

Make the Most of Your Meetings

Meeting time is valuable. Here's how to maximize effectiveness in your meetings.

Set an objective. Answer three questions:

1. What do I want to achieve by this meeting?
2. What has to be accomplished by the end of this meeting?
3. When the meeting is over how will I know the meeting was a success?

Use your answers to define your meeting objectives.

Make sure key people attend. Key people are essential to accomplish the meeting objectives.

Arrange for the proper facility. Little things make a difference, such as how the room is arranged, the room temperature, refreshments, etc.

Write an agenda. The agenda can be developed through a committee, or a pre-meeting survey. List the most important items first. The agenda should be distributed in advance when possible so participants can adequately prepare for the meeting. The agenda should state the date, location, start and finish times, topics to be discussed and expected outcome (information only, discussion, or decision). Studies show that productivity decreases sharply after about an hour and a half of meeting. You may also provide breaks during a long meeting.

Talk with officers and committee chairs to determine who will be reporting. Check the minutes for items that are to be taken up at this meeting.

Keep the meeting on track. The meeting leader is responsible for keeping the meeting on track and adjourning on time. You may also set some guidelines for the meeting, such as:

- One person speaks at a time.
- No side conversations.
- Everyone participates.
- Listen as an ally.
- Set time frames and stick to them.
- Use a consensus decision-making model.

Should discussion stray from the agenda, the group may decide to add it to the agenda or save for a future meeting.

Summarize the meeting. The leader should summarize the group's accomplishments, review action items (including who, what, and when), and thank everyone for their participation. The summary of the meeting should be documented and distributed following the meeting.

MEETINGS AND PROGRAMS

FOR LOCAL ASSOCIATION CONSIDERATION

- Number of meetings/year
- Executive Committee and general membership meetings
- Different locations for meetings
- Different times to meet (breakfast, luncheon, dinner)
- Business meetings
- Social time before meeting or between meeting and lunch
- Recognize new members
- Recognize those members who have died
- Mention those members who may be experiencing health problems
- Meeting announcements – newsletter, website, email
- How to run a meeting – Parliamentary Procedure
- Invite spouses and guests

PROGRAM IDEAS

- When making a request, please include the following information:
 - Name of your organization
 - Date of event
 - Location of event
 - A brief description of the event
 - Approximate size of audience
 - Name of speaker requested and the topic you'd like for them to address
- AARP's Speakers Bureau
 - Attention: Office of Public Outreach (A9-333)
 - 601 E Street, NW, Washington, DC 20049
 - To book a speaker for your next event, please send an email to speakers@aarp.org or call 202-434-2520. (AARP has a sample listing of topics that can be addressed)
- Local Historical Society Speakers Bureau –
<http://msa.maryland.gov/msa/mdmanualataglance>
- Local Community College Speakers Bureau
- Local Chamber of Commerce
- Local Sheriff's Department
- University of Maryland Extension Office
- Maryland Department of Aging
 - 301 W. Preston St., Ste. 1007, Baltimore, MD 21201
 - (Stephanie Hull) 410-767-1107

- Senior Medicare Patrol
- Maryland Congressional Delegation (info on MRSPA website)
- Maryland Legislators
- Maryland Insurance Administration – www.mdinsurance.state.md.us
- Maryland Attorney General’s Office – Consumer Protection – 410-576-6300
 - Or 888-743-0023
 - Maryland Superintendent of Education
- Local County Executive/Mayor
- Local Teacher of the Year
- Local Superintendent of Schools
- Local school student groups – music, speech/drama
- Maryland State Retirement/Pension System
 - Dean Kenderdine, Executive Director
 - Maryland State Retirement/Pension System
120 East Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21202
1-800-492-5909 or 410-625-5601
 - Theresa Lochte, Retiree Trustee
4009 Arjay Circle, Ellicott City, MD 21042
410-461-2040 *tlochtetrustee@gmail.com*
- MRSPA President/Executive Director - Call 410-551-1517
- MRSPA Board of Directors – Committee Chairs
- Wills and trusts presentation
- Trips/special activity presentation by members
- Safety and security – police department
- Health and nutrition issues
- Reverse mortgages
- Leadership through music
- Local and school music groups
- Charity organization speakers
- Local elected officials
- School superintendent
- Home safety expert
- Local authors
- Maryland Public Television
- Information on fracking
- Memorial service (annual)
- Local teacher/support person of the year
- Tea history/service
- Trivia games

