



Successful & Engaging Meetings

Meaningful Board & AGM's

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Who is here?

Please stand if you answer yes...

What does our typical meeting look like?
How do we spend our time?



Past Meeting Experiences

Recall a past meeting.
 What made it an effective meeting?
 What made it a ineffective / bad meeting?

Effective

Bad

What would you recommend for ensuring meetings are productive and enjoyable?

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“Board meetings provide the occasion to **focus the board's attention on the matters of utmost concern** and to call the board to action accordingly...

Board members should leave each meeting with:

- a renewed appreciation of the **mission**
- an increased understanding of the **challenges and opportunities** facing the organization
- a chance to have **contributed** to a discussion of importance
- **inspiration** and **direction** to help the organization.”

Alice Korngold, in [*Leveraging Good Will: Strengthening Nonprofits by Engaging Businesses.*](#)



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The Link to Governance

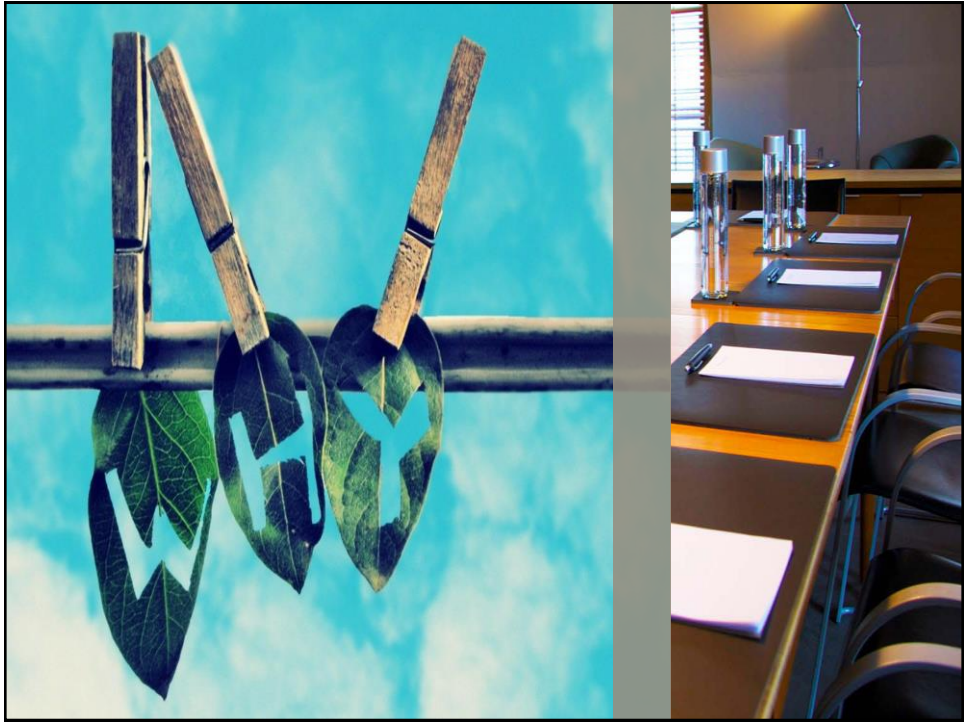
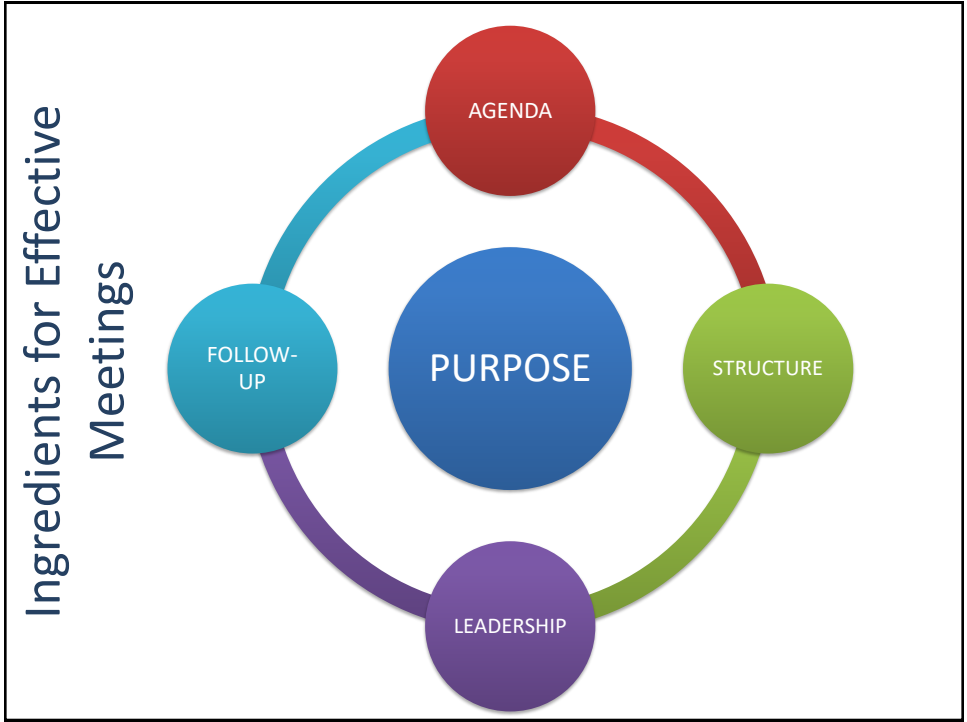
- Board members have a responsibility to meet regularly to discuss the future direction and well-being of the organization.
- It is important that meetings are linked to the organization's overall goals and purpose.
- The Chairperson's role is to make sure the business of the board is carried out within the meeting's designated time.



