



Ohio 4-H President's Handbook

Name of President _____

Year _____ Age as of January 1 _____

County _____

Name of Club _____

4-H Advisor Signature _____



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES



Make it a Project (optional activity)

Your efforts in this officer position can be turned into a project by completing the requirements for a self-determined project. Every self-determined project requires the 4-H member to identify and complete areas of interest and related activities, learning experiences, leadership/citizenship activities, and a brief report. Just like other projects, self-determined projects can be reviewed and are eligible for fair participation. Learn more about self-determined projects and download the 4-H 365 Self-Determined Project Guide at ohio4h.org/publications.

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4-H President

Welcome

Congratulations! Your fellow 4-H members have selected you to lead them as club President this year. Being elected club President is both an honor and a responsibility. You represent not only your club, but the 4-H program in your county and throughout the state. Your skills and abilities, standards and ideals, grooming, speech, even your smile represents Ohio 4-H members. Representing others is one of your most important duties because you perform it at all times—not just while you are at 4-H events.

Duties of the President

- Meet with advisors prior to the meeting to plan the agenda for the business meeting.
- Conduct the 4-H club meeting using Parliamentary Procedure.
- Maintain order and control during meetings. Be courteous, but firm.
- Guide the meeting in a tactful, courteous way. Avoid talking too much or voicing personal opinions on motions under discussion. The President is the “guide” or “pilot” for the meeting.
- Encourage everyone to participate in the meeting and provide opportunities for all members to be heard.
- Decide points of order fairly.
- Work with other club officers as a team to plan and follow through with programs and events.
- Appoint committees as needed by the club and define the responsibilities of the committees.
- Check frequently on progress of committees and ask for a report from each chair.
- Delegate responsibilities and make sure that everyone gets to serve on a committee or have a job in the club at some time during the year.
- Be courteous to guests and introduce them to the club.
- Cast the deciding vote in case of a tie.
- Attend as many 4-H meetings and activities as possible and be prompt and enthusiastic.
- Let the advisor know well in advance if you cannot attend a meeting so that the Vice President will have time to prepare to take over the role of the President and preside over the meeting.

Components of a 4-H Meeting

Business. In the business meeting, members share ideas, plan activities, and make decisions together. Members learn how to use basic principles of parliamentary procedure to make decisions as a group and to ensure a smooth and effective meeting. Most of the meeting agenda is dedicated to the business meeting (20–30 minutes).



Educational Program. The second part of the meeting is the educational program. It may be a speaker, video, field trip, clinic, tour, demonstration, or project work session. This important meeting component must be well planned and organized. An educational program makes learning fun. This portion of the meeting is the responsibility of the vice president and committees assigned to help (30–45 minutes).

Recreation and/or Refreshments. Recreation and social time provides members an opportunity to talk, get to know other members, catch up on personal happenings, and to have fun. It is usually held at the end of the meeting and is organized by the club's recreation officer (15–25 minutes).

Running an Effective Meeting

Conduct an effective meeting by following these steps:

- Prepare a written agenda prior to the meeting and have a copy for each member.
- Start on time. Tap the gavel twice to begin the meeting, whether or not everyone is present. If the President is late, the Vice President should start the meeting.
- End on time. If your meeting has a specific ending time, make sure you adjourn the business meeting in time for the program and recreation/refreshment components.
- Set up the meeting room before other members arrive.
- Display the American and the 4-H flag properly.
- Conduct meetings in an orderly and business-like manner.
- Vary the response to roll call rather than just have members say “here.” Encourage other officers, especially Health & Safety leaders to come up with roll call questions.
- Monitor officers and committee members to make sure they are doing their jobs.
- Keep the business meeting short and to the point.
- Do not allow discussions to drag on too long. If they do, call for the vote.
- Encourage as many members as possible to participate. Don't be afraid to call on quieter members and make an effort to include everyone.
- Use a gavel and good parliamentary procedure.
- Members may not speak unless called on.
- Arrange chairs and/or tables in a circle or rectangle so members are facing each other. Avoid back rows whenever possible.
- Straighten up the room after your meeting. The meeting room should be as neat and clean as it was when your club arrived.
- Be courteous.
- Communicate upcoming events, dates, and responsibilities.
- Set behavior standards early in the year. Remind members of standards when necessary.
- Set goals with the club and work diligently to reach them.