- Local newspaper editor
- Local retired “Senior Idol”
- Museum and library speakers
- Local hospital executive
- Consumer Education Workshop
- Speakers to solicit volunteers for various causes
- PTA speaker
- Board of Education benefits office
- Identity theft information
- County executive
- Sing-a-long
- Caregiving
- Scholarship Recipients
- Emeritus Members Recognized
- Audiologist/hearing tests
- Speaker from local senior center
- Speaker and tour of local Vo-Tech Center
- Board of Education President or other member
- Local Association Chorus
- Memorial Service for members
- MRSPA Benefit Providers
 - Joe Barger – Academy Financial
(Long term care, dental and vision plans)
410-825-3569 or 800-253-9915
 - Association Member Benefits Advisors (AMBA) Austin, TX
Jeanie Coffey – 800-258-7041
Discounts on Apple Computers, Auto Rentals, CU Wireless
Final Expense Whole Life Policy, Government Employee Travel Opportunities
Identity Theft Protection, Medical Air Services Association, Presto Printing
Mailbox, Road Scholar
 - Fusco Financial Associates – 410-296-5400 or 800-810-6650
Kevin Fusco or Dave Matthews
 - Hear in America – 800-286-6149 Louisville, KY
Murphy Brock
 - SECU Credit Union - 800-879-7328
 - United Legal Benefits – 410-628-1110 or 800-546-1602
Scott Crosby

EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

Parliamentary Procedure

- is a set of rules for conduct at meetings.
- allows everyone to be heard and to make decisions with a minimum amount of confusion.
- can be adopted to fit the needs of any organization.
- assures democratic rules, flexibility, protection of rights of the majority and of the minority, a fair hearing for everyone.

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You Are The Presider

Be efficient, courteous, and impartial.
Show outward composure and dignity.
Maintain impartiality by attitude,
facial expression, voice, and word.

- The presiding officer is responsible for seeing that the business of the assembly is transacted in proper order, and expedited as much as possible, that members observe the rules of debate, that order and decorum are always observed, and that the “rules of order” are enforced with as little friction as possible.
- As an elected officer, you are responsible for the overall management of the meeting.
- The presiding officer should stand while:
 - a. calling a meeting to order and adjourning a meeting.
 - b. stating a question.
 - c. putting a question to vote.
 - d. explaining reasons for ruling on a point of order.
 - e. speaking on an appeal in debate, or
 - f. answering a parliamentary inquiry or point of information.
- The presiding officer should sit or step back from the microphone when the floor has been assigned, unless a clear view of the speaker and the assembly would be obstructed.
- The gavel, the symbol of authority for the presiding officer, is used in three instances during a meeting. It is used to:
 - a. call the meeting to order.
 - b. call attention to breaches of order by members in the meeting.
 - c. adjourn the meeting.

Preparation For the Meeting

Personal Knowledge:

Preparing for a meeting involves “doing your homework”. At the top of the list is your knowledge of procedure. Facts needed are contained in your organization’s bylaws and other documents, in the organization’s parliamentary authority, and in the minutes of previous meetings. The more knowledge you have of the rules and of the past activities of the organization, the more at ease you will be when presiding.

The Agenda:

An agenda is an outline of a meeting. It includes items to be acted upon or information to be given. Your organization may have an adopted “agenda form” which lists the standard order of business.