Presentation in a Nutshell

- Why Meet?
- Meeting Preparation
- Meeting Structure
- How to Run an Effective Meeting
- Meeting Evaluation & Follow Up
- AGM's & Special Meetings
- Ideas, Resources & Questions?






Is this meeting essential?

What are we trying to achieve by having a meeting?

What needs to get done?




How will our meeting link to our organization's purpose or goals?

Who needs to be in the room?

What do we need to accomplish that requires us to come together?

PURPOSE



Types of Meetings

- Make a decision
- Solve a problem
- Plan for the future
- Assign tasks
- Share info or intelligence
- Learn together
- Build the team
- Evaluate progress
- Celebrate success

PURPOSE



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PURPOSE

WHY
HOW
WHAT

Why an Agenda?

- Acts as a meeting guide
- Important to democratic process
- Connects meeting to purpose/ outcomes
- Encourages focus
- Documents key group / team activities

AGENDA

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Agenda Preparation

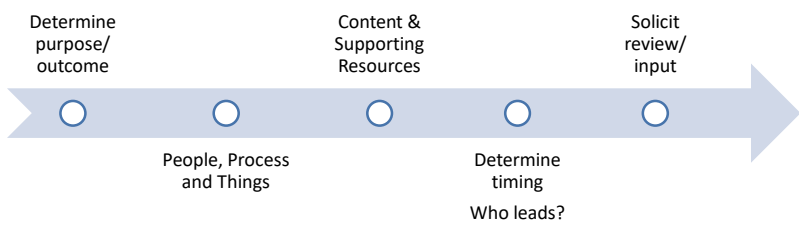


80 percent of an agenda should be future-oriented in discussion, debate, and decision making.

20 percent should be for reports that guide decision-making.



Agenda Preparation




Agenda Content

What Should Be Included?

Traditional Board Agenda	Strategic Board Agenda
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call to Order • Approval of Agenda • Reading and Approval of the Minutes of Last Meeting • Committee Reports • Ad Hoc Committees • Unfinished Business • New Business • Next Meeting • Adjournment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and Opening Thoughts • Consent agenda • Discussion of Goals and Strategic Initiatives • What's keeping you up at night? • Adjourn



A-G-E-N-D-A.



