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**Parliamentary Procedure Guide**

The 4-H Club model provides an excellent forum for youths to experience, practice, and effectively use life skills that will allow them to be successful in living productive and satisfying lives. Leading or participating in a club business meeting gives members an opportunity to plan, evaluate, discuss ideas, and set goals. For these skills to be gained, the club officers need to foster an inclusive environment, where all members have a voice and all adult leaders support members in choosing, rather than dictating, the club’s direction.

Parliamentary procedure provides a framework that encourages all members to have an equal voice in their club. Robert’s Rules of Order is the standard reference for business meetings and is commonly used in both small and large organizations. Fundamentally, parliamentary procedure is a valuable resource to ensure each member has a say and to make certain that each meeting is conducted efficiently.

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Call to Order

Pledges

Welcome Guests/New Members

Song Leaders

Officer’s Reports:

Secretary

Corresponding Secretary

Treasurer’s Report

Parliamentarian

Reporter

Historian

Wit & Wisdom

Health & Safety

County Council

Project Leader

Committee Reports

Unfinished Business

New Business

Announcements

Adjourn Business Meeting

Educational Program or Project Experience

Recreation (Songs, Games and/or refreshments)

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**Getting Started:**

The Club President will work alongside the 4-H club leader to prepare an agenda in advance of the meeting. The president runs the meeting using the agenda constructed prior to the meeting. Agendas are the order of business that will occur at the meeting.

**Use Parliamentary Procedure to accomplish these goals:**

* Keep meetings orderly
* Accomplish more items in less time and meet your goals
* Help people work better together and come to an agreement
* Provide a democratic process at meetings
* Use Parliamentary Procedure effectively

Teaching youth officers to lead a business meeting is quite easy by providing them with a basic script that explains what to say and what to do, such as the one below.

**Five Steps of a Motion**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Steps** | **Who Speaks**  (After being recognized by the presiding officer) | **What Is Said**  (In this example the club is considering participating in a parade.) |
| 1. Any member makes a motion. | Any Member | “I move that our club enters a float in this year’s Thanksgiving parade.” |
| 1. Another member seconds that motion. | Any Other Member | “I second that motion.” |
| 1. The presiding officer states the motion, and it is discussed. | Presiding Officer  Member 1  Member 2  Member 3  Presiding Officer | “It has been moved and seconded that our club enters a float in this year’s Thanksgiving parade. Is there any discussion?”  “I think this would be a great way to promote 4-H.”  “In the past my grandfather has been willing to let us use his trailer for floats. I can ask him.”  “I don’t think we have enough time to get a float ready for the parade.”  “Is there any further discussion?” |
| 1. A vote is taken. A voice vote is most commonly used; however, a vote can also be taken by a show of hands, standing up or by ballot. | Presiding Officer | “All in favor say ‘Aye’. All opposed say ‘Nay’.” |
| 1. The outcome is announced | Presiding Officer | ‘This motion carries. Our club will enter a float in this year’s Thanksgiving parade.” |

**DEFINITIONS**

The following table provides some definitions of commonly used terms

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Aye | When a vote is called, the members who agree with the motion will say “Aye”. |
| Floor | Only one person is allowed to speak at a time during the meeting. The person who has been given permission to speak by the presiding officer “has the floor” or the right to speak. To obtain the floor, a member raises their hand, and the presiding officer will call on that member. |
| Majority | One more than half of the voting members. This is the minimum number of votes needed to pass motions. |
| Motion | A suggestion that a member wants the group to consider. A motion is stated in the form, “I move that …. “ |
| Nay | When a vote is called, the members who disagree with the motion will say, “Nay”. |
| Parliamentary Procedure | A set of guidelines that describes the proper way to conduct a business meeting. |
| Presiding Officer | The person in charge of conducting the business meeting, typically the president or the chairperson. |
| Second | Once a motion has been made, the president will ask for a “second”. This is like asking if there is another member who agrees that the group should consider the suggestion. To second a motion a member will say, “I second that motion” or “Second.” |

