

Recommendations to Streamline Your Business Meetings
Becky Berger, District Director SD 18

1. Have an agenda with last meeting's minutes on the back available at the sign in table for each meeting. Also assign a member, your membership chair or Secretary to greet everyone that comes in.
2. Have permanent name tags or the peel and stick kind so newcomers can catch everyone's name. Greeters should keep a separate list of the guests that attend to give the President so she can acknowledge them.
3. Have a set invocation that is respectful of denominational differences. Make it short and to the point. This is not church. Prayer is a positive influence in most clubs but extensive prayers are not necessary in a political forum.
Examples:
 - a. The Lord's Prayer (full version)
 - b. Dear Lord, thank-you for our many blessings. We ask you to strengthen our resolve to bring back our country, "one nation under G-d, with liberty and justice for all", amen.
4. Pledges to the Flags
There is no comma after "one nation". Teach our members to say "one nation under God" as a complete phrase, it has more impact. The US Flag always stands on the left as you face it and the Texas Flag on the right.
5. Acknowledge guests by name and always introduce any Current office holders or Candidates that attend. (Candidate intros –they do themselves- are addressed in #16.)

Speaker may present here or after the business meeting. Rules for speakers are #14-17 below.

6. Instead of reading the minutes ask if there are any additions or corrections to the minutes as presented on the back of the agenda. Give the members a minute to look at them. Make the appropriate corrections or approve them as presented. If changes are made, approve the minutes as amended.
7. Get Roberts Rules of order and follow them as closely as possible. Be polite but firm.
8. Committee Reports Suggestions:
 - a. Reports should be concise and to the point, but not so brief as to omit crucial information.
 - b. If chair of each committee has a written report, she can make copies available for members. The report would be a reminder about the committee's plans and could have a sign-up portion on the bottom for those willing to help with any projects.
 - c. Verbal reports are fine but each chair needs a brief summary for the Secretary to put in the minutes.
9. Inform your general membership of any actions, decisions or upcoming events your executive board has acted on, planned or scheduled. Be as specific as possible with dates, times and locations.
10. Try to get individuals to head up small portions of each of your projects. This encourages member involvement and takes some of the burden off the Board. Find out what each of your members is good at, educated in, experienced with or talented at and use those resources.
11. Open the floor for new business (you may want to publish a deadline for items to be put on the agenda for new business, but remember there will be things that occur on the day of or shortly before the meeting that may need to be addressed even if they had no time to notify the President, so some flexibility is required)
 - a. If discussion becomes lengthy, suspend the discussion until the next meeting or refer to a committee.
 - b. Recommend that members can discuss their opinions by phone or email before the next meeting.
 - c. This will narrow the discussion to conflicting points to be voted on as an appropriate action.
12. Announcements
If your speaker is last on the agenda you may make your announcements after they speak.

These may include but are not limited to:

- a. Other functions or events in the community that would be of interest to the members
- b. Any Tea Party, Campaign events, Elected Officials visiting
- c. Members who are ill or have passed away or new baby Republicans born recently
- d. Local Soldiers returning home

13. Adjournment needs a motion and a second with verbal vote. If your speaker is last on the agenda may adjourn they speak.

Helpful hints for handling Guest Speakers

14. When introducing a speaker use the *Reader's Digest Version* of their credentials. If you downloaded their bio from a website, it is usually too long. Make sure they have something to tell the audience after the introduction is finished. Practice a little ahead of time. If you are not comfortable doing the intro give someone the "honor" of doing that within these parameters. This helps keep the members involved.

15. Speakers can do their presentation before or after the business meeting. Sometimes it depends on logistics for them. Find out in advance what works best for them. If they have no preference put them last so the question & answers can end your meeting.

16. Use a time-keeper for multiple speakers or for verbal contributions from the membership. Remember this is **your** meeting so if **your** agenda really doesn't have time for the Candidates to speak every time they attend make sure when you introduce them in step #5, you tell the attendees they are welcome to hang around after the meeting to meet each of them one on one.

Suggested time limits:

- a. 20-30 minutes for a single speaker with 10-15 minutes of question & answer time
- b. 10-15 minutes per speaker when 2-3 speakers are on the agenda
- c. 4-5 minutes for first time visits from candidates (if they are not the speaker)
- d. 1 minute repeat candidates introducing themselves
- e. Keep the question and answer time to about ½ the time of the presentation. People can visit with the speakers after the meeting adjourns.

17. Do not allow people to present sides of issues or represent a candidate if they are not on the agenda. Candidates send their own representatives or request you let a member speak on their behalf. It is not appropriate for some to jump up and insist on being heard without prior consent by the candidate to the President/Board and being placed on the agenda. Make sure you let the membership know they are welcome to request time on the agenda. When these methods are applied consistently no one should be offended.

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Note to Clubs: Please use **spell check & have another person** (second pair of eyes) look over your publications before you print them. It saves confusion and embarrassment.