Acts as the group/team's meeting guide

Gets the meeting's desired outcomes

Encourages effective & efficient meetings

Nurtures a focused group/team meeting

Documents key group/team activities

Acts to stimulate progress

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Agendas (the written kind)

Ensure the following (work with others):

- Send out agenda before the meeting so members can be prepared
- Clearly state group norms
- Put times on the agenda
- Identify outcomes or what needs to be done for each meeting / agenda
- Link items to strategic plan and goals – include mission and vision
- Agenda should be decisions and discussion focused (not passive listening)

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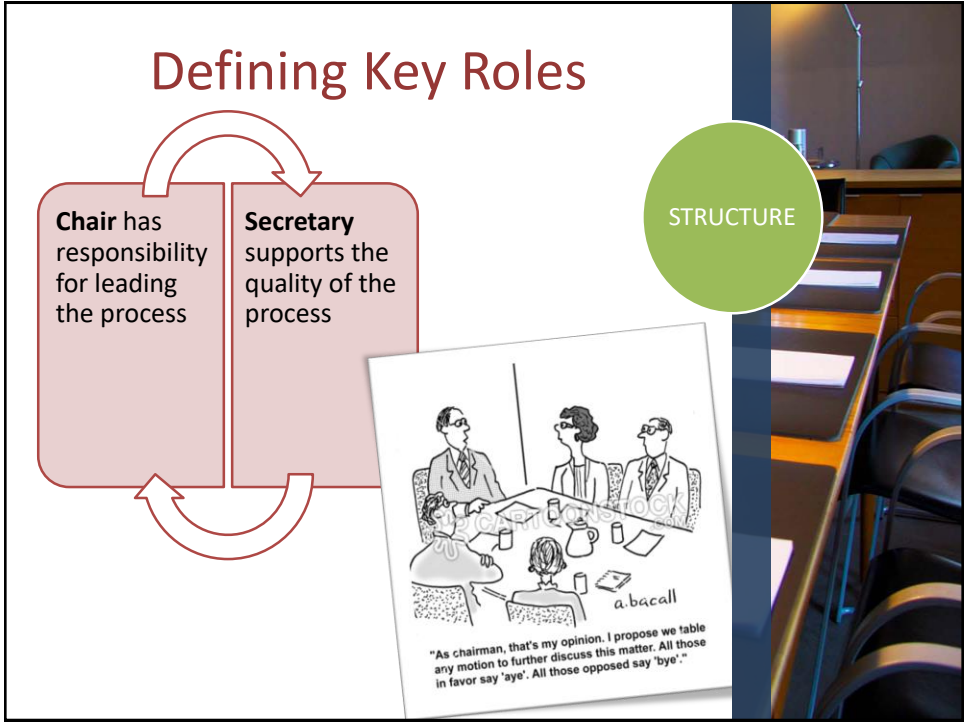
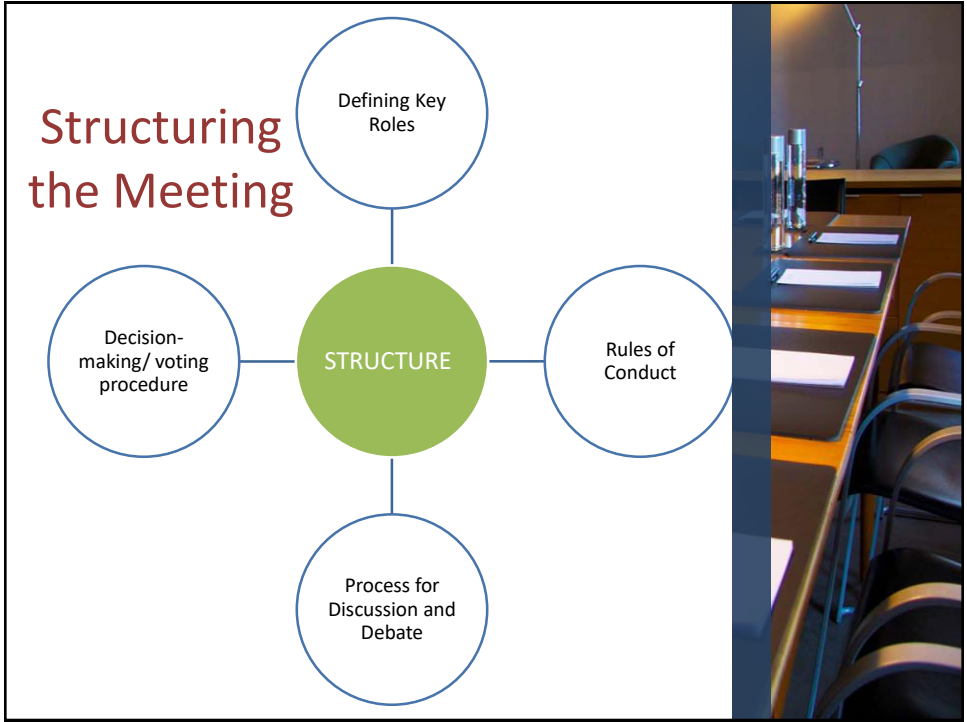
Consent Agenda



