

# **Officers' Handbook**

**4-H**

# HOW'S YOUR CLUB GOING?

## WHAT ARE YOUR MEETINGS LIKE?

How are the general meetings of your club these days?

Are you having fun?

What about other 4-H members? Are they having fun, too? Do they look forward to the meetings? Do they get a chance to take an active part?

What do you do at your meetings? Are you getting important things done?

Do you have demonstrations, talks, or discussions on member's projects?

Do you ever talk about things, such as citizenship or health? Or plan a picnic or a tour? Or talk about the club's fair exhibit or achievement day program?

Do you always learn something new?

## WHAT ARE MEETINGS FOR, ANYWAY?

Meetings give people a chance to think and act together, a chance to plan and do things together.

They let members learn from each other.

You couldn't very well learn to lead a discussion by yourself. Or work out the ideas for a picnic or party. You need club members thinking and acting together to really get things done.

That's what a club meeting is all about: to learn to make plans, to have fun.

## HOW CAN YOU HAVE BETTER MEETINGS?

-Make sure officers, committee chairmen, and members all know their jobs.

-Learn what makes a good meeting. It's everyone pulling together, doing his share, plus using parliamentary procedure to govern the club's business.

-Plan interesting meetings that **start** and **end** on time: opening, business, educational program, recreation.

-Plan the program for several months ahead.

-Let everyone be on the program sometime during the year.

# JOBS FOR EVERYONE

## OFFICERS

Good officers are enthusiastic, tactful and friendly. They work to get each member of the club in on plans and to give everyone a fair chance. They accept and respect each member and encourage everyone to contribute to the club.

They are proud of their jobs and always do their best. They get things done right and on time.

They understand their jobs and prepare themselves to do them well.

### **President**

His job is to help everyone in the club work together. He does all he can to make each member feel at home and to help everyone take part in the discussion.

He doesn't put in his own ideas. He acts more like a referee. He watches, he listens, and he tosses back to the group any question put straight to him.

He asks questions that make the group think.

When he feels that the group is fairly well agreed on a plan, he asks, "Are we agreed that we should do \_\_\_\_\_?" Any member may say, "I think we ought to talk about it more," or "I like this part, but not that." The president lets the group talk some more and then asks again, "Are we all agreed on this new plan?"

So what? You come out with a plan on which everyone, or nearly everyone, agrees. You don't have members who feel they have been over-ruled.

In doing his job, the president:

- Presides at meetings.
- Sees that the room is ready and that the meeting starts on time.
- Arranges to have the vice president take over if he can't be there.
- Appoints committees with the help of the leader.
- Works with members and the leader to plan the program for the year.
- Meets with the leader and the other officers to plan the order of business for each meeting.

-Casts the deciding vote if there is a tie.

-Gives other officers a helping hand with their jobs.

### **Vice President**

The vice president is the president's assistant. He:

- Presides at meetings when the president is absent.
- Handles other jobs in the club, such as serving as chairman of the program committee.

### **Secretary**

The secretary keeps record of what the club does and handles its correspondence.

As part of his job, he:

- Puts the club's plans for the year in the 4H Secretary's Book.
- Keeps minutes of all meetings.
- Keeps a complete list of all members and calls the roll.
- Reads letters to the club at meetings.
- Reminds members of special meetings – by phone, by postcard, or as he sees them. He makes sure each member knows **when** and **where** the next meeting will be.
- Writes the club's letters, such as thank-you letters and requests for information.
- Fills out, with the help of members, "Our Club's Application for a Seal" in the 4-H Secretary's Book.
- Turns his completed 4-H Secretary's Book over to the club leader.

## **Treasurer**

The treasurer is responsible for handling the club's money. He:

- Receives all money.
- Keeps a record of the amount received in the 4-H Treasurer's Book.
- Puts the money in a special club bank account or keeps it in a safe place.
- Pays out money only when approved by the club.
- Records the amount paid in the 4-H Treasurer's Book.
- Reports at club meetings on money received, money paid out, and the amount of money on hand.
- Gives the new treasurer complete and accurate records when he takes office.

## **Reporter**

The reporter tells the public about what your club does. Whether it's known as a group that goes places and gets things done depends mainly on him. He:

- Talks with your county agent about how to handle club stories.
- Writes a story about each meeting to send to your County Extension Office or local paper.
- Sends advance information to local papers or radio stations when you plan a special event, such as a demonstration day or a community service project.
- Writes a follow-up story after the special event is over.

## **Song Leader**

The song leader helps members learn new songs and have fun together. He:

- Keeps the song books and passes them out and collects them again at each meeting.
- Leads singing or gets others to lead it at club meetings and special events.

## **COMMITTEES**

Your club should have several committees. The exact number will depend on how big the club is and what you want to do.

### **Program**

This committee goes to work after the club has made its program plans for the year. Committee members find speakers on subjects the club wants to know about. Or they see if the County Extension Office has films. Or they may ask a 4-H'er who has been to a special conference to talk to the club about it. Whatever they do, they check with the leader before the meeting to be sure the program is set.