- Vary your club’s traditional activities or try something new. Ask other members for ideas to make the club’s meetings and programs more fun.
- Work closely with your club advisors.
- Encourage family participation in club activities, educational trips, fundraisers, etc.
- Make sure members, not adults, are running the club. Always seek advice from adults.

Use of the Gavel	
Club members and officers need to understand the use and meaning of the gavel. It symbolizes authority. As President, you will use it to run orderly meetings. How and when you tap the gavel means different things:	
One Tap	Indicates members need to find a seat to begin the meeting, signals the completion of a motion, announces adjournment
Two Taps	Calls the meeting to order
Three Taps	Signals for all members to stand
A Series of Taps	A series of sharp, loud taps is meant to restore order

Order of Business for a 4-H Club Meeting

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance and 4-H Pledge
3. Roll Call and Introduction of visitors
4. Minutes of the previous meeting
5. Reading of communications
6. Treasurer’s Report
7. Other Officer’s Reports
8. Reports of Standing Committees
9. Reports of Special Committees
10. Unfinished Business
11. New Business
12. Advisor’s Report and Announcements
13. Adjourn the Business Meeting
14. Educational Program (speaker, demonstrations, etc.)—may be placed after roll call
15. Recreation and/or Refreshments

Basic Parliamentary Procedure

Parliamentary procedure is a systematic and democratic way to develop policies and carry out action in a group. Parliamentary procedure has four main objectives: to discuss only one item at a time, show courtesy to everyone, abide by the rule of the majority, and respect the rights of the minority.

Main Motion Used to get group approval for an action item

1. A member wanting the club to make a decision raises his/her hand.
2. The chair calls on the member.
3. The member presents the motion by saying, "I move . . ." (NOTE: It is improper to present a motion by saying, "I make a motion . . ." or "I motion . . .")
4. Another member seconds the motion. (A second is required to assure that more than one person is interested in the motion.)
5. The chair restates the motion and calls for discussion. (Discussion allows members to express their opinions and helps members consider all aspects of the motion.)
6. Following discussion, the chair calls for a vote. (Voting assures that more than half the members voting want a motion approved.)

Example of a Main Motion

1. The chair says, "Is there any further new business?"
2. Susan has an item she wants to discuss, so she raises her hand and sits quietly until the chair calls on her.
3. Susan then says, "I move that the club donate five dollars per member to the Extension office from the club treasury."
4. Bill says, "I second the motion." (The person seconding the motion may do so without being called on by the chair.)
5. The chair says, "It has been moved and seconded that the club donate five dollars per member to the Extension office from the club treasury. Is there any discussion?"
6. Members raise their hands and wait to be called on by the chair to discuss the motion.
7. Following discussion, the chair repeats the motion and calls for a vote, "We shall now vote on the motion that the club donates five dollars per member to the Extension office from the club treasury. All those in favor say, 'aye.' All those opposed say, 'nay.'" Motion passes (fails).

If the chair is unsure of the voting results, he or she may call for another vote with a show of hands or by having the members rise to vote.

Amendment Used to change the wording of a main motion. The wording may be changed by inserting words, striking out words, striking out and inserting words, or by adding words.

1. During discussion of a main motion, a member who thinks the wording of the motion needs changed raises his or her hand.
2. The chair calls on the member.