- Approval of agenda items that do not need discussion or debate
- “Bundling” process where entire set of business items can be voted in one action
- Saves time to allow board meetings focus on substantive topics that are worth discussion

Sample Consent Agenda

- I. *Welcome*
- II. *Consent Agenda*
 - a. *Board meeting minutes*
 - b. *Contract to retain HR Consultant*
 - c. *Marketing Committee meeting minutes and report*
 - d. *Executive Director's report*
- III. *Finance Report*
- IV. *Discussion Item*
 - *Change recommendation for XYZ Program*



Rules of Conduct

- Using the Right Procedure – what is best for you?

Laws should be like clothes. They should be made to fit the people they serve (Clarence Darrow)

- One size does not fit all
- Board meetings and membership meetings should be conducted differently
- Large annual meetings should be fairly formal
 - Formal votes help avoid legal challenges.

STRUCTURE

Rules of Conduct

- The board rules the process – the agenda is merely a recommendation and the board has the right to make changes
- Only one issue, question, or motion addressed at a time.
- Rule of Order should not be so strict as to hinder discussion in a meeting or intimidate members.

STRUCTURE

TIP

Consider setting a policy or process for “tabling” items.

Ex. All tabled items must be decided upon after two consecutive meetings

Motions

- Occur when a proposal is formally submitted at a meeting for discussion, action, and resolution via vote
- Bring up items that are urgent or that affect pending business
- Are either debated or moved directly to a vote



An individual seconding a motion does so only to get the motion debated, and not necessarily because he or she favors it.

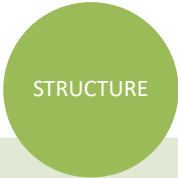
STRUCTURE

Steps in Making Motions

1. First person makes a proposal: *"I move to..."*
2. A different person seconds the motion.
3. The chair or secretary restates the motion as written.
 - a. The wording of this statement is the one being debated.
4. All members discuss the motion.
 - a. If discussion brings up changes to the working of the motion, it can be amended.
5. The chair asks for affirmative votes then for negative votes.
6. The chair announces the result of the vote and states the next course of action.

STRUCTURE

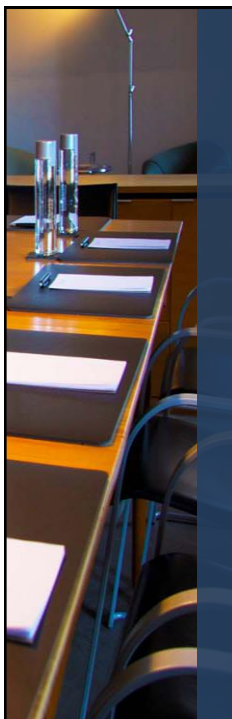
Voting



STRUCTURE

Email	• Can be used if permissible by bylaws
Mail	• Can be used but is not used as often as in the past
Voice or Viva Voice	• The term given when the group says yea/nay simultaneously
Roll Call	• Calling a members name as he or she votes
General Consent	• The chair asks if anyone objects
Division	• A person stands or raises a hand to be counted
Ballot	• Members anonymously place their vote on paper

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Decision Making

Consider:

- How important is the decision?
- How much time is available?
- What information is needed?
- How critical is buy-in?
- What are people's capability levels?
- Do we need to build group capability?

