

MEETING TIPS AND HINTS

You are the presiding officer. It is your obligation to ensure the orderly running of your chapter's meetings. Here are some tips to help you prepare for meetings.

Prior to the meeting:

- Keep a list of the business to be brought before your membership during the month.
- Type an agenda listing all business, reports, etc. to be covered at the meeting.
- Make sure all equipment is arranged for (flag, podium, etc.)
- Make sufficient copies of materials for each member that will attend and to be distributed to absent members personally or through the mail.
- Contact all members who will be reporting or presenting business as a reminder of the importance of their presence at the meeting.
- Review chapter bylaws and policies in preparation for your first meeting, and regularly thereafter to be ready to handle issues that may come up at the meeting.
- Arrive early to get meeting room in order and to set out agendas, correspondence, etc.
- If guests are coming, make sure someone meets and greets them.
- Seat your chapter parliamentarian beside you to advise and have secretary and treasurer seated near you as well.
- Be aware of the length of your meeting and stick to your plan.

At the meeting:

- Call the meeting to order on time! Habitually late members will soon learn to arrive on time.
- Be confident and poised in front of your membership; review meeting procedures just prior to your meeting.
- Follow your agenda very closely. This is the business that you want to cover—don't stray from it!
- You may wish to limit reports under "Unfinished Business" to a maximum of 2-3 minutes each. If so, please inform the chairs who will be making reports.
- Use your gavel well and wisely. Tap it as you call the meeting to order and as each motion carries or is defeated. This will help call members' attention to the chair and the business at hand.
- Move swiftly from one item of business to the next without lulls that will lose members' attention and allow discussion to stray away from business.
- You may wish to "plant" motions and seconds to expedite putting items on the floor.
- Each item under "New Business" should be presented with a motion and a second before allowing discussion to follow.
- Ask for discussion three times for each item of business to allow for all to voice their opinions.
- If there is no further discussion, ask for the vote in a strong voice: "All in favor, say 'AYE;' (pause); all those opposed, say 'NAY;' (pause)." Then tap gavel and state: "Motion carried" or "Motion defeated."
- After all business and reports have been covered on the agenda, ask for any other business.
- If there is no further business, you may tap the gavel and declare the meeting adjourned.

After the meeting:

- Send thank you notes to guests, speakers, etc.
- Make sure you complete all follow-up commitments promised.
- Send copies of agendas and other materials to those members that were not present at the meeting.

Miscellaneous:

- Be sure to start the meeting on time - ten minutes grace may be allowed, but is not advisable. If no quorum is present, start the meeting anyway.
- Keep members informed of pending business, results of voting and motions before the group.
- Insist on accepted parliamentary procedure and accept the responsibility of maintaining order during the meeting.
- Insure that officers and committee chairmen have reports ready for presentation at meetings.
- During a short meeting, the president may remain standing until the meeting is adjourned. During a lengthy report, be seated.
- If the president finds it necessary to leave the chair, she may ask the vice president to preside during the absence. This may be to participate in the discussion or to take care of an emergency.
- The president may present facts not known to other members without leaving the chair, but expressing an opinion should be avoided.
- Refrain from calling a member "out of order" when actually the motion is out of order.
- In a show-of-hands vote, the president may vote only when there is a tie or when her vote will make a tie. A motion receiving a tie vote is automatically lost unless the president cares to break the tie. A motion also will be defeated if the president votes to make a tie. When the vote is by ballot, the president may vote during the balloting, but not after the ballots are counted. Her ballot should be set aside to be used only in the case of a tie.
- Anytime a vote results in a tie, the vote fails.
- If a motion requires a 2/3 majority, the president should announce this before asking for the vote. A counted vote should be taken under these circumstances.
- The president may at times facilitate business by proceeding with the common consent of the group. For example: "If there are no objections, the motion is withdrawn."
- While presiding over a meeting, have your chapter bylaws and policies and Roberts Rules of Order.

MEETING CHECKLIST

MONTH _____ YEAR _____

Preparations for Board Meeting

- ___ call hostess
- ___ review calendar of events
- ___ prepare board meeting agenda
- ___ prepare draft agenda for general meeting
- ___ select Board Member of the Month _____

Preparations for General Meeting

- ___ select theme for the month
- ___ arrange for orientation or speaker _____
- ___ call hostesses _____
- ___ prepare general meeting agenda
- ___ select members to lead creeds, flag pledge
- ___ prepare calendar to hand out
- ___ select Member of the Month _____ (certificate)
- ___ select Chairperson of the Month _____ (certificate)
- ___ installation of new members: _____
- ___ print member labels for secretary & newsletter labels for Newsletter LPM
- ___ prepare awards for project participation, member of the month, etc.
- ___ Secret Sis gift
- ___ confirm invocation and ice breaker

MEETING OVERVIEW

When people join our organization, we usually tell them that each person decides how much time she is able to put into the chapter. In some cases, that time may only be one night a month -- and hopefully it will be the night of the chapter's meeting!

