Sample Guide for Planning a Business Meeting Agenda

Name of Organization
Date
Location/Time

Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Minutes
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Reports of Officers
5. Reports of Committees
6. Unfinished Business
7. New Business
8. Announcements
9. Adjourn

Agenda items may be added where necessary.
Refer to parliamentary procedures for local presidents for details on conducting a business meeting.

NOTE: An agenda listing committee reports, pending and special order business should be compiled before the meeting and publicized widely, if possible.
Do your members complain they’re too busy to come to a local meeting?

Use this alternative:

▶ Try promising a 10 minute building meeting . . . timed by the clock!

Distribute an announcement that calls attention to the 10 Minute Limit . . . It could include comments such as . . .

“10 Minutes! You don’t believe it??? Then bring along your stopwatch!”

“Meet at (time) sharp!”

“We meet at (place).”

▶ The agenda might look like this . . .

2 MINUTES . . . What was discussed at (insert name of governing body)
Negotiations update . . .

4 MINUTES . . . We need your opinions on _______________________

Your views will be presented at the next (insert name of the local governing body such as executive committee/board).

3 MINUTES . . . Latest developments on the problem of . . .
This is what needs to be done . . .
This is what (the local) would like you to do . . .

1 MINUTE . . . A local victory you should be proud of . . .

▶ Closing

“Time is up! We told you we could do it in 10 Minutes!!! Don’t forget to leave your questions or suggestions at the door. Thanks for coming and for supporting the local.”
IDEAS for Effective Meetings

1. The president is really a moderator. He/she is non-partisan in the chair, seeing that members are treated equally, regardless of which side of the questions they debate. He/she is, in many respects, like an umpire or referee.

2. The president never makes a motion while in the chair, nor does he/she debate a motion without first having called the vice-president or other person to preside in his/her place. In such an event, he/she does not usually resume the chair until the vote has been announced.

3. Parliamentary procedures are to be used to facilitate local meetings, not to stifle them. When in doubt as to proper procedure, common sense on the part of the president should be used to clear up problems and continue business.

4. The proper form in which to offer a motion is: “I move that . . . .”

5. The mover may request to withdraw or modify his/her motion without consent of anyone before the motion has been put to the group for consideration. When the motion is before the assembly, and if there is no objection, the chairperson announces that the motion is withdrawn or modified. If anyone objects, the request is put to a vote.

6. When making the motion to close debate, the traditional form is: “I move the previous question”.

7. The motion to postpone the question until a later time should, of course, mention the specific time proposed.

8. The motion to refer to committee should specify the number on the committee, how the committee is to be selected, and when the committee is to report (unless it is an existing committee).

9. When members of the assembly call out informally, “Question! Question!” the chairperson is merely to understand that they as individuals are ready to vote on the pending question or motion.

10. Without securing recognition from the chair, or even without waiting for a speaker to yield the floor, a member may rise to a point of order, to a point of information, or to a question of privilege. No second is necessary.

11. The president should not permit one or two constant talkers to dominate the meeting. Time is limited; everyone should receive equal opportunity to speak. The chairperson should not recognize the same person twice until all others who wish to speak have had an opportunity.
Parliamentary Procedures

The following are some parliamentary procedures which are essential in conducting a meeting. More detailed rules can be found in Robert's Rules Newly Revised.

Order Of Business

Every meeting should be controlled by an Order of Business. It may be whatever the Union itself determines or whatever the properly authorized officers may designate.

Normally, it should include:

1. **Call to Order**: by the President (or Chair)

2. **Reading and Approval of the Minutes**:
   - can be presented orally or in written form
   - corrections should be called for
   - motion is needed for approval

3. **Reports**: by officers and committees
   - can be oral or written
   - no motion is needed to adopt treasurer’s report unless it is audited
   - no motion is needed to adopt committee reports unless recommendations for action are made

4. **Old Business**: unfinished business from last meeting is brought to floor for action.
   - motion is required to adopt

5. **New Business**: any items not previously up for action

6. **Announcements**:
   - oral or written

7. **Adjournment**:
   - president automatically adjourns meeting at end of agenda
   - a motion can be made to adjourn before business is concluded but it must be voted on

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Robert’s Rules of Order Motions Chart
Based on Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised (10th Edition)

The motions below are listed in order of precedence. A motion can be introduced if it is higher on the chart than the pending motion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>§21</td>
<td>Close meeting</td>
<td>I move to adjourn</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Majority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§20</td>
<td>Take break</td>
<td>I move to recess for...</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Majority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§19</td>
<td>Register complaint</td>
<td>I rise to a question of privilege</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§18</td>
<td>Make follow agenda</td>
<td>I call for the orders of the day</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§17</td>
<td>Lay aside temporarily</td>
<td>I move to lay the question on the table</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Majority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§16</td>
<td>Close debate</td>
<td>I move the previous question</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§15</td>
<td>Limit or extend debate</td>
<td>I move that debate be limited to...</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§14</td>
<td>Postpone to a certain time</td>
<td>I move to postpone the motion to...</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Majority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§13</td>
<td>Refer to committee</td>
<td>I move to refer the motion to...</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Majority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§12</td>
<td>Modify wording of motion</td>
<td>I move to amend the motion by...</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Majority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§11</td>
<td>Kill main motion</td>
<td>I move that the motion be postponed indefinitely</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Majority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>§10</td>
<td>Bring business before assembly (a main motion)</td>
<td>I move that (or “to”)...</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Majority</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>