Suggested Form

- Call to Order
- Opening Ceremonies (Welcome; Invocation; Pledge)
- Approval of Agenda
- Minutes of the Previous Meeting
- Reports of Officers (Include report of Treasurer)
- Reports of Standing and Special Committees
- Special Orders
- Unfinished Business and General Orders
- New Business
- Announcements (May include program)
- Adjournment

Before developing the agenda:

- Make assignments for the *Opening Ceremonies*.
- Talk with officers and committee chairs to determine who will be reporting.
- Comb the minutes for items that are to be taken up at this meeting.
- Check the bylaws (rules) for items that are required to come up at this meeting.
- If a special presentation (program) is to be included, verify the participants and the time required.

Finalize the agenda. Make sufficient typed copies for all attending the meeting and for your records.

Presiding Officer's Script:

Scripts are a wonderful tool to help both the presiding officer and the parliamentarian run a fair and efficient meeting. The script should include the words you would use to introduce each segment of the agenda. You may want to have, close at hand, a script for handling the types of motions that may arise.

Sample Script for Presiding Officer

Call to Order: [Determine the presence of a quorum. Stand quietly at the podium (or in the appropriate position), hold the gavel in one hand.]

“Good morning. A quorum being present, the meeting will come to order.”

[Rap the gavel once (do not pound).]

Opening Ceremonies:[Invocation/Inspiration; Pledge]

“The Opening Ceremonies will be conducted by _____.”

[After ceremonies.....] ***“Thank you, _____.”***

[Add complementary comments, if appropriate, and a statement of welcome. This segment may also include introductions.]

Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

“The first business in order is the approval of the minutes of the last meeting. _____, recording secretary.”

[Secretary reads the minutes or reports that an approval committee has read and approved them.]

“Are there any corrections to the minutes? Are there any corrections to the minutes?” [Pause.] ***“There being no corrections, the minutes are approval as read (circulated).”***

[If there are corrections, the corrections should be noted in the minutes by the secretary. The Chair then says: ***“The minutes are approved as corrected.”***]

Reports of Officers: [Including report of Treasurer]

“The next business in order is the reports of the officers.”

[Call on all officers who will actually be reporting. Call for reports in the order they are listed in the bylaws. Call for the report of the treasurer after the officers.]

“The treasurer, _____, will give his/her report.”

[At the conclusion of the report.....] ***“Are there any questions?”***

[Pause.] ***“There being none, the report will be filed for audit.”***

[Ask: ***“Are there other officers with reports? If there are officers who have not been listed on the agenda.”***]

Reports of Standing and Special Committees:

The next business in order is the committee reports.

[Call on all reporting committees in the order they are listed in the bylaws.

Example: The report of the _____ Committee, _____, Chair. If a report recommends specific action, process the motion immediately after the report has been given. ***“Thank you, _____, the report will be filed with the minutes of this meeting.”***]

Special Orders:

[These are matters the bylaws require to be taken up at this meeting: such as, election of officers, selection of award recipients, selections of convention delegates; and also, matters that were made special orders for this meeting from the previous meeting.]

Unfinished Business and General Orders:

[Announce this category only if the minutes of the previous meeting list business which has been postponed to this meeting. Example: Suppose “consideration of amendments to standing rules” was listed on the agenda for the previous meeting but was not reached before the meeting was adjourned. And, that your group meets at least quarterly.]

“The next business in order is consideration of amendments to the standing rules which is unfinished business from the previous meeting. _____, Chair of the Rules Committee, will present the proposed amendments.”

New Business:

“The next business in order is new business. Is there any new business to come before this group?”

Announcements: [May include program.]

[Make the announcements or call on the person to give the announcements. Ask for additional announcements. If there is to be a program, introduce the person in charge of the program.]

Adjournment: ***“If there is no further business and there is no objection, the meeting will be adjourned.”*** [Pause.] ***“There being no objection, the meeting is adjourned.”***
[Rap the gavel one time.]