Work with your board to provide a meeting that makes it worthwhile to attend, something that members look forward to and don't want to miss. By having a meeting where members feel that they have learned something, accomplished something and had fun, they will keep coming back.

Purpose of a Meeting:

- **TO LEARN SOMETHING**
Provide a program at the meeting. You might consider a speaker, a film or video, or a presentation by one of your local program managers. Use an agenda and follow good parliamentary procedure so members can observe a well-run meeting.
- **TO ACCOMPLISH SOMETHING**
Lead an efficient business meeting. Again, an agenda will help keep you and the chapter on track. Allow each officer and program manager an opportunity to present their information to the group. Discuss any unfinished business. Potential future projects and events should be brought up under new business and voted on. Allow all members to participate and contribute. You want each member to feel that they are an important part of the chapter. However, you do not want to waste time on unrelated topics, committee work and side conversations.
- **TO HAVE FUN**
You could offer mixers, icebreakers, awards and fun themes during the meeting. Allow for social time after the business meeting has been adjourned.

Arrange to call your members before each meeting or event to remind them and make sure they know it's important to the chapter that they attend. If your chapter is smaller, you may want to make the calls yourself to share your enthusiasm, but having all members take a turn in encouraging attendance makes a positive impact on your chapter.

At your meeting have one or two board members responsible to make sure every member and guest has someone to sit with. It may seem silly if you have a small group, but often the smaller chapter is where a few feel left out. Use mixers or games to get people moving and interacting with all members. Encourage LPMs and project chairs to be prepared with their reports and try to keep them to two minutes to encourage efficient use of time and allow time for socializing.

Consider planning every other meeting around a theme. Members appreciate your efforts to make meetings fun and will attend more often and bring friends to join in the festivities. If one idea doesn't work, try another. You will make a difference.

SAMPLE
ANYTOWN WOMEN OF TODAY AGENDA
General Meeting - Thursday, September 14, 2000 - 7 p.m. - Library

Hostesses for September - Chris James and Laurie Dean
Call to order
Pledge of Allegiance - Dawn Anderson
U.S. Women of Today Creed - Kristi Ames
Introduction of Guests
Invocation - Judy Luck
Ice Breaker - Michelle Goodrich

Program - Leadership Presentation by President Vicki

OFFICER'S REPORTS

Parliamentarian - Debbie White
Secretary - Anne Johnson
Treasurer - Chris James
Programming Vice President - Marla King
Membership Vice President - Judy Luck
State Delegate - Debbie White
President - Vicki Nickolaus

ONGOING BUSINESS

Kids Week - Anne Johnson/Jody Whitney
Old Fashioned Fall Festival - Missy Frank
Outstanding Young Adult - Anne Johnson
Adopt a Highway - Debbie White
Newtown Extension - Chris James
Women of Today Week - Jody Whitney
District Meeting (Sat, Oct 21) - Chris James/Marla King
Friendship Day - Jody Whitney
Business Expo - Anne Johnson

NEW BUSINESS

Schmidtz Family Picnic
Death by Chocolate M-Night
Project Voting: Elfin Magic Food Booth, Pictures with Santa
Other

Gift exchange - Marla King

Break - 10 minutes - Refreshments served

PROGRAMMING VICE PRESIDENT - Marla King

Internal Areas

Records & Recognition - Vicki Nickolaus

Living & Learning - Judy Luck

Newsletter - Anne Johnson

Public Relations - Cathy Paulson

Ways and Means - Chris James

Webmaster – Sally Jones

External Areas

Youth of Today - Dawn Anderson

Community Connections - Missy Frank

Women's Wellness - Laura Jepson

Lucky Quarter Can - Vicki Nickolaus

Good and Welfare

INVITATION TO JOIN

Minnesota Women of Today Creed - Sue Bird

Adjournment

SAMPLE AGENDA WITH SCRIPT
ANYTOWN WOMEN OF TODAY AGENDA
General Meeting - Thursday, September 14, 2000 - 7 p.m. - Library

Hostesses for September - [names]

Call to order

*At this time the presiding officer stands, preferably at the head of the room and says: "I call the general meeting of the Anytown Women of Today to order at _____ (time)."

Pledge of Allegiance - [name]

*(Try to assign someone ahead of time to lead.) Presiding officer says: "Please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance led by _____."

U.S. Women of Today Creed - [name]

*(Try to assign someone ahead of time to lead.) Presiding officer says: "Please remain standing for the Creed led by _____."

Introduction of Guests

*Presiding officer says: "I'll now call on _____ (membership vice president or hostess) to introduce our guests." You should jot down their names so you remember them during the meeting and make them feel welcome.

