

How to run a Committee Meeting

Running effective and efficient committee meetings is essential to the smooth operation of your organisation. It is good practice to have the minutes, agenda, treasurer's report, and any other documents that require perusal distributed ahead of the meeting. The expectation is that committee members will read these through and bring copies with them to the meeting.

Committee members should always advise the secretary ahead of time if they cannot attend – if there are numerous absences this could mean that there are not enough members present for a quorum – so no decisions will be able to be made. In this instance the meeting should be rescheduled.

MEETING FORMAT

(Please note – this is a suggested format only)

1 – OPENING & WELCOME

Declare the meeting open at (time). Welcome everybody.

2 – PRESENT & APOLOGIES

List apologies (i.e. those who have notified you or another committee member that they will be absent).

Move that the apologies be accepted.

Secunder? All in favour / against. CARRIED.

3 – MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Secretary reads the minutes unless they have already been circulated.

Ask for any amendments to the minutes. *Discuss accuracy of minutes, not content.*

After any amendments have been discussed

Either:

Move that the minutes as circulated be taken as a true and accurate record (if no amendments)

Or:

Move that the minutes as circulated be confirmed, with the agreed amendments.

Secunder? All in favour / against. CARRIED.

The Chairperson should then sign the minutes and initial all amendments.

4 – MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Discuss only things that were mentioned in the minutes of the previous meeting and are not elsewhere on the agenda. They should continue to be included in all minutes until they have been resolved. Even if there has been no progress, this should be noted.

5 – CORRESPONDENCE

Circulate or read out a list of all the correspondence since the last meeting.

Move that inward correspondence be received and outward be endorsed.

Secunder? All in favour / against. CARRIED.

Deal with any matters arising from the correspondence.

Remember – emails are also a form of correspondence! Include all important and relevant emails that you send or receive in your correspondence.

6 – TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer presents a report on the group's financial situation, including a list of all invoices paid, for the committee's approval.

The Treasurer points out anything that needs to be brought to the committee's attention, then answers any questions on the payments or the report.

Move that the payment of the accounts listed be approved and the report be adopted.

Secunder? All in favour / against. CARRIED.

7 – COMMITTEE REPORTS

Committee members with specific tasks present their reports and moves it be received.

Secunder? All in favour / against. CARRIED.

If the report contains recommendations, move that the report be adopted.

Secunder? All in favour / against. CARRIED.

8 – GENERAL BUSINESS

Anything else that needs discussing, including anything held over from the last meeting.

9 – NEXT MEETING (Date, Time, Venue)

10 – CLOSE THE MEETING (Time)

SAMPLE AGENDA

The agenda should be distributed to committee members at least a week in advance of the meeting.

- opening & welcome
- present & apologies
- minutes of previous meeting confirmed
- matters arising from minutes
- correspondence
- treasurer's/financial report
- reports from committee members
- general business
- date of next meeting
- closing

Committee members need to give the Chairperson or Secretary plenty of advance notice of items that they wish to bring up.

TIPS FOR THE CHAIRPERSON

- stick to the agenda;
- avoid introducing your own opinion unless necessary;
- help the group complete a task or make a decision by intervening with clarification, summary, suggestion of options, & encouragement of participation from members;
- when closing the meeting ensure everyone is clear on what is to be done and by when.

GROUND RULES

It can be a good idea to have some guidelines or rules for meeting behaviour:

- Respect – no interrupting, no long monologues, no personal abuse.
- Timekeeping – everybody needs to be aware of how long they are speaking for and that they are sticking to the agenda.
- How will decisions be made – by voting or consensus? Check your group's deed document or rules – this will state how decisions are to be made and it will also include other important rules such as whether the Chairperson has an additional casting vote if the voting is tied.

It can be a good idea to always try to reach a consensus even when voting – this ensures that everyone in the group is on the same page.

FORMAL VS INFORMAL MEETINGS?

Although many community group meetings may be relatively informal (i.e. held around a kitchen table or at the local pub) it is a good idea to follow a format and always include the following:

- check minutes or notes from previous meeting;
- check any correspondence or finances;
- have each member report on what has been done since the last meeting;
- discuss what is to be completed before the next meeting;
- make sure that clear decisions are made with majority support and they are recorded;
- also make sure that everyone is clear on what their responsibilities are;
- all important decisions should be moved, seconded, and documented.

Information prepared by



LINKS / WHERE TO GO FOR MORE INFORMATION:

www.community.net.nz/how-toguides/crk/ (section 6)

www.effectivemeetings.com

For more information or help you can also contact your local Community Development Planner at Venture Southland:
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