### **Membership**

Every live club is a growing one. The membership committee makes sure other boys and girls know how to join your club. They try to reach everybody in the area. They get other members to help. The club could have as its goal: "Each one reach one."

### **Recreation**

The recreation committee plans for some fun at each meeting. It can also suggest and plan special activities – swimming parties, overnight camps, trail rides, etc.

### **Community Service**

This committee finds out what your club can do to make the community better. To get ideas, committee members talk with leaders, parents, neighbors, and local public service organizations.

Then they present their ideas to the club. Once the club decides on a project, the committee plans for work days, reports on how much has been done, and coordinates the club's efforts.

### **Health**

Some clubs plan a special health activity during the year. This can be things like checking sight and hearing, checking balance and coordination, fighting food fads, learning how to lose weight safely, fighting air or water pollution, learning about drugs or smoking, checking study lamps to find out if they give good light, or a tour of the county health department. Committee members get ideas, investigate to see if help is available, and then make suggestions for the club to consider. After the club decides, they work out the program in detail.

### **Safety**

If your club wants a safety program, you may also want to set up a special committee to handle it. Again, the committee can check out various ideas – highway safety, home fire drills, safety near irrigation canals, carbon monoxide problems in camper trucks, safety in consumer products, safe use of pesticides, etc. The committee finds out if the County Extension Office has bulletins or films, or if they can get someone from the community to talk on the subject. Then they present their ideas to the club. After the club decides on a subject, the committee makes the arrangements.

### **Special Events**

The president can also appoint committees for special events, such as parent's night, achievement day, a club tour, or a party.

### **MEMBERS**

Members are important, too. Without good members, the club won't go. Encourage them to take an **active** part. That means they speak up in meetings and make their ideas known. And they volunteer for jobs without having to be coaxed.

Every member should be on a committee or have another important job. That way, he'll feel he's really part of the club. Try to arrange the committees so each member serves on the one that interests him most. Also let each member do the job he does best. He'll be happiest and most enthusiastic if he can do something that really interests him and something he can do well.

Members also have an important part at meetings. They can make suggestions and come up with ideas that no one else may have thought of. You can encourage this by making the meeting friendly and positive. That means saying things like "I like Sue's idea, but maybe it would work even better if we did..." instead of something like "That won't work" or "That's the wrong way."

And, of course, members should attend **all** the club meetings and activities if they possibly can. Help them feel that their attendance is really important to the success of the club.

# **ALL ABOUT MEETINGS**

## **THE ORDER OF A BUSINESS MEETING**

- Call to order when the meeting opens.
- 4-H pledge, pledge of allegiance, song, or other opening.
- Roll call.
- Reading of the minutes of the last meeting.

- Reports of officers.
- Reports of committees.
- Unfinished business left over from the last meeting.
- New business.
- Adjournment when business meeting is over.

### **IF THERE'S NO BUSINESS**

When there is no business to be discussed, the president can just call the meeting to order and ask the secretary to read the roll. Then the meeting can be adjourned and the rest of the time can be spent on the educational part of the program or other activities.

The president and the club leader can decide ahead of time if a regular business meeting is really necessary. If not, there's no use in having a long meeting when a short one will do.

### **MAKING AND VOTING ON MOTIONS**

A member who wants the club to vote on something makes a **motion**.

He raises his hand, or stands and waits to be recognized. When the president calls on him, he says, "I move that . . ."

Another members says "I second the motion." This means he thinks the club should consider it. (If the motion is not seconded, it is dropped.)

The president then asks for discussion. When it stops, he asks members, 'Are you ready for the question? If no one wants more discussion, the club is ready to vote.

The president states the motion so everyone can hear it. The members vote when he says "All in favor say 'Aye'," and "All opposed say 'No'."

The motion is passed if more members vote "Aye" than "No." If the president is in doubt

about the vote, he should ask for a show of hands or a standing vote.

The president then says, "The motion is carried," or "The motion is lost," according to the vote.

### **NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS**

There are two ways to nominate officers.

One is to have members suggest someone for an office during the election meeting. The member says, "I nominate \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_." A nomination does not need a second, although a second can be made to show support.

The other way is for the president to appoint a nominating committee. The committee chooses candidates for each office and asks them to run. It presents its nominations as a report at the meeting. Other nominations can then be made from the floor.

When there are no more nominations, a member says, "I move to close the nominations." If the motion is carried, the members then vote on the candidates.

Voting for officers is usually by ballot. It takes a majority – one vote over half – to be elected. If you have 17 members, a majority is 9.

Nominations and elections are important club business. Tell the members about the election ahead of time. Then they can be thinking about the kinds of officers they want to have. Make sure everyone knows the duties of each office, too.

### **WAYS TO VOTE**

-**Voice Vote.** The president says "All in favor of the motion say 'Aye'."

-**Standing Vote.** The members stand so their votes can be counted.

-**Show of Hands.** The members raise their hands so the president can count their votes.

–**Ballot.** The president has one or more helpers hand out blank slips of paper so the members can write down their vote.