Invocation - [name]

*Presiding officer says: "For the purposes of an invocation, I call on _____."

Ice Breaker -[name]

*Presiding officer says: "For our ice breaker, I call on _____."

Program - [Name of program and who is presenting]

*If presenter is other than a chapter member, then someone should introduce the presenter. The program can be put on the agenda at any time, whatever works best for the chapter and the presenter. Presiding officer says: "I now call on to introduce our speaker" OR "I now call on _____ who is going to speak on _____." After the presentation, be sure and thank the presenter. Also thank those who made the arrangements for the program.

OFFICER'S REPORTS

*Call on each person as his or her report comes up. Thank them when they are finished. If they ramble or bring up unrelated discussion, try to get them back on track. Use your gavel to keep order.

*Parliamentarian - [name]

Report should include determining whether there is a quorum present. If the past president is also the parliamentarian, their report goes here too.

*Secretary - [name]

Report should include approval of minutes of last meeting and reading of any correspondence sent to the chapter. Presiding officer says: "Are there any corrections or additions to the minutes?" (pause) Then continues: "Hearing none, the minutes stand approved as written." If there are corrections, then say: "The minutes stand approved as corrected."

*Treasurer - [name]

Report should include a statement of the checking and savings account balances. The treasurer should provide a written report for any members that desire a copy. Presiding officer says: "Are there any questions about the financial report?" No action is needed to approve a financial report.

*Membership Vice President - [name]

Report should include listing those up for renewal this quarter, introduction and installation of any new members, and information on upcoming membership activities.

*State Delegate - [name]

Report should include any activities held or upcoming involving visitations, district or state. Any awards given out at a district or state meeting should be presented.

*President - [name]

Report should include local awards, upcoming meetings, and discussion of topics not related to any other area.

ONGOING BUSINESS

*This area could include reports on any completed projects or the status of activities in progress. Refer to last month's agenda to see what was listed under new business that should be moved to this section. Note: Some chapters include these reports under the specific LPM area.

Kids Week - [project chair(s)]

Old Fashioned Fall Festival - [project chair(s)]

Outstanding Young Adult - [project chair(s)]

Adopt a Highway - [project chair(s)]

Newtown Extension - [project chair(s)]

Women of Today Week - [project chair(s)]

District Meeting (Sat, Oct 21) - [project chair(s)]

Friendship Day - [project chair(s)]

Business Expo - [project chair(s)]

Other:

*Presiding officer says: "Is there any other unfinished business?" If so, ask for the report.

NEW BUSINESS

*This section should include any projects or activities that are coming up in the next three months or so that have not been approved. They may also include items from your Calendar of Events that were approved at the beginning of the year but have not been discussed or need chairs.

Schmidtz Family Picnic
Death by Chocolate M-Night
Elfin Magic Food Booth
Pictures with Santa
Other:

*Presiding officer says: "Is there any other new business?" If so, ask them to make a motion prior to discussing the subject. This allows members to bring up new ideas from the floor. Ideas can be approved, defeated or tabled. (You may want to encourage members to bring ideas to a board meeting ahead of time.)

Gift exchange - [name of person in charge]

*This is a fun activity some chapters add to their meetings.

Break - 10 minutes - Refreshments served

PROGRAMMING VICE PRESIDENT - [name]

*Your chapter may have separate internal and external vice presidents. If so, call on them each separately. They should call on the LPMs for reports in the programming areas under them.

Internal Areas

*Each LPM should be listed on the agenda and allowed to give a short report in their area. If there is a project under their area, they could call on the chair to give the project report.

Living & Learning - [LPM name]
Newsletter - [LPM name]
Public Relations - [LPM name]
Records & Recognition - [LPM name]
Ways and Means - [LPM name]

*Some chapters have additional programs and include these reports under the internal or external areas.

External Areas

*Each LPM should be listed on the agenda and allowed to give a short report in their area. If there is a project under their area, they could call on the chair to give the project report.

Youth of Today - [LPM name]

Community Connections - [LPM name]

Women's Wellness - [LPM name]

Priority Area - [LPM name]

Lucky Quarter Can - [name of person in charge]

*This is a fun activity that some chapters add to entice their members to stay until the end of the meeting.

Good and Welfare

*All members are welcome to add comments, thank yous, invitations to other events and such.

INVITATION TO JOIN

*This is when the chapter president extends an invitation to any guests to join and thanks them for attending the meeting. You may wish to ask a specific member to meet with the guest(s) after the meeting.

Minnesota Women of Today Creed - [name]

*(Try to assign someone ahead of time to lead.) Presiding officer says: "Please stand for the Creed led by _____."

Adjournment

*Presiding officer says: "There being no further business, the meeting is adjourned." (No motion is needed unless someone wishes to adjourn the meeting before all business is conducted.)