

# Make it a Hit!

Why it Matters to Have an Engaging AGM

Paul Meunier, April 2016



# Agenda

## 1) AGM Standards

- Frequently Asked Questions

## 2) Planning Tips

- Checklist for Preparedness
- Using Your Platform

## 3) Creative Examples

So we need an AGM... Question:

**Why?**

*What's the point?*

# So we need an AGM...

## Despite LOTS of public engagement opportunities:

- Board meetings (can be public)
- Association events
- Communication updates  
(email blasts, newsletters, websites)

**AGMs are a legislated requirement**

# AGM Standards

**Convene  
Membership**

**Uphold/Honor  
Process**

**Communicate  
Value**

***Fundamentally: to enable democratic action***

# AGM Standards

## AGM business is fairly typical, regardless of NPO

- Approve financials/audits
- Present reports
- Elect a board
- Pass special resolutions (as needed)

## Societies Act of Alberta:

*Your association must present a financial statement at the AGM setting out its income, disbursements, assets and liabilities, audited and signed by auditor.*

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Audit

*“how much time do we need?”*

*“what if audit’s not ready?”*

## Special Resolutions

*“what are they used for?”*

*“what notice is required?”*

## Reports

*“what exactly needs to be covered?”*

*“what if our members want something not on the agenda?”*

*“what’s the deal with AGM meeting minutes?”*

## Elections

*“how do we recruit?”*

*“can we pre-source candidates?”*

*“do we HAVE to call from the floor?”*



# Planning Tips

## Checklist for Preparedness

- Read your bylaws**
- Delegate** tasks, **organize**, secure **resources**
  - What space do you need?
  - Who is chairing?
  - Which reports are needed? (singular, multi-party?)
- Think about your **goals** ; what do you hope to gain?
- Pay attention to **hints/signs** from members
- Turn to **policy** support (code of conduct, etc.)



# Planning Tips

## Mistakes or Challenges to Prevent

- Notifications:** not upholding deadlines
  - Not using types of notice the bylaws require
- Marketing:** poor announcements, passive invites
  - Inability to get quorum
- Chairperson:** being disorganized (before/during)
  - Allowing member disruptions
  - Not upholding process <sup>m</sup>, not being neutral
- Audit:** missing deadlines

# Using Your Platform

## Set the Tone

use language that inspires, is compelling, is a call to action

## Be Prepared

as if anything can happen, know your bylaws

## Opportunity

think of this as a time to celebrate, promote, be bold

*“~~Business as Usual~~” a voice for community pride!*

# Activity!



# Activity... What are you communicating?

**Key Messages:** small, bite-sized pieces that explain

- What your organization does
- What it stands for
- What is distinct about you
- The value you offer

**Should be refined and consider your:**

*AUDIENCE*

*RELEVANCE and IMPACT*

*RELATABILITY (all points of view)*

# Creative Examples



- Incentives
- Socials
- Awards
- AGM Bookends
- Speakers
- Updates
- Features
- Reporting Value
- Storytelling
- Urgency

# Creative Examples



## Incentives . Socials . Awards

- Food, prizes, event-only giveaways
- Fun-sounding socials (wine and cheese)
- “Meet-and-greet” network building
- Recognition awards, anniversaries

## AGM “Bookends”

- Functions before/after to draw people  
**e.g.** Beltline’s recent CJSW, DJ event  
before/after AGM business

# Creative Examples



## Speakers . Updates

- Special guests ; not just AGM-based  
**e.g.** Dignitaries/politicians?  
Keynotes? Sought-after people?
- Recent victories (look what we just did!)
- Long-term progress (outcomes)
- Controversial matters of interest

## “Features” and unveilings

- New space, assets, partnerships

# Creative Examples



## Reporting Value . Storytelling

- Be creative in your report delivery
- Be personal - “put a face to a name”

**e.g.** Hillhurst-Sunnyside CA financials: turned numbers into colourful charts to show investment on popular programs. Made program trifold. Had program reps network by trifold “gallery” after AGM.

**e.g.** SW Communities Resource Centre: clients speak to turn #’s into story



# Creative Examples



## Urgency

- If rumors are spreading, encourage members to come and learn the facts
- If you're in trouble, don't be afraid to admit it. Be clear if you need help.  
*e.g. "May 28, 2016 we need you to come out and show your support, or else..."*
- Use your agenda restrictions: welcome concerns, redirect
- Use scripts, pre-plan 1<sup>st</sup> motioners

# Activity!

*What are some  
fun or interesting things  
that you have seen?*





# *Thank You!*

*Paul Meunier*

*Member Services Coordinator*

*Federation of Calgary Communities*

## *Bonus Takeaway*

### *10 Basics of Robert's Rules* (principles of fairness)

1. The Rights of the Organization Supersede the Rights of Individual Members
2. All Members Are Equal and Their Rights Are Equal
3. A Quorum Must Be Present to Do Business
4. The Majority Rules
5. Silence is Consent
6. Two-Thirds Vote Rule (certain matters of importance require greater votes)

## *Bonus Takeaway*

### *10 Basics of Robert's Rules* (principles of fairness)

7. One Question at a Time and One Speaker at a Time
8. Debatable Motions Must Receive Full Debate
9. Once a Question Is Decided, It Is Not in Order to Bring Up the Same Motion or One Essentially Like It at the Same Meeting
10. Personal Remarks In Debate Are Always Out of Order