

4-H Volunteer Leaders' Series

Order of Business

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Following exactly the same agenda at each meeting is not necessary. Vary the agenda by having the educational part of the program first and the business toward the end. Recreation can be mixed in at any time on the program. Sometimes, a little recreation at the beginning gets members into the mood and also allows time for stragglers to arrive.

Many organizations have bylaws setting out a certain order of business to follow. The following order is used when there are no such bylaws:

Call to Order

The presiding officer stands and taps the table with a gavel to attract attention. The use of a gavel is recommended because it gives a businesslike appearance. The officer says, "The meeting will now come to order." This is the form used in ordinary meetings. In legislative assemblies, "The house will come to order" is the form used.

Songs

If a song or songs are part of the opening exercises, the presiding officer should notify the song leader prior to the meeting. The song leader should decide on the songs and, when called upon, should promptly come to the front and say, "We are going to sing two stanzas of . . ." (naming the song).

Thought for the Day

If a thought for the day is used to open the meeting, it would be part of the opening exercises.

Roll Call

The presiding officer says, "The secretary will now call the roll." The secretary can call each member by name; or if it is a large club, the roll can be called by grades or classes. One member from each group is appointed to check on members in his group and report to the secretary.

To increase interest, vary the response. Instead of just saying "here" in response to their names, club members may be asked to answer with their birth dates, favorite colors, favorite TV shows, etc.

In some organizations, the secretary merely records those present and no verbal response is required.

Meaning of 4-H Emblem, Pledge and Motto

The presiding officer leads the club members in reciting the meaning of the 4-H emblem. The presiding officer should call on a club member to lead the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America and to lead the 4-H Pledge. This offers an



*18 U.S.C. 707

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opportunity to encourage participation of younger club members. A different member should be asked each time.

Reading of the Minutes

The presiding officer says, "The secretary will read the minutes of the last meeting." After they are read, the officer asks, "Are there any corrections or additions?" then pauses. The officer continues, saying, "If not, the minutes stand approved as read."

Every member of an organization is responsible for seeing that records are correct. If anything has been omitted from the minutes or is not accurately reported, the member who notices it shall call attention to the fact and suggest a correction during the pause before the presiding officer announces that the minutes are approved. Corrections are suggested without a motion, second or vote. If there are no objections to the corrections, the secretary makes the changes. Where there is a difference of opinion as to what was said, the president will entertain a motion to amend the minutes.

When the issue is resolved, the presiding officer asks, "Are there any further corrections?" If there is no response, the officer continues, "The minutes stand approved as corrected."

Reports

Officers and Standing Committees – Officers, boards or standing committees should be called upon to report in the order in which they are mentioned in the constitution or bylaws of the organization.

No action is required on the treasurer's report. It is for information only. In order to protect the treasurer from an honest mistake, the treasurer's report should always be filed for audit or received for audit or just received. It should never be accepted as read. Normally, in the routine conduct of an organization, an audit is made when the new officers are elected. At that time, their reports are approved and this is retroactive to when they were received or filed for audit. Normally, members of the group do the auditing.

Special Committees – Special committee reports follow standing committee reports.

Committee reports should consist of the material agreed upon by the majority of the committee. They may be oral or written. If they contain recommendations or resolutions, they should be written. It is preferable for them to be signed by all members of the committee. When the final draft has been made by the chairman after the committee meeting and it is difficult to get the other signatures, the committee chairman may sign the report. In this case, the word "chairman" will follow the signature to indicate that the action is for the committee as a whole.

The nature of a report that is received (that has been presented to the organization) determines the method of its disposal. If the report gives information, tells what the committee has done or gives the opinion of the committee on the subject involved, then no action is necessary. The proper motion, if any is taken, should be to "accept the report." This has the effect of endorsing the report and makes the organization assume responsibility for it, as well as recognizing the club's obligations to the committee.

The committee may make recommendations on the action to be taken. If the subject is extremely important or if it involves another organization or individual outside the club, the committee may recommend resolutions to carry its suggestions into effect. The recommendations or resolutions should be grouped at the end of the report, even though they are discussed separately before. The chairman of the committee should move their adoption. Members of the club who vote for the adoption of the recommendations or resolutions should realize that they are obligating themselves to carry them out.

Unfinished Business

This is action on any business not settled at adjournment of the previous meeting. The secretary should give the presiding officer a list of unfinished business before the meeting, or the secretary may be called upon to stand and state the unfinished business to the group. The unfinished business is completed by motions.

As soon as an item of business is disposed of, the presiding officer should announce the next item.

The presiding officer follows a list of items on the agenda and allows time for matters to be suggested by members.

During the business meeting, decisions will need to be made. Many groups use some form of parliamentary procedure, such as *Robert's Rules of Order* or a modification of them, to assist making decisions. Use rules to get things done, not to slow the process.

New Business

After all unfinished business is completed, the presiding officer asks, "Is there any new business?" Anyone having a new idea or problem for the group to consider presents it at this time. The presiding officer may know of matters to be acted upon. If so, the group should be informed and then asked for any items of business they wish to propose.

Today parliamentary procedure is becoming more flexible. Some groups are finding that it helps to discuss a question informally and come to a general agreement before a formal motion is made. In such cases when the motion comes to the floor, it can be disposed of quickly and easily.

The presiding officer asks, "Is there any further business to come before the group? (pause) If not, we will proceed with the program as planned."

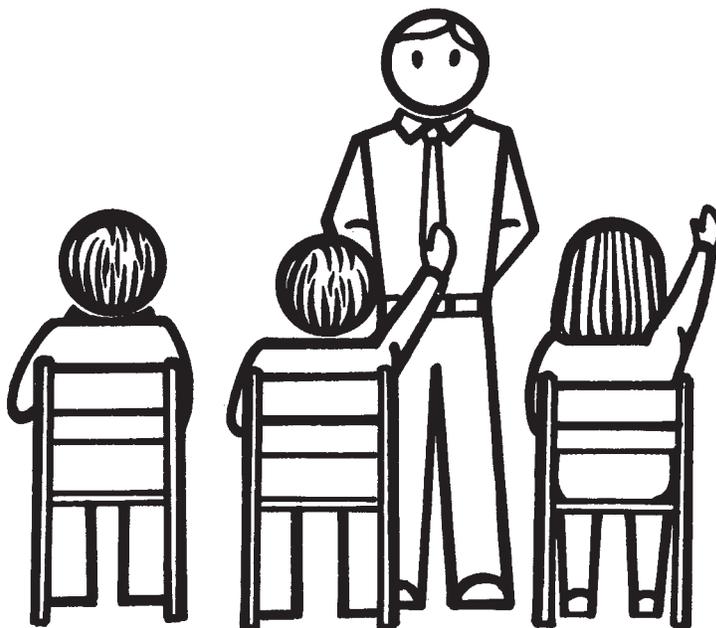
Program

Some groups have the program as part of the business meeting. Others adjourn the meeting and then have the program.

When a guest speaker is on the program, a 4-H member should introduce the speaker. The 4-H'er should briefly mention the speaker's training, experience, special interests and qualifications for speaking on the particular subject. Allow the guest speaker to make the speech.

Adjournment

A member can make a motion to adjourn, or the presiding officer can ask for a motion to adjourn. This motion is not discussed but brought to a vote quickly. The meeting is not adjourned until the presiding officer taps the gavel once and says, "The meeting is adjourned."



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