3. The member presents the amendment by saying, “I move we amend the motion by inserting the words . . .” or “I move we amend the motion by striking out the words . . .” etc.
4. Another member seconds the amendment.
5. The president restates the amendment and calls for discussion. Discussion is on the merits of the amendment, not the original motion.
6. Following discussion, the chair calls for a vote.
7. If the amendment passes, the chair calls for discussion on the motion as amended.
8. If the amendment fails, the chair calls for further discussion on the original motion.
9. The chair then calls for a vote on the motion as amended or the original motion (if the amendment failed).

Amendment Example

1. During discussion on the main motion to donate five dollars to the Extension office from the club treasury, Kathy raises her hand and is called on by the chair.
2. Kathy says, “I move to amend the motion by striking out the words, ‘from the club treasury’ and adding the words, ‘with profits from the bulb sale.’”
3. Ted says, “I second the amendment.”
4. The chair says, “It has been moved and seconded that we amend the motion by striking out ‘from the club treasury’ and adding ‘with profits from the bulb sale.’ Is there any discussion on the amendment?”
5. Following discussion on the amendment, the chair repeats the amendment and calls for a vote, “We shall now vote on the amendment to strike out ‘from the club treasury’ and add ‘with profits from the bulb sale.’ All in favor say ‘aye.’ All opposed say ‘nay.’” Amendment passes (fails).
6. If the amendment passes, the chair says, “Is there any discussion on the motion as amended that the club donates five dollars per member to the Extension office with profits from the bulb sale?” The motion as amended would be voted on after discussion.
7. If the amendment fails, the chair says, “The amendment fails. Is there any further discussion on the motion that the club donates five dollars per member to the Extension office from the club treasury?” The original motion would be voted on after discussion.

Referring to a Committee Used to give an item of business to a smaller group from the club to gather more information or to work out details. The motion should include how many members should be on the committee, how the members are selected, when they report back, and if they have the power to act or if the club must vote on their recommendations.

Example of Referring to a Committee

1. During discussion on a motion to go to Cedar Point, Jim raises his hand and the chair calls on him.
2. Jim says, “I move to refer the motion to go to Cedar Point to a committee of five volunteers to report back at the next meeting.”
3. Amy says, “I second the motion.”



4. The chair says, "It has been moved and seconded that the motion to go to Cedar Point be referred to a committee of five volunteers to report back at the next meeting. Is there any discussion on referring the motion to a committee?"
5. Following discussion on referring the motion to a committee (NOT on the main motion), the chair repeats the motion and calls for a vote, "We shall now vote on referring the motion to go to Cedar Point to a committee of five volunteers to report back at the next meeting. All those in favor say 'aye.' All those opposed say 'nay.' Motion passes. Are there any volunteers to serve on the Cedar Point committee?"
6. The chair picks five volunteers and instructs them to gather information and report to the club at the next meeting.
7. If the motion to refer to a committee failed, the chair would say, "Motion to refer to a committee fails. Is there any further discussion on the motion to go to Cedar Point?" The motion would be voted on after discussion.

Adjournment

Used to end a meeting.

If no motion is on the floor, a member may be recognized and say, "I move we adjourn the meeting." A second is required. The chair repeats the motion and then takes the vote.

If a motion is on the floor and a member moves to adjourn, the motion still requires a second, but whether or not to adjourn must be discussed before the vote.

The vice president needs to be prepared to take over as chair of a meeting at any time. If the president is absent or wants to vigorously discuss a motion, the vice president will serve as chair.

Parliamentary Procedure Reminders for Presidents

- Restate the motion clearly before discussing and voting on it.
- Wait to confirm that a motion has a second. If it does not get a second, it dies.
- Allow the member who made the motion to discuss it first.
- Discuss only one main motion at a time.

Making or seconding a motion does not necessarily mean the member favors the motion, only that he or she wants the motion on the floor for discussion.

When voting, the President votes only in the case of a tie. (If the President chooses not to vote in a tie, the motion fails). The President may vote when voting by secret ballot.

Members do not have to vote if they choose not to. They also do not have to serve as an officer or committee member if they do not want to. Each member has the right to decline any nomination.