–**Roll Call.** Each member votes as his name is called.

–**Honor System.** Each member closes his eyes and votes by raising his hand.

## MINUTES OF A MEETING

The minutes of a meeting should be a record of what is **done**, not what is **said**. They should contain:

- Date and place of meeting.
- Number of members and visitors present.
- Approval of previous minutes.
- All reports and what was done about them.
- All motions, with the name of the person who made them, and whether the motion was carried or lost.
- The time the meeting was adjourned.

## DISCUSSION GROUPS

Rules for meetings are fine, especially for electing officers. But many clubs like to work and plan together without using these rules. Votes – especially if the vote is close – can leave a lot of members with the feeling that they didn’t have any part in the plan.

Discussion groups let all members feel that they helped in shaping the decision. The group talks about something until everyone – or nearly everyone – agrees on what to do.

**Circle Response** is one way to start a discussion. The discussion leader or president says, “I’ll call on each one in turn for his best suggestion on our plan. If you don’t have a quick idea, you can say ‘pass.’ Will the secretary please write all the

ideas on the blackboard (or this sheet of wrapping paper)?”

**Buzz Groups.** If your club has 10 or more members, you can use small groups to decide on a plan of action. After all the ideas are up on the board, divide into groups of five or six members each. Divide the ideas on the board into two or more sections, one section for each group. After buzzing for four or five minutes, each group reports back on its “best” idea.

**Group Discussion** of the two, three, or four “best” ideas comes next.

**Decision.** The president asks, “Does the group agree that this is what we should do?”. If the members say “yes”, the next step is to ask for volunteers to carry out each part of the plan. Everyone has some of his own ideas in the plan, so it’s easier for him to do his part. After all, it’s **his** plan.

## FOR BETTER MEETINGS

Why not ask your leader or County Extension Educator for a community – or county-wide officer training school? You’ll enjoy knowing officers from other clubs and you’ll learn even more about planning and holding meetings.

# LET’S CHECK ON HOW YOU DID

Were your club meetings planned?     

Did members help make plans?     

Did the president and other officers  
get together to plan the order of  
business for each meeting?

- Were materials and equipment ready?    ō
- Did meetings start on time?           ō
- Were the officers ready to make the  
meeting go smoothly?               ō
- Were committee chairmen ready with  
their reports?                       ō
- Did the president help members take  
part in the discussion?           ō
- Did you follow the order for a  
business meeting?                 ō
- Did you use parliamentary procedure  
to elect officers?                   ō
- Did you use circle response or  
buzz groups to work out ideas?   ō
- Did each member carry out his part  
of the plans?                       ō
- Did meetings close on time?       ō

## SAMPLE 4-H CLUB MEETING

PRESIDENT: Will the meeting please come to order? John Jones will lead us in the pledge of allegiance and Martha Martinez will lead us in the 4-H pledge.

MEMBER JOHN JONES: Let's all stand and say the pledge of allegiance.

MEMBERS: I pledge allegiance.....

MEMBER MARIA MARTINEZ: Let's all say the 4-H pledge.

MEMBERS: I pledge my head.....

PRESIDENT: The secretary will call the roll.

SECRETARY: Today we will answer the roll by telling what we did on our project last week. (There are many different ways of answering the roll, which you plan in the 4-H Secretary's Book.)

MEMBER NANCY TATE: I dyed different kinds of cloth and put the samples in my record book.

MEMBER KEN WASHINGTON: I taught my dog to heel.

MEMBER DICK LEE: I set out some tomato plants in my garden.

OTHER MEMBERS: (Tell what they did.)

PRESIDENT: Will the secretary read the minutes of the last meeting?

SECRETARY: The meeting was called to order by .....

PRESIDENT: Are there any additions or corrections to the minutes? (Waits a minute.) If not, they stand approved as read.

PRESIDENT: We will now have reports from the officers and committee chairmen.

President – reports on coming 4-H events, etc.

Vice President – reports on other activities.

Secretary – reads letters.

Treasurer – reports on money received, money paid out, and the amount of money on hand.

Committee Chairmen – report on activities of committees since the last meeting.

After each report, the president asks if there are any questions. If there are no questions, the president says, "The report is accepted as presented."

If there are no questions and if the report needs something done about it, the president asks for a motion, a request that something be done.

Each motion must be seconded, discussed, and voted on before another motion can be made.

PRESIDENT: Is there any unfinished business? (Business left from the last meeting can be discussed at this time.)

PRESIDENT: Is there any new business? (Club members discuss new business – future plans for club activities, things to be done before the next meeting, etc.)

PRESIDENT: Are there any announcements? (Club members or leaders make announcements.)

PRESIDENT: If there is no further business, is there a motion for the meeting to be adjourned?

MEMBER: I move that the business meeting be adjourned.

MEMBER: I second the motion.

PRESIDENT: All those in favor of the motion say “AYE.” Those opposed say “No.” The motion is passed (if more members vote “Aye” than “No”). The business meeting is adjourned.