Sample Scripts for Specific Motions:

Main Motion

Member #1: ***“I move that _____.”***

Member #2: ***“I second the motion.”***

Chair: ***“It has been moved and seconded that _____.
Is there any discussion?”***

[Recognize each member who wishes to speak. After all have spoken.....]

“The question is on the motion that _____.”

“All in favor of the motion say AYE.”

“Those opposed, say NO.”

“The Ayes have it and ...” [Explain the outcome of the vote. Example: ***“The Ayes have it therefore the annual scholarship will be \$2000.”***]

An Amendment to a Motion

Member #1: ***“I move that _____.”***

Member #2: ***“I second the motion.”***

Chair: ***“It has been moved and seconded that _____.
Is there any discussion?”***

[Recognize each member who wishes to speak.]

Member #3: ***“I move to amend the motion by _____.”***

Member #4: ***“I second the motion.”***

Chair: ***“It has been moved and seconded to amend the motion by _____.
_____ . Is there any discussion?”***

[Recognize each member who wishes to speak. After all have spoken.....]

“The question is on the amendment to _____.”

“All in favor of the motion say AYE.”

“Those opposed say NO.”

“The Ayes have it and the amendment is adopted.”

“The question is now on the amended motion that _____.”

Is there any discussion?”

[Recognize each member who wishes to speak. After all have spoken.....]

“The question is on the amended motion that _____.”

“All in favor of the motion say AYE.”

“Those opposed say NO.”

“The Ayes have it and ...” [Explain the outcome of the vote. Example: ***“The Ayes have it therefore an oak chair will be purchased for the office.”***]

Reminders:

1. Previous question requires 2/3 vote for adoption. If adopted, debate stops and the vote is taken.
2. Take votes requiring more than a majority with a rising vote. Announce the vote required before taking the vote.
3. Do not allow “Lay on the Table” to be used to kill a motion. The correct motion to use is “Postpone Indefinitely”.

The Meeting

- Arrive at the meeting early and begin the meeting on time.
- Check off the business on the agenda as it is completed. Stick with the agenda. Interrupt the agenda only for emergencies or “recess”.
- Take the vote by unanimous consent when it appears that all are in favor. ***“If there is no objection, the motion is adopted.”***
- Keep the meeting under control. Do not allow cross-talking between members.
- Talk so everyone can hear what is said.
- Give information on how to dispose of a pending motion; particularly, if this is an inexperienced assembly.
- Before taking a vote, be sure the members know what they are voting on.
- Help members phrase motions when help is needed.
- Announce results of a vote clearly.
- Adjourn on time. Adjourn the meeting without a formal motion.

Aids for the Presiding Officer

The presiding officer should accumulate resources that can be adapted to each situation.

- Basic Agenda
- Motion Forms
- Sample Scripts
- Chart of Motions
- Form for Tracking Motions
- Small Fill-in Scripts for Specific Motions

In addition:

- Copy of bylaws; Rules of Order for meetings; any other rules of the organization.
- Copy of the parliamentary authority.
- Copy of all committees and their members

Members Get Their Say

Active participation of members in the assembly is what makes it all work. Members present motions, second motions, debate, and vote on motions. By their vote, they decide the action to be taken by the assembly.

When members don't feel secure in their knowledge of correct procedures, they are less likely to actively participate in the deliberations of the assembly. Assist your members in perfecting their parliamentary skills of obtaining the floor, making motions, speaking in debate, and voting.

➤ **Obtain the Floor**

- a. Wait until the last speaker is finished.
- b. Rise and address the chair. Say, "**Mr. (Madam) Chair.**"
- c. Give your name. The Chair will recognize you by repeating it.

➤ **Make Your Motion**

- a. Speak clearly and concisely.
- b. State your motion affirmatively. Say, "**I move that we _____.**"
- c. Avoid personalities and stay on the subject.

