and prospective members understand the benefits fo 4-H and all that it has to offer.</li> <li>• Be sure to promote programs beyond the club that 4-H Alberta offers, such as Selections, Summer Programs or Judging Competitions.</li> <li>• Publicize the program and activities.</li> <li>• Ensure members' suggestions for changes to programs and resources are sent to <a href="mailto:info@4h.ab.ca">info@4h.ab.ca</a></li> </ul>
Some members may not have a way to get to meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open Lines of communication with parents, ensuring they understand the benefits of 4-H.</li> <li>• Arrange car pools with other members</li> <li>• Change the location of your meetings.</li> </ul>

## Challenging Members (continued)

### Challenge: Lack of Participation

#### - Members do not take part in group activities

Factors	Suggestions
Members may not be interested in the program or activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involve all members in setting goals and in planning activities.</li> <li>• Keep lines of communication open, so members have the ability to tell you what they want to do!</li> </ul>
Members may feel insecure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage senior members to partner with younger members for some activities, making younger members feel accepted.</li> <li>• Give each member responsibility for at least one task.</li> <li>• Promote a friendly, helpful group spirit where no one laughs or ridicules a person who “goofs”.</li> </ul>
More aggressive members may not give others a chance to participate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a group goal that “everyone participates”.</li> </ul>
Meeting schedule may be in conflict with other commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use time at the first meeting to create a schedule that meets the needs of most group members.</li> </ul>
Members may be forgetful.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribute club calendars to all members.</li> <li>• Use reminder phone calls or emails (can be a responsibility of a senior member).</li> </ul>

### Challenge: Disorderly Meetings

#### - Meetings are unorganized or plagued by interruptions

Factors	Suggestions
The group has fallen into bad habits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Openly discuss issues with members, without placing blame.</li> </ul>
Members or leaders arrive late	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change the meeting time.</li> <li>• Open with the most attractive parts of the program.</li> <li>• Run recreational activities as members arrive.</li> </ul>
Members may not know what is expected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review 4-H expectations with your club.</li> <li>• Encourage members to state their expectations.</li> </ul>
Meetings are not appropriately structured or planned.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refer to the Club Meeting Guide in the Leaders’ Information Manual</li> </ul>

**Challenge: Poor Group Relationships**

**- Bickering and jealousy among members exists**

Adapted from Minnesota 4-H Youth Development's "Troubleshooting 4-H Club Problems" resource.

Factors	Suggestions
<p>Individuals may not understand their own motivation or that of others.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice active listening</li> <li>• Discuss personality and communication style differences.</li> <li>• Work to develop mutual understanding and trust among members and between members and volunteers.</li> </ul>
<p>Individuals cannot distinguish between differences in ideas and differences in personalities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accept members as they are; don't make your approval and acceptance dependant upon their behaviour.</li> <li>• Help members to focus on what is being said, rather than who is saying it.</li> <li>• Focus on contribution and appreciation. "Your contribution counts." "We appreciate what you have done."</li> </ul>
<p>Individuals may feel insecure and therefore are excessively shy or aggressive.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build self-confidence and feelings of worth by focusing on each member's strengths. "I appreciate what you did."</li> <li>• Let the members know their worth. Recognize the improvement and effort, not just accomplishment.</li> <li>• Encourage cooperation rather than competition, especially at show times! Remember and encourage that working together as a team is worth more than anybody's red ribbon.</li> </ul>



# Responsibilities of Club Members

### At Meetings

- Be on time and stay until the end.
- Before the meeting, check the agenda to organize your thoughts and prepare for any part of the meeting you're responsible for.
- Become familiar with parliamentary procedure.
- Don't talk to other members while a meeting is in progress.
- Stand to make a motion or to address the chair.
- Wait for recognition from the chair before speaking.
- Pay close attention and co-operate with the requests of the chairman.
- Get involved in committees and projects.
- Make independent decisions, vote on motions and accept the decision of the majority.
- Keep discussion to the point.
- Notify chairman or leader if you can't attend a meeting - especially a committee meeting.
- Tell your parents about decisions the club has made.

### During the Year

- Select projects with the help of parents and leaders.
- Do project work outlined, including the record book.
- Help plan the club program and join in club activities.
- Complete community projects with other club members.
- Take part in club, district, regional and provincial activities when possible.
- Get to know your own talents and respect those of others. Use and develop these talents by participating in activities and group projects.

**In summary, be prepared, organized, professional and active in order to give and receive the most out of your organization.**

## Duties of 4-H Club Officers - Check out "Great Meeting, Great Clubs: The Tools To Get You There" Interactive CD Resource

The officers of a 4-H club are the members elected to conduct club business, to provide leadership to the other 4-H members and to represent the club in the community.