Ways to Vote

Voice Vote: The president says “All in favor of the motion say ‘aye’.”

Standing Vote: Members stand so their votes can be counted.

Show of Hands: Members raise their hands so the president can count their votes.

Ballot: The president has one or more helpers hand out blank slips of paper so members can write their vote.

Roll Call: Members vote as their name is called.

Honor System: Members close their eyes and vote by raising their hands.

Presidential Phrases

Use the following phrases to run a 4-H business meeting.

AGENDA ITEM

PHRASE

Call to order	“The meeting will come to order.”
Pledge to the U.S. and 4-H flags	<i>[Name]</i> and <i>[name]</i> will lead the pledges.”
Roll call	“The secretary will please call the roll.”
Reading of the minutes	“The secretary will read the minutes of the last meeting.”
Approval of the minutes	“Are there any additions or corrections to the minutes?” If not, “The minutes stand approved as read.” OR If there were additions or corrections, then “The minutes stand approved as corrected.”
Correspondence	“Mr. or Ms. Secretary, is there any correspondence?”
Treasurer’s report	“The treasurer will present the treasurer’s report.”
Other officer reports	“Are there other officers who would like to report?”
Committee report	“The _____ Committee will report.”
Leader’s report (optional)	
Project reports (optional)	
Unfinished (Old) business	Present any old business. (You should get this information from the secretary and your club leader. Then ask, “Is there any more old business?”



New business	Present any new business you know about. Then ask, “Is there any more new business?”
Adjournment	“Do I have a motion to adjourn the meeting?” (A second is required.) Take a vote and declare the meeting adjourned (if the motion passed). The meeting is not adjourned until you say so.
To vote	Repeat the motion and call for a vote. “It has been moved and seconded to . . .” “All those in favor, say ‘aye.’” “All those opposed, say ‘nay.’” Then declare the motion— “The motion passed (carried).” OR “The motion did not pass (is defeated).” If the verbal outcome is not clear, take a counted vote.

Working with Committees

According to Webster's Dictionary a committee is “a group of people chosen to consider, investigate, and report or act on some matter or cause.” The vice president works with all standing and special committees. The president confers with the vice president on committee work, but it is the vice president's responsibility to keep track of what each committee is planning, to make sure there is no duplication of programs or overlap of dates and times. The vice president also monitors discussions to assure that the plans being made support the club goals for the year and are not in conflict with the approved club program.

Standing committees are committees the club has every year. Standing committees should be listed in the club's by-laws. Standing committees may include Fund Raising, Program/Education, Educational Outing, and so on.

Special committees are committees which are formed to perform a specific task, plan a specific program, or handle a specific problem. Rules for how special committees are set up may be in the club's by-laws.

The Value of Committees

Committees can help the 4-H club function effectively. The committee makes recommendations and plans and lets everyone get involved. Committee membership need not be limited to club members. Parents and club advisors may also be appointed to help plan and supervise various club activities. Adults on committees need to understand that their role is as an advisor to the group.

Some individuals who will not accept responsibility alone may be willing to work with others on a committee. Serving on a committee can give a member a chance to “grow into” responsibility, which will help develop leadership skills.

Committee Membership

Committees may be appointed by the president or may be named from volunteers. Committee chairs may be named by the president or by the committee. The vice president coordinates the work of all committees, and should not serve as the chairman of every committee.

The number of members needed on a committee depends on the tasks assigned to the committee. Too few members and the workload may be too great. Too many members make it difficult to get anything accomplished.

Setting Club Goals

Goals are the end result your club chooses to work toward. They may be goods (new club T-shirts), money (to donate to a worthy cause), activities (a club educational outing), or community improvements (through community service).

Consider your club program last year and identify areas that could be improved. Also think about new things your club might want to try this year. Use these ideas to help your club set one or two goals for the year. Goals should be specific and measurable. Goals should also encourage participation while meeting the needs and interests of club members.