➤ **Wait For A Second**

- a. Another member will say, "**I second the motion.**"
- b. Or the Chair will call for a second.
- c. If there is no second, your motion is LOST.

➤ **Chair States Your Motion**

The Chair must say, "**It is moved and seconded that we _____.**" After this happens, debate or voting can occur. Your motion is now **ASSEMBLY PROPERTY** and you can't change it without consent of the members.

➤ **Expand On Your Motion**

- a. As mover, you are allowed to speak first. Direct all comments to the Chair.
- b. Keep to the time limit for speaking, as stated in the rules of order.
- c. You may speak again after all other speakers are finished.
- d. You may speak a third time by a motion to suspend the rules with a 2/3 vote.

➤ **Putting The Question**

- a. The Chair asks, "**Are you ready for the question?**"
- b. If there is no more discussion, a vote is taken.
- c. Or motion for previous question may be adopted.

❖ **Be Courteous. It's the Parliamentary Way!** ❖

Basic Parliamentary Procedure

When you want...	Motion to use is...	This is what you do....	Example
to introduce new business	Main Motion	-Rise to be recognized. "I move that..."	<i>"I move that the fall meeting be held on the first Saturday in October."</i> The motion will need to be seconded; may be discussed; may be amended; is adopted by majority vote.
to kill the motion	Postpone Indefinitely	-Rise to be recognized. "I move to postpone indefinitely the motion..."	<i>"I move to postpone indefinitely the motion to join the group."</i> The motion needs a second; may be discussed; may not be amended; is adopted by majority vote.
to modify or change the motion	Amend	-Rise to be recognized. "I move to amend the motion to..."	<i>"I move to amend the motion by inserting the word 'camera ready' before the word 'copy'."</i> The motion needs a second; may be discussed; may be amended; is adopted by majority vote.
to refer the motion to a committee	Commit	-Rise to be recognized. "I move to refer the motion to..."	<i>"I move to refer the motion to the Communications Committee."</i> The motion will need to be seconded; may be discussed; may be amended; is adopted by majority vote.
to postpone action on a motion	Postpone To A Certain Time	-Rise to be recognized. "I move to postpone the motion to..."	<i>"I move to postpone the motion to the Saturday morning business session."</i> The motion needs a second; may be discussed; may be amended; is adopted by majority vote.
to modify time, number, or length of debate	Limit or Extend Limits of Debate	-Rise to be recognized. "I move to limit debate to..."	<i>"I move to limit debate to ten minutes."</i> The motion needs a second; may not be discussed or amended; is adopted by 2/3 vote.
to stop debate or prevent amendment	Previous Question	-Rise to be recognized. "I move the previous question."	<i>"I move the previous question."</i> The motion needs a second; may not be discussed or amended; is adopted by 2/3 vote. Adoption stops debate; vote is taken on the motion.
to set aside a motion temporarily	Lay On The Table	-Rise to be recognized. "I move to lay on the table the motion relating to..."	<i>"I move to lay on the table the motion relating to the December luncheon."</i> The motion needs a second; may not be discussed or amended; is adopted by majority vote.
to force the presider to follow the agenda	Call for Orders of the Day	-Rise to be recognized. "I call for the orders of the day."	<i>"I call for the orders of the day."</i> This motion must be enforced when called for by just one member. The chair immediately returns to the matter set for that time.
to protect the rights of the assembly/members	Raise a Question of Privilege	-Rise but do not wait to be recognized. "I rise to a question of privilege."	<i>"I rise to a question of privilege affecting the assembly."</i> The chair will ask you to state the question. There is no vote. The chair takes proper action to resolve the question.
to take a short break	Recess	-Rise to be recognized. "I move to recess for..."	<i>"I move to recess for fifteen minutes."</i> The motion will need to be seconded, may not be discussed; may be amended; is adopted by majority vote.