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Level of Decision-Making

STRUCTURE


Level	Use
NO DECISION REQUIRED	When input is sought, and another person or party will make a decision based on the input given
SPONTANEOUS AGREEMENT	When full discussion isn't critical Decision is trivial
ONE PERSON	When one person is the expert Individual willing to take sole responsibility
VOTING: SIMPLE MAJORITY (50% + 1)	When the group is ready to make a decision (after an appropriate time for discussion) When the group is following a formal rules process (ex Robert's Rules of Order) When options are clear
VOTING: CLEAR MAJORITY (66% OR 75%)	When it is important that the majority of the group agree /support the decision When bylaws or other governance rules apply
CONSENSUS *	When risk of making a wrong group decision is high When total group buy in is essential When the group feels it is important to show commitment to the input
COMPROMISE	When positions within a group are hardened and consensus is extremely difficult or not likely When a decision must be made

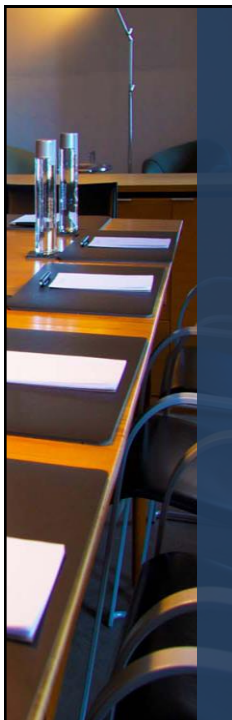
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Minutes

- Record groups objective and collective action
- Provide permanent record & Keep track of progress
- Inform absent members & Orient new members
- Useful guide for evaluating an organization's work
- Legal record of decisions made for organizations

STRUCTURE





In Camera Sessions

- Portion of a meeting not open to the public due to sensitive information shared
- Held in private, but decisions or motions are made publicly in regular portion of meeting
- To take notes or not? What is your practice?

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Meeting Culture

LEADERSHIP

Space

- Ensure space is suitable to size – extra room is nice to allow small group break-out conversations or using walls to post ideas
- Arrange room so that people face each other
- Circles, Semi-Circles, U-Shapes
- Vary location as able, to accommodate different members


Look & Feel

- Use visual aids, images, media
- Post large agenda on wall or whiteboard
- Serve light refreshments, or rotate muffin duty

Check-ins

- Important to greet and make people feel welcome and connected
- Structured go-arounds allow each member to 'check-in' – can be a set question, or variable, personal or professional

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Establish Meeting Guidelines

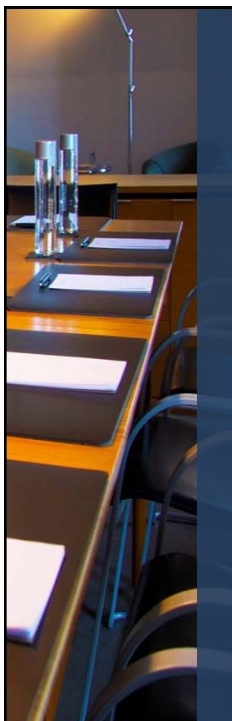
We all gain more when we...

- *Discuss and participate enthusiastically.*
- *Allow and encourage others to participate.*
- *Listen attentively.*
- *Confine discussion to the topic at hand*
- *Ask questions when we need more information.*
- *Feel free to change our minds.*
- *Put other communications on hold (cell phones, side conversations) to reduce distractions*
- *Begin and end meetings on time*

Meeting Guidelines

1. Have an agenda.
2. Be on time, start on time.
3. Identify the chair and facilitator.
4. Set meeting norms.
 - Respect others views.
 - Speak one at a time.
 - Debate points of view—not the personalities involved.
 - Keep comments brief and relevant.
 - Encourage participation.
5. Capture decisions made for action.

LEADERSHIP



Decorum & Civility

LEADERSHIP

- C Clear and Concise
- A Adaptable
- R Respectful
- E Exact

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Time Management



LEADERSHIP

- Start and end on time
- Don't use group meeting time if it can be done by one or two parties
- Limit distractions by having a group policy (cell phone use, etc.)
- Discuss how group decisions will be made
- Use simple language to convey thoughts (avoid jargon)
- Agree to a time limit on discussion before decisions are made

Dealing with Difficult Situations

LEADERSHIP

What action can a Chairperson or participant take to address:

- A person who tends to dominate
- A person who wants to argue
- A person who starts a side conversation
- A person who is timid
- Personality clashes between two or more people
- A person who will not budge from their position

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Informal Leadership

LEADERSHIP

- All participants have a leadership role
- Use meetings to create broader leadership and ownership within your team
- Share facilitation
- Hold each other accountable to stay focused on purpose, topic, and timing
- Can assign and rotate time-keeper, note-taker, vibe-watcher.
- Show interest and appreciation, ask questions, give feedback, admit mistakes
- Other ideas?