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**Sample Business Meeting Script for a 4-H Club**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **CALL TO ORDER** |  |
| President | *Taps gavel.* “The monthly meeting of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 4-H Club now comes to order on *month date year* at *time.*" |
| **PLEDGES** | |
| President | “Pledges will be led by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. *(President asks two members to lead pledges)* |
| Member(s) | “Please stand and join us in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and the 4-H Pledge.” |
| **INTRODUCE NEW MEMBERS/GUESTS** | |
| **VICE PRESIDENT (**Or officer assigned this responsibility) | “We would like to introduce \_\_\_\_\_\_ who is a (a new member, guest, etc.) to our club. |
| **Officer’s Reports** | |
| **SECRETARY** | |
| **ROLL CALL** | |
| President | “The secretary will now call roll. Roll call will be \_\_\_\_\_\_” |
| Secretary | *Calls roll and records attendance.* |
| **READING OF THE MINUTES** | |
| President | “The secretary will now read last month’s minutes” |
| Secretary | *Reads the minutes from the last meeting.* |
| President | “Are there any additions or corrections to the minutes?” ***PAUSE****. If a member notices a mistake, the member will raise their hand. When called on by the president, they will explain the mistake.*  **IF CORRECTIONS:** “The secretary will please make the correction. Are there any other additions or corrections?” ***PAUSE.***“If not, the minutes stand approved as corrected.”  **IF NO CORRECTIONS:** “If not, the minutes are approved as read.” |
| **Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer, Parliamentarian, Reporter, Historian, Wit & Wisdom, Health & Safety** | |
| **COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT** | |
| **COMMITTEE REPORTS** | |
| Committee Chairperson | *Small groups that have been appointed or elected. Committee chairman should report back to the club to inform them of what their committee has been working on and their suggestions for the club. The club may need to vote on something that committee suggests.* |
| **OLD BUSINESS** | |
| President | *As the agenda is prepared prior this meeting, the president will refer to the minutes of the last meeting to list unfinished business, which is business that was discussed at a previous meeting that still has unfinished details or decisions to be made.*  “Our first item of unfinished business is \_\_\_\_\_.” |
| **NEW BUSINESS** | |
| President | *As the agenda is prepared before the meeting, the president or leader will identify new topics or issues for the club to discuss.*  “Our first item of new business is \_\_\_\_\_.” *The president, leader or another member will help lead the discussion about each business item. Who will lead the discussion is generally identified on the agenda. If a decision needs to be made for any business item, the president will accept a motion from the floor and a vote will be held.* |
| President | *After all listed new business listed on the agenda has been discussed.* “Is there any other new business?” |
| Any Member | *After receiving the floor from the president, any member may bring up new business. If the business requires a decision to be made, the member will say,* “I move that \_\_\_\_” |
| President | “Is there a second to this motion?” |
| Any Member | “I second that motion.” |
| President | “The motion has been made and seconded to \_\_\_\_\_. Is there any discussion?” |
| Any Member | *Any member may raise their hand and share their views about the topic when the president calls on them.* |
| President | “If there is no further discussion, then we will vote. All in favor say ‘Aye.’ All opposed say ‘Nay’.” The motion carries (or fails depending on the vote).” |
| **ANNOUNCEMENTS** | |
| President | *Your club leader may prepare a list of announcements or prepare a take-home list for each member with important dates and reminders.* |
| Any Member | *After receiving the floor form the president any member or leader may make announcements.* |
| **ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING** | |
| President | “If there is no further business, is there a motion that we adjourn the monthly meeting of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 4-H Club?” |
| Any Member | *Raises hand. After receiving the floor from the president, the member will say,* “I move that this meeting be adjourned.” *This particular motion does not need a second.* |
| President | “This meeting is adjourned.” *Taps gavel.* |

This concludes the business portion of the 4-H club meeting, which is typically followed by educational actives, social activities, and snacks and/or refreshments.

Learning how to conduct and participate in meetings allows 4-H youth to experience and practice life skills that will help them in school and as adults. Planning, evaluating, sharing ideas, listening to others, and making decisions are all important life skills that take place through participation in meetings.

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