Basic Parliamentary Procedure

When you want...	Motion to use is...	This is what you do...	Example
to close the meeting	Adjourn	-Rise to be recognized. <i>"I move to adjourn."</i>	<i>"I move to adjourn."</i> The motion will need to be seconded; may not be discussed; may be amended; is adopted by majority vote.
to continue the session at another meeting	Fix the Time to Which to Adjourn	-Rise to be recognized. <i>"I move that when we adjourn to meet..."</i>	<i>"I move that we adjourn to meet on Monday, December 3, 2011 at 9 a.m. in the library."</i> The motion needs a second; may not be discussed or amended; is adopted by majority vote.
to ask for parliamentary information	Parliamentary Inquiry	-Rise to be recognized. <i>"I rise to a parliamentary inquiry."</i>	<i>"I rise to a parliamentary inquiry."</i> This is a question for the chair, who will ask that you state the inquiry. The chair answers the question.
to ask for information	Point of Information	-Rise to be recognized. <i>"Point of information."</i>	<i>"Point of Information."</i> This is a question for the chair, who will ask that you state the point. The chair will answer the question.
to verify a voice vote	Division	-Just call out the word. <i>"Division!"</i>	<i>"Division!"</i> The chair will immediately call for a rising vote.
the rules of the assembly to be followed	Point of Order	-Rise but do not wait to be recognized. <i>"Point of order!"</i>	<i>"Point of order!"</i> The chair will ask you to state your point of order. <i>"The comment is not germane."</i> The chair may decide or may ask the assembly to decide.
to take up something out of sequence	Suspend the Rules	-Rise to be recognized. <i>"I move to suspend the rules and take up..."</i>	<i>"I move to suspend the rules and to take up the budget."</i> The motion needs a second; may not be discussed; may not be amended; is adopted by a 2/3 vote.
to consider a motion that has been laid on the table	Take From the Table	-Rise to be recognized. <i>"I move to take from the table the motion relating to..."</i>	<i>"I move to take from the table the motion relating to the December luncheon."</i> The motion needs a second; may not be discussed or amended; is adopted by majority vote.

❖❖❖ NOTES ❖❖❖

Sample Annual Business Meeting Agenda
(required of incorporated entities and recommended for all others)

Welcome and introduction of any special guests

1. Call to order
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Minutes of previous Annual Meeting
4. Treasurer's Report (can include annual fiscal year financial review/audit)
5. President's Annual Report
6. Standing Committees Annual Reports (should include presentation by the appropriate Committee of a new budget, any Bylaws changes, and nominations of new officers; acceptance of these would require a motion by the Committee which would not require a second and could be voted upon. The nominations are accepted as nominations; this is not an election. To elect those nominated, nominations from the floor must be called for and accepted, then an election may be held. The election can be held as a separate agenda item – see below)
7. Election and Installation of new officers
8. Unfinished Business (from previous Annual Meeting)
9. New Business (caution – some organizations' Bylaws require a period of previous notification of certain items of business before they can be voted upon. If a new business item has a sense of urgency and falls under a Bylaws restriction, a vote could be taken to suspend the Bylaws temporarily allowing the new business item to be voted upon immediately. This is not to be done lightly since Bylaws restrictions are in place to protect.)
10. Announcements
11. Adjournment

Sample Meeting Agenda

Local Association Meetings (not Annual Business Meeting) / Board of Directors /
Executive Committees

Welcome and introduction of any special guests

1. Call to order
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Minutes of previous Meeting
4. Treasurer's Report
5. President's Report
6. Standing Committees Reports
7. Unfinished Business
8. New Business
9. Announcements
10. Adjournment

A Local Association Meeting may incorporate some of these items or none of them if the purpose of the meeting is for some other purpose such as a Christmas party or Breakfast with Santa in support of Toys for Tots, etc. This is especially true if the minutes from the on-going meetings of the Boards of Directors or Executive Committees are available on-line or in newsletters so that members can be constantly aware of the continuing business of the organization.