### President

- Chairs the 4-H club meetings.
- Prepares the agenda for each meeting after consulting with other officers and the club leader.
- Maintains order, keeps business moving and discussions on topic during club meetings.
- Knows and uses parliamentary procedure at meetings.
- Guides members through elections, motions, votes and reports if there is no club parliamentarian.
- Remains impartial in all discussions. Votes only to break ties. A tied vote defeats a motion.
- Signs the minutes after adoption.
- May be a co-signer of club cheques.
- Helps develop the club's program plan for the year.
- Serves as ex-officio member of club committees.
- Acts as spokesperson for the 4-H club.

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## Duties of 4-H Club Officers

### Vice-President

- Presides as chairperson in the absence of the president.
- Assists the president and performs any duties assigned by the president.

### Parliamentarian

- Knows parliamentary procedure and helps members follow it correctly.
- Assists members to effectively run a meeting following an agenda.
- Knows the club constitution; ensures it is followed.
- Reviews the constitution annually and recommends any changes.

### Secretary

- Helps the president prepare the agenda and gives notice of meetings.
- Calls the roll and records attendance.
- Keeps a careful record of all meeting minutes, club committees and committee reports.
- Reads or distributes the minutes of the previous meeting.
- Handles all club correspondence and reads pertinent items at meetings.
- Prepares year-end summary.

The **minutes** taken during the meeting should contain the following:

- Date, place and type of meeting.
- Time of the call to order.
- Number of officers, members and guests present.
- Statement that the minutes of the last meeting were read and approved.
- Statement of correspondence read and action taken.
- All motions with the names of mover and seconder and the final decision of the group.
- Names of movers and seconds of officer and committee reports.
- Results of elections and committee appointments.
- Notes on discussions that may be useful in the future.
- Brief summary of program activities.
- Time of adjournment.

### Treasurer

- Receives all monies; makes deposits and pays bills promptly; records all transactions.
- Keeps an accurate, up-to-date record of the club finances.
- Reports at club meetings.
- Issues receipts for monies collected and keeps receipts of bills paid.
- Signs cheques with one other officer.
- Keeps an accurate record of receipts and expenditures.
- Prepares a financial statement for review at the end of the year.

### Club Reporter

- Informs radio, newspaper and other news outlets of club activities.
- Keeps a scrapbook of clippings, reports and photographs of club activities.

### Historian (optional)

Organizes and makes available the club's written material to all members.

### District Council Representatives

Each club elects representatives to participate in district council meetings and report back. The exact number and makeup of the club's representation depends upon the individual district council. An alternate should also be elected to represent the club should one of the representatives be unable to attend.

# Committees

A committee is appointed to deal with a specific task or problem which can be handled better by a small group than by a large group of people or by an individual.

There are generally two types of committees: **Standing** and **Ad Hoc**.

- **Standing** committees are usually of a permanent nature. They tend to be formed every year and usually have the same task, year after year. An example might be a phoning committee.
- **Ad Hoc** committees are sometimes referred to as special committees and these are formed on a temporary basis. An example could be a committee to review the constitution. Once the job is done, the committee is dissolved.

Some clubs have a number of standing committees which organize club events such as Achievement Day, Awards Night, Communication Competitions, etc. They have every family take responsibility for a committee. Larger jobs may have more than one family on the committee.

When forming a committee it is important to keep some hints in mind:

- Keep the committees small. Three people would be considered a small committee.
- When choosing committee members remember to have a variety of experiences represented by the members - young and older, experienced and inexperienced.
- Avoid giving the appointment to someone who is accepting the job for recognition alone. Ask those who care about the task and understand its importance.
- The chairperson of the committee should be appointed immediately.
- Ensure the committee chairperson and members understand the purpose of the committee.
- Set a deadline for the committee to report back by.
- Committee reports should not be lengthy. It may be oral, written or both. A written copy should be given to the Secretary.

## Parliamentary Procedure

Parliamentary procedure is based largely on common sense and courtesy. It provides for good manners and an orderly plan to follow in the business meeting. Parliamentary procedure ensures that democratic principles (equality of membership, free discussion and the will of the majority to prevail) are followed. At the same time, it protects the minority by guaranteeing the individual certain privileges. For these reasons, parliamentary procedure should be a part of every 4-H club business meeting. Some of the most important rules you need to be aware of are:

### Quorum

The minimum number of members that must be present for business to be conducted legally. This number (usually 1/3 or 1/2 of the members) should be stated in the bylaws or constitution.

### Recognition of Speakers

Anyone wishing to speak should wait to be recognized by the chair before standing and giving their point of view.

### Agenda

Members review the agenda. Chair asks for additions. A motion is made to adopt the agenda as presented or amended. A second is required. A vote is taken.

