

Guidelines for Effective Meetings

Meetings are an important part of Farm Bureau, they are designed to accomplish specific goals, whether they're a regular county board of directors meeting or ad hoc committee meeting directed to a specific purpose.

Exert Leadership

Chairmen must be willing to exert leadership, make progress toward a solution and get discussion back on track when it wanders too far from the subject. Make specific assignments and set deadlines for committee members to complete them.

Plan Agenda Beforehand

- It's important to do advance planning. Develop an agenda by determining what you want to accomplish at the meeting, identify the resources you'll need.
- Having a guest speaker or putting a local issue or a state or national topic on the agenda also helps pique interest.
- Whenever possible, email or mail the agenda to committee members ahead of time so they know what's planned and can be prepared for discussion.

Start on Time, End on Time

- Committee chairmen should strive to start and end the meeting at the scheduled time.
- If some members have not arrived and a quorum is needed, start on time with items that don't require a vote and deal with those that do once members are present. Over time, members may become more prompt.
- Announce when you plan to adjourn, to help keep the meeting moving and keep discussion from straying.
- When there are items you would like on the agenda, call the chairman in advance so it can be included, rather than just bringing it up. This way other members can be prepared and the meeting can stay on track and on time.
- Meetings also serve a social function. If the business of the meeting is accomplished first, members can relax and socialize with fellow YF&R's afterwards.

Working Through an Agenda

Here's how to handle agenda items:

1. Announce the item.
2. Ask for or give any report on the item. (Or distribute resource materials.)
3. Allow discussion.
4. Ask for motion.
5. Ask for second to motion.
6. Ask, "Any further discussion?"
7. Repeat the motion.
8. Call for a voice vote:
9. Announce adoption or failure.
10. If the motion fails, call for a new motion and second. (There should be no discussion until a new motion is made.)

11. Repeat steps 4-10 until the item is dealt with.

12. Move to next item.

Adapted from: *Association Management*, March 1989