Authors

Kathy Bruynis, Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development, Ohio State University Extension

Jenna Hoyt, Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development, Ohio State University Extension

Bonnie Malone, Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development, Ohio State University Extension

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Reviewer

Justin Bower, Former 4-H Member and Past President, Collegiate 4-H at The Ohio State University

Melinda Morrison, Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development, Ohio State University Extension

Production Team

Stacy S. Cochran, Assistant Editor, Marketing and Communications, College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences, The Ohio State University

Lauren Farr, Senior Graphic Designer, Marketing and Communications, College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences, The Ohio State University

Jane Wright, Curriculum Manager, 4-H Youth Development, Ohio State University Extension
WHY USE PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE?

Parliamentary procedure is a basic tool used at meetings of all sizes. It is valuable to anyone leading or participating in a meeting. These are the main benefits:

- It keeps meetings short and focused.
- It is democracy in action. Everyone has equal rights.
- Majority rules, but the rights of the minority are protected.
It is a club president’s responsibility to lead meetings in an orderly way using parliamentary procedure. It is the responsibility of every participant to adhere to the guidelines and to participate in a way that is respectful.

Words in green throughout this book are defined in the glossary.
PLANNING YOUR MEETING: THE AGENDA

The agenda is how your meeting is organized. Even if you don’t share an agenda ahead of time, prepare one to share at the beginning of the meeting so everyone is informed and can participate in the right order. A typical agenda for a 4-H meeting includes these items:

- Call to Order
- Pledges (Pledge of Allegiance and 4-H Pledge)
- Introduction of Visitors
- Roll Call
- Minutes of Previous Meeting
- Officer Reports (secretary, treasurer, and others)
• Committee Reports
• Advisor Reports
• **Unfinished (Old) Business**
• **New Business**
• **Adjournment**

The agenda for a particular meeting might vary depending on the club’s needs and activities. For example, special meetings are not likely to need all of the above agenda items. Also, your officer team might prefer a different **order of business**.
Planning Your Meeting: Things to Do Ahead of Time

Here are some other things to do as you plan your meeting:

1. Set the date and time.
2. Schedule a facility.
3. Review the purpose and goal of the meeting.
4. Develop a draft agenda with input from committee chairs. If your meetings are small, frequent, or routine, a draft agenda is optional.
5. Send out a meeting notice by mail, email, phone, or text. Use a method convenient for the attendees. Be sure to ask if anyone would like to include anything on the agenda.
6. Develop a final agenda that supports the meeting’s purpose and goal.
These tasks need to be done a day or two before the meeting:

- Send a meeting reminder.
- Make copies of the agenda and other handouts such as officer reports.
- Plan and arrange the room setup. Basic options include theater, U-shaped, classroom, conference or boardroom, circle, and rounds.
- Gather supplies such as name tags, name plates, sign in sheets, gavel, flags, refreshments, pens, pencils, notepaper, etc.