Moving Forward

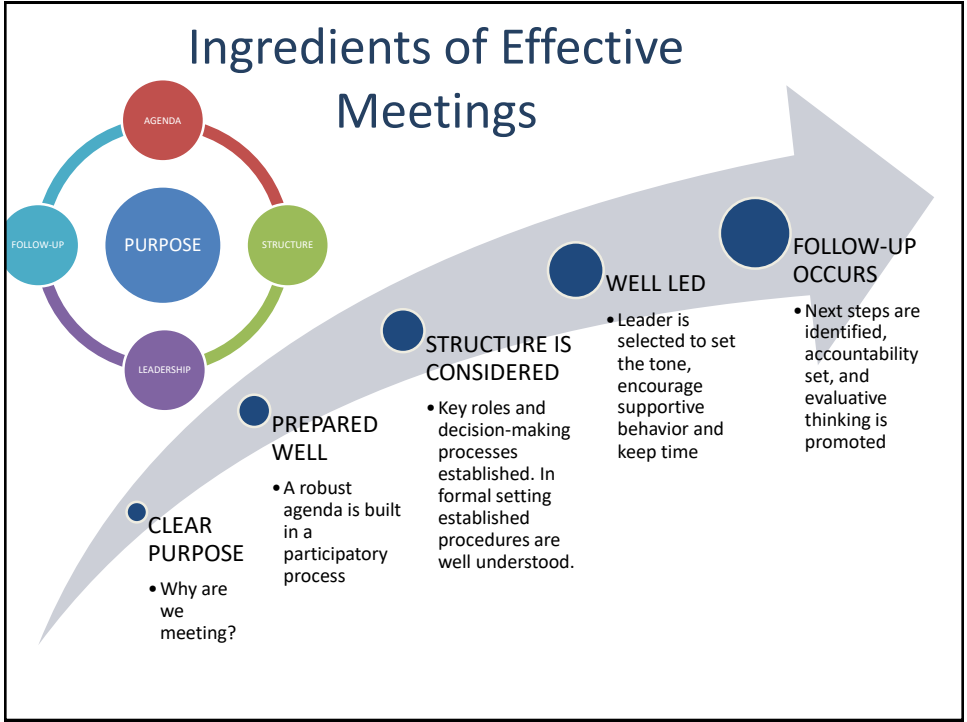
Closing

- Check for completion
- Check for alignment
- Agree on next steps
- Reflect on the value of what you accomplished
- Check for acknowledgement

Evaluating

- Was the purpose of the meeting clear?
- Did the meeting deviate from the agenda?
- Was the goal of the meeting achieved? If not, why?
- Did the meeting agree on persons to carry out decisions?
- Have all the decisions made in previous meeting(s) been carried out?

FOLLOW-UP



Why do annual general meetings (AGMs) matter?

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What is an annual general meeting?

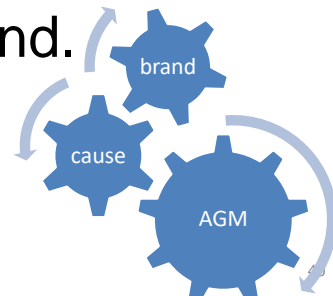
An AGM is an opportunity for groups, often required by the law, constitution, charter, by-laws etc., to hold every year for members in good standing to:

- elect the board of directors
- receive information about the past year's activities, progress, achievements and milestones
- find out about the organization's financial health
- make changes to the incorporation objects and bylaws
- receive information on future directions
- ask questions

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The AGM is a valuable opportunity for your organization to engage members more deeply in your cause, activities and to develop your brand.

MEMBERS



Non-Profit Incorporation Options




- Society (Societies Act)
- Non-profit Company or Part 9 Company (Alberta Companies Act)
- Not-for-profit Corporation (Canada Corporations Act)
- Extra-Provincial Corporation (Business Corporation Act)
- Religious Society (Religious Societies Land Act)
- Cooperative (Cooperative Associations Act)
- Private Act of the Legislature (e.g. Libraries Act, Agricultural Societies Act).


