

SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

GUIDE TO MEETING PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION

Many people are shy, nervous or simply scared of nominating themselves for committee positions or even attending meetings, because it puts them in a new and unfamiliar situation.

Gaining a general understanding of meeting procedures will allow more active participation in the School Association and its various committees.

MEETINGS

Meetings are an excellent forum for people to gather and discuss/try to resolve matters which are of mutual concern/benefit where recommendations are made, reports presented, directions given and course of actions decided by a majority vote or consensus. For a meeting to effectively achieve these goals, a structure is needed otherwise results may be unproductive and dissatisfying to members – Refer Att. 1 (Meeting Structure).

AGENDA

It is essential prior to the meeting that a Notice of Meeting (3.7.5) Draft Constitution is prepared and circulated to all members. An agenda forms the structure of the meeting. The agenda states where and when the meeting will take place and what matters will be listed for discussion (items of business) together with any relevant material (which members should read prior to the meeting) as well as a draft copy of the minutes of the previous meeting. Refer Att. 2 (Agenda forma).

In most instances the main headings of an agenda will remain unchanged. The number of items under each heading may vary given the matters being considered by the Association. The agenda ultimately becomes a historical record of business addressed for that particular meeting for future reference.

MINUTES

It is important that accurate minutes are kept and that all decisions adopted are identified, it is not necessary to include general discussion in body of minutes but merely pertinent points in reaching decision.

Every decision of the Association and committees within the minutes should then form part of a formal minutes register developed by the Association and maintained by the Secretary. Policies adopted by the Association should also be contained in a formal policy register. The minutes may also list actions to be taken and by whom.

It is beneficial for decisions to be numbered and referenced to the minute register e.g.

Decision 101/03/04:

Mrs A Smith/Mr B Walker:- *“That ABC School Association adopt the uniform policy as presented by the Committee”.*

CARRIED

Smith/Wilson - First name always mover and therefore second name – seconder to motion.

101 – Reflects numerical decision i.e. 101st decision of School Association.

03 – Relates to month in which meeting held.

04 - Relates to year decision adopted.

Should at anytime in the future a person wish to ascertain via the minutes any decision specific to Uniforms the Minute Register under the heading “Uniforms” will quote Decision 101/03/04.

THE MEETING STRUCTURE

OPENING THE MEETING - The meeting begins after the Chairperson declares the meeting opened.

The meeting is unable to begin until the Chairperson declares a quorum. This means that there are enough people in attendance to allow debates to be conducted and decisions to be voted upon. If a quorum cannot be declared within a stipulated time of the meetings designated starting time, the meeting should be called again for a similar time and place a week later. If no more members attend the reconvened meeting, the Chairperson may be allowed by the standing orders to conduct the business with those who arrived. If a Chairperson has not taken the chair 15 minutes after the meeting was due to begin, the meeting should elect another Chairperson (3.7.6 – Draft Constitution). Chairperson may also welcome guests, speakers etc. at this time.

APOLOGIES - Those unable to attend.

The Chairperson states the names of those members who formally notified that they were unable to attend the meeting. Secretary/Members may advise other apologies.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chairperson should ask the meeting to vote on those corrections. If there are only a few minor corrections, the Chairperson may ask the members to accept the minutes with the corrections. The

vote to adopt the minutes can then go ahead on that basis. Once the minutes have been adopted the Chairperson should sign every page of the minutes and hand them to the meeting secretary for filing.

It is not appropriate at this time to indulge in debates on decisions which were made at the previous meeting. Anyone who wishes to change a motion should wait until the same subject arises in the general business of the current meeting or raise it in the part called "Other Business". The most important advice about the minutes of a previous meeting is to make sure you read them and they reflect business undertaken.

The Chairperson tables the minutes of the previous meeting making them open as a topic of discussion. At this point the Chairperson will ask the members to adopt the minutes. If the members do not agree that the draft minutes are accurate, changes may be suggested.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Often the Items for Business arising from the Minutes of the previous meeting are listed in the agenda. Any reports, pieces of information or other matters of substance that were requested at the previous meeting are debated and a vote is taken on the appropriate action to take.

INWARDS/OUTWARDS CORRESPONDENCE – Letters that have been sent/received are tabled and debated, if the meeting wishes to do so.

Any letters, facsimiles and the like, which have been received by the committee are discussed here. The Chairperson should summarise correspondence which cover similar issues, or express similar opinions and discuss them as a single issues.