Examples of club goals:

- The club will get new club T-shirts for all members and advisors.
- All members will complete every project they take.
- Every member will have a parent or guardian participate in at least one club activity.
- Club members will plan and conduct two community service activities.

Planning Activities for Meetings

1. Surveying Member's Interests

Try a few of these methods to help your club generate ideas:

Brainstorming: Give members a topic, such as community service. Allow members to offer ideas and suggestions. Record ideas generated on a chalkboard or large piece of paper. Do not evaluate ideas at this stage. After brainstorming, discuss the ideas and decide which ones the club wants to pursue.

Survey: Ask members to answer written, open-ended survey questions. Questions can be placed around the room on posters for members to add their suggestions or on paper for them to work individually or in small groups. Examples of survey statements include: "We could help our community by . . ." and "Just for fun we could . . ."

Roll Call: Ask members to answer roll call with an idea or suggestion for an activity, such as something new you would like to try in the club this year, or ideas for a family activity. Encourage creative ideas by asking each member to suggest a new idea.

2. Selecting Program/Education Committee

The Program/Education Committee should consist of three to ten people, representing club members, advisors, and parents. Youth members should include different ages, male and female, officers and different interests. Adult members should include advisors and parents. If your club is small, the program planning committee might be the entire group. If the club is large, the president can appoint representatives or ask for volunteers.

3. Planning the Program

Yearly club programs should include the following:

- **Balance of Activities:** Community service, education, social/recreation, business and member recognition.
- **Who, What, Where and When:** Include the person responsible, what is planned, and the location, date, and time.
- **Member Assignments:** Host, demonstrations, refreshments, program responsibilities, etc.
- **County-wide Activities:** Camp dates, judging dates, quality assurance training dates, fair dates, etc.
- **Contact Information:** Advisors, officers, other members, OSU Extension Office.

4. Approving the Plan

The Program/Education Committee presents the proposed program to the club for approval. After their presentation, the committee should be willing to make changes based on membership input. Seek club adoption and then develop a club calendar or program booklet to share with families.

5. Evaluating the Plan

Evaluation gives members the chance to look at the strengths and weaknesses of the plan. After some discussion you can determine what went well and what could be done differently next time. Keep tabs on progress throughout the year by asking for suggestions and comments about your club's programs. Good communication is essential to improving the programs your club offers in the future.

The Club Calendar or Program

Informed 4-H members and families will participate; miss fewer meetings, deadlines, and programs; and be happier and more productive. Members with a club program or calendar will be more likely to have a positive 4-H experience.

Your Final Program

Determine the following as you finalize your club program for the year:

- Dates, times, and locations of all club meetings, events and activities.
- Club members responsible for refreshments.
- Member(s) giving demonstrations.

- Dates, times and locations of important county programs.
- Educational programs for meetings or club events, and member(s) responsible for arranging/conducting.
- Contact information for club advisors, officers, other members and the OSU Extension Office.

Nominations and Elections

One way to nominate officers is to ask members to suggest someone for an office during the election meeting. The member says, "I nominate [name] for . . ." A nomination does not need a second, although a second can be made to show support.

The other way is for the president to appoint a nominating committee. The committee chooses candidates for each office and asks them to run. The committee presents its nominations as a report at the meeting. Other nominations can then be made from the floor. When there are no more nominations, a member says, "I move to close the nominations." If the motion is carried, the members then vote on the candidates.

Voting for officers is usually by ballot. It takes a majority (one vote over half) to be elected.

Nominations and elections are important club business. Tell the members about the election ahead of time so they can think about the kinds of officers they want to have. Also, make sure everyone knows the duties of each office.

Forms for the President

Visit the Club Officer Resources web site at ohio4h.org/members/officers for these helpful forms:

- Planning the Meeting Agenda
- Sample Meeting Script

Good luck in your new role as president!

I pledge

My head to clearer thinking,

My heart to greater loyalty,

My hands to larger service, and

My health to better living

For my club, my community, my country, and my world.

