Texas 4-H

Prairie View A&M University Cooperative Extension Program

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Four Parts to a Monthly 4-H Club Meeting

4-H Club Meetings have four parts, which include an established order of business. The four parts of a regular monthly 4-H meeting are:

Inspiration – (5 minutes)
The inspiration sets the stage for the meeting. Younger members first feel the spirit of belonging when they see flags, banners, and other regalia at the meeting place. They like to wear jackets, quote pledges, etc.,which give them the feeling of being a part of a big organization. 4-H meeting kids with flags, banner, and a gavel may be ordered from the National 4-H Supply Catalog. The inspiration can include:

- Pledge to the American Flag
- 4-H Motto, Pledge, and Prayer
- Songs
- Spiritual emphasis material
- Inspirational Poems
- Citizenship Activities

Business – (15 to 20 minutes)
Club activities and plans are handled so as to make the club an example of "democracy in action." Members learn parliamentary procedure and the group decision-making process. The business part of the meeting has an established order of business.

- Roll Call – Some clubs have special responses for members to give roll call. Some suggestions include:
  - My favorite project
  - My New Year's resolution
  - Something I did with a project last month
  - Member activity and project reports
  - My favorite food
- Introduction of guests and new members – Give special consideration to new members and guests at each club meeting. Introduce them and their parents and set a time during recreation or refreshments for new and old members to get acquainted.
- Reading of minutes – The secretary reads the minutes of the last meeting.
- Reports – The reports section of the meeting is on the best places to involve a lot of different members in the meting. The club manager(s) and president should try to think of every club, county, or district activity that any member participated in since the last meeting, and have each participant report on what happened at the activity. These are given under activity reports. Use as many different members to give reports as possible.
  - Officer Reports – Includes treasurer's report, council delegate report, reports on any correspondence by secretary, etc.
  - Committee Reports
  - Activity reports – club or county activities participated in by members
  - Leader reports – Managers and other leaders should be prepared to give their reports at this time.
  - Necessary announcements on all current activities
- Unfinished Business
- New Business – Business that may come up at certain time of the year includes:

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- Election of officers
- Committee appointments
- Bylaw amendments
- Club budget approval
- Observing special events

When business items cannot be handled immediately or if further study is needed, they should be referred to a special committee. A small group is much more efficient in planning specific events or studying an issue and coming up with alternatives. Use of committees give members added opportunities to participate in the club and feel they are an important part of the group. This also ensures that a business meeting does not last over 15 to 20 minutes.

Program – (15 to 20 minutes)

The program is an important part of the 4-H Club meeting and should be interesting to all club members. The selection of programs should result from going through the steps in annual program planning and programs should be planned one year in advance. In this phase, "resource" people may be needed.

This part of the meeting should be thought of as the educational part. It should include:

- A 4-H presentation by a member – either a method demonstration or a project talk. These presentations give each member an opportunity to share project work with the club. These presentation and the activity reports also help members develop public speaking ability and poise before an audience.
- A program of general interest using a variety of methods, such as:
  - Panel discussions
  - Slides, filmstrips, or films
  - Guest speakers
  - Judging activities
  - Tours
  - Workshops
  - Debates
  - Learning Games

The program part of the meeting may also relate directly to project work. Project instruction may be the program with every member studying the same project or by dividing into two or three different project groups. Project leaders would be in charge of this part of the program.

The programs should be planned one year in advance and people who are responsible for presenting the program should be contacted. Follow-up contacts should be made one month before the program is to be presented.

Recreation – (20 minutes)

Each 4-H meeting should include a recreational activity. One main reason a member belongs to a 4-H club is to have fun. Recreation and social events can help build club morale. The 4-H Club provides natural situations where boys an girls have clean, wholesome recreation essential to youth. Some recreational activities fit into almost any 4-H meeting situation. For a well-rounded program, include starters, mixers, get acquainted games and active games; musical, dramatic, small and large group activities; and quiet paper and pencil activities. Through recreation, boys and girls can learn to create their own fun, to cooperate, to follow and give directions, and to understand themselves and others better.

All recreation does not have to be at the end of a meeting. Recreation activities for early arrivals at the beginning of a meeting help a group develop a spirit of togetherness. Helping everyone feel welcome and accepted is vital to enthusiastic participation and cooperation.

Refreshments are a part of the recreational part of the meeting. They are important, and can get to be a lot of trouble in a larger club, but they are worth it. It's important to give members and families a chance to informally visit and get to know each other. They can discuss the program and upcoming activities. Younger members really enjoy refreshments. It's part of the meeting that is fun for them.