The Chairperson presents a piece of correspondence to the meeting by putting a motion that the meeting "receive the correspondence". This is an acknowledgement by the meeting that the correspondence has been formally received and that it may now be discussed and acted upon, if necessary. If correspondence sent to the meeting is considered offensive, the meeting can vote on a motion, "not to receive" it. Alternatively, the meeting can decide that the correspondence should be "received and lie on the table". This means it will not really be dealt with. It is effectively in limbo until such time in the future that it is "taken from the table" and discussed.

FINANCE – Reports any matters specific to the Associations Financial Management or school budget.

Enables Treasurer and members to table financial reports and discuss issues relevant to the Associations financial activities and school budget. May also include discussion on Asset Management, Internal/External funding not directly related to committees e.g. departmental funding criteria.

REPORTS - Reports written for the meeting are tabled and debated, if the meeting wishes to do so. Alternatively Chairperson may accept verbal reports.

Reports and submissions that have been written for the meeting or include information relevant to the work of the meeting are tabled and discussed. A motion or resolution is required to be put that a report be received. This means that the report exists, as far as the meeting is concerned, and a discussion or debate may now take place on the contents, interpretation and recommendations of the report. Motions are able to be put for or against the recommendations of the report or ask the author to consider further issues or reconsider issues on the basis of particular information. A member of a meeting can even put forward a motion to change the working of a report or submission.

GENERAL BUSINESS - Items so listed in the agenda are debated. The debate usually begins with the Chairperson calling on someone to move a motion.

General business items are announced singly by the Chairperson and a discussion or debate follows each one. Motions that suggest methods of resolving issues are put forward to a vote. Once the motions receive a simple majority, or a majority as defined in the standing orders, they become resolutions. Sometimes amendments to a motion are put forward.

Only after the amendments are debated and voted upon can the revised substantive motion be brought to the vote. In the case of more formal meetings, general business consists of motions that are moved and seconded by participants of the meetings.

A seconder is someone who agrees that a motion should be debated. In most meetings however, the need for a member to support a motion is ignored.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS – When all items on the agenda have been debated, the Chairperson may call for items not listed in General Business.

It is at this point in time, that the members are able to raise issues they feel are important. These include any items which are not listed on the agenda. No extremely important or complex issues should be raised unannounced during this part of the meeting. If an urgent matter must be dealt with by the meeting, the Chairperson should be informed before the meeting begins. A revised agenda can then be drawn up in the time that remains before the meeting is due to begin. If the Chairperson feels that any of the issues brought up for discussion are too complex or troublesome, he may call for another meeting to discuss the issue or alternatively, put it on the agenda for the next scheduled meeting.

CLOSE OF MEETING

Once all the issues have been put forward and discussed, the Chairperson advises members of the date and time of the next meeting. The meeting is now officially closed.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO BE AN ACTIVE AND EFFECTIVE MEMBER OF A MEETING:-

- Be well prepared
- Make sure you have read the agenda

- Be aware of the topics that will be discussed
- Be involved
- Be a good listener

There are four steps to good listening.

- Hearing – receiving the sound
- Attending – focusing on what you are hearing
- Understanding – interpreting and evaluating what you listen to
- Remembering – storing the information.

ABC SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

NOTICE OF MEETING

Notice is hereby given that an Ordinary Meeting of the ABC School Association will be held in the Staff Room of ABC on *Day, Month, Year* commencing at *time* a.m./p.m.

J Citizen

Secretary

1. WELCOME/PRESENT

2. APOLOGIES

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES – DATE / MONTH / YEAR

4. BUSINESS ARISING

(a)

(b)

5. INWARDS/OUTWARDS CORRESPONDENCE

Recommendation:- *“That inwards correspondence be received and outwards correspondence as tabled be confirmed”.*

6. FINANCE

(a) Treasurers Report – Financial Statement

(b) Authorisation of Accounts Paid or to Be Passed for Payment

(c) Levies

Other matters of a financial matter.

7. REPORTS

(i) **STUDENT REPS REPORT**

(ii) **PRINCIPALS REPORT**

(iii) **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

8. GENERAL BUSINESS

(Where items have expressly been notified for inclusion in Agenda).

9. OTHER BUSINESS

Items not listed in agenda or general business.

10. NEXT MEETING

11. CLOSURE