### Minutes

The secretary reads or distributes minutes from previous meetings. Chair asks for errors or omissions. A motion is made to adopt the minutes as read or distributed or corrected. (The secretary can move adoption of their own minutes as read.) A seconder and vote is required.

### Treasurer's Report

- The treasurer's report is read or handed out. The treasurer moves to adopt their report as presented for review purposes. Requires a second. Discussion is allowed. A vote is taken.
- Any action requiring finances, or any decision of significant importance to the club requires a motion unless it was included in the budget. The budget should be presented to and approved by the club at the beginning of the year.

### Committee Reports

Reports are generally given by the chair and should be submitted in writing. Committee reports that are for information only don't require motions. If a committee wants action to happen as a result of their report the committee chair can make the motion, "*By direction of the committee, I move . . .*". Requires second and a vote.

### Motions

- Making and handling motions - A motion is a procedure to get a topic discussed, recorded and voted on.
  - ◇ The chair will recognize a member who will stand and say, "*I move that . . .*".
  - ◇ Chair asks for a second. Another member will second the motion.
  - ◇ Chair states the motion and asks for discussion.
  - ◇ When discussion has ended chair should restate the motion and ask for, "*All in favour?*" "*All those opposed?*" Votes should be counted, especially if vote is close.
  - ◇ Chair states the results - carried or defeated. Generally majority rules, unless stated otherwise in the club constitution or bylaws.
- The president only votes to break or make a tie, unless the club decides the chair has the right to vote on all issues. A tied vote defeats a motion.
- If discussion is rambling or going on and on, a member may call for the question by saying "*Question*" at which time discussion is ended and a vote is taken.

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# Parliamentary Procedure (continued)

### Amendments

Amendments can be made to a motion either by:

- the members who originally made the motion and seconded it agree to accept the amendment, in which case the motion as amended is what is voted on OR
- another set of members can make a motion for amendment and second it, the amendment is voted on; if carried the original motion is modified and voted on; if defeated the original motion as first stated is voted on.

### Withdrawing a Motion

- If the chair has not yet restated the motion to the membership then the mover simply says he would like to withdraw the motion.
- If the chair has already stated the motion and discussion is underway, the chair must give permission for the motion to be withdrawn.
- A motion that is withdrawn is struck from the minutes.
- A second can only be withdrawn if a motion is changed and the seconder no longer agrees with it. If a second is withdrawn, and no one new seconds, the motion is dead.

### Tabling a Motion

Sometimes it is necessary to continue a discussion at a later date. A motion may be tabled with a motion, second, discussion and vote to do so. The motion to table should include a time to resume discussion. When that time is reached, a member moves to reactivate the discussion. This also requires a second, discussion and a vote.

### Referring a Motion

If you wish to refer a motion to a committee for further investigation, a member moves to refer the motion by stating which committee, what they're to do, and when they're to report back. A second is required and a vote is taken.

### Rescinding a Motion

Occasionally it is necessary to rescind a motion that has already passed. It requires a motion, second, discussion and vote. Generally a 2/3 majority is required for this type of motion to carry.

### Elections

- The procedure for elections may be outlined in the club constitution or bylaws.
- No second is required for a nominations from the floor.
- The chair should call for nominations three times before announcing nominations closed.
- No vote is necessary if there is only one nomination. The chair declares the position is filled by acclamation.
- If the chair is nominated for a position, they must ask another member to take over during that portion of the election process.
- If using show of hands, the nominees should leave the room. The ballots, if using secret ballot, should be destroyed after the elections. This requires a motion, second and vote.

### Adjournment

- The chair can declare the meeting adjourned if there is no further business, no second or vote required. A motion to adjourn may be made at any time. It requires a second and a vote.

For more on effective meetings see the resource "Meeting Pack" which can be ordered with your club supplies or downloaded from the web site.

# Evaluating The Meeting

## Evaluating the Meeting Checklist

- Do the officers and leaders check meeting plans beforehand?
- Does the president start and end the meeting on time and keep the meeting on track?
- Are guests introduced and made to feel welcome?
- Are all announcements short and to the point?
- Do all officers use correct parliamentary procedure?
- Is there a balance of education (project work), business, communication training and recreation in the meeting?
- Do officers avoid doing all the talking?
- Do all or most of the members take part in the meeting?
- Do leaders and parents avoid doing all the talking?
- Are leaders given a chance to voice their opinions?
- Is there common courtesy shown between officers and members?
- Is the business part of the meeting short and efficient?
- Is the educational program of interest to everyone? Did everyone learn something?
- Is the recreation suitable to the meeting place and the group?
- Is there an opportunity for members to get to know each other?