Societies Act

Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000


Section 25: A society shall hold an annual general meeting in Alberta and shall present at that meeting a financial statement setting out its income, disbursements, assets and liabilities, audited and signed by the society's auditor.



The Big Four



1. Annual report (year in review)
2. Special resolutions
3. Audited financial statement
4. Election of board of directors



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FIRST AND FOREMOST:

**Check and
follow your
bylaws**

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BYLAWS

Bylaws are the fundamental governing rules and regulations of any society that state how the society is to be governed and how the powers of the society are to be exercised.



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AGM timing considerations....

- When is your fiscal year end?
- How much time do you need to have your financial statements prepared and audited?
- What month is the anniversary of your incorporation certificate being issued?
- The last day of which month is the deadline for filing your annual return?
- What do your bylaws say about the AGM timing and amount of notice?



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A few other things to check out in the bylaws....

What is the quorum needed for your AGM?

Are proxy votes permitted? If so, how?

Who must do the audit of the books for the previous year? Who appoints the auditor?

Does a special resolution have to be passed to amend the bylaws?

If the bylaws are amended at an AGM, when do the amendments take effect?

When is the fiscal year end for the society?

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Election of Directors

How do you handle the election of directors?

Common Practices:

- Be clear on who conducts this part of the meeting
- Nominations
 - Nomination committee report/slate
 - Call for nominations (from the floor)
 - Individuals accept or decline nomination
- Scrutineers
- Voting
 - Ballots, Show of hands, Voice
- Announcing the results

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Preparation Ideas



What things could you do to entice people to come to your AGM? What would be a compelling draw?

What would make an AGM a positive, enjoyable and invigorating experience and ensure people go away firmly committed to the organization and its purpose?

Promoting -notice for AGM by video
-annual report options – infographics, prezi, videos, newsletters etc.

Conducting the AGM

Be prepared

- Know the agenda
- Understand rationale for agenda and process
- When and who calls motions

Host

- Welcome attendees

Lead and Direct

- Direct meeting according to the agenda
- Structure, order and procedure

Manage Process

- Time
- Discussion
- Maintain order in procedures and behaviors

Follow up

- Summarize and clarify motions, decisions, actions
- Take agreed upon action

Confirm Membership and Quorum

Before the meeting begins:

- Confirm the type of membership and the voting status of each attendee
- Identify whether quorum requirements have been met
- Remember whether or not your organization allows proxy voting

Quorum Calculation Sheet

AGM quorum according to bylaws:

20% of voting members

Total number of members:

87

Number of voting members:

50

Quorum:

50 x .20 = 10

Number of voting members in attendance:

18

Quorum reached:

Yes

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Other Helpful Hints

- Start and end on time
- Set appropriate structure
- Create a detailed agenda with notes for chair
- Create a minutes template for secretary
- Post or have available 'rules of order' summary
- Provide an incentive for attending
- Discuss mission-driven questions
- Facilitate so each perspective is heard respectfully and on topic
- Celebrate successes

Others?



Other Meeting Ideas



- Make field visits to see program activity firsthand
- Read or share a story or thank-you note from someone the organization serves, or from a staff member's recent experience.
- Share an article, video or other resource ahead of the meeting and carve out 10-15 minutes to discuss how it applies to your mission area or an issue you're facing as a board
- Provide facilitation opportunities for all members
- Regular check-ins on strategic plan progress
- "Fireside chat" with ED at every meeting/regular intervals
- Meeting themes/Core Focus
- Breakout groups for discussions; don't need to stick together!
- Hold a board debate to explore divergent topic

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Trio Talk:

What is one thing you could take from this presentation to make a difference in your meetings?

or

What could you do differently for your AGM?

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Further Resources

- Meetings that Work (Alberta Culture)

 - www.culture.alberta.ca/bdp/bulletins/Meetingsthatwork09-print.pdf
- Running Effective Meetings Guidebook (Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development)

 - <http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca/flippingbook/rural-dev/aet/mtgs/index.html>
- Effective Meetings.Com - Meeting Resource Center

 - www.effectivemeetings.com

Questions?

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