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THE Business Side of a Club

PART I

Underlying Rules for Parliamentary Procedure:

*"Justice and courtesy to all,
One thing at a time,
The rule of the majority,
The rights of the minority."*

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UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN



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THE BUSINESS SIDE OF A CLUB

PART I

Constitution—By-Laws—Officers—Committees—Minutes

The Home Demonstration Project clubs are organized so that women may study thru demonstrations some of the problems and activities of homemaking. The lessons are prepared at the University by the Agricultural Extension Service specialists.

Project club work in Nebraska is carried on thru local leaders. That is, two members of the club agree to attend the leaders' training meetings held by a state specialist or the county home demonstration agent. At these meetings the leaders learn thru demonstrations and study, how to take the demonstration back to the local club. The same two leaders should serve thruout the year. These leaders' meetings begin in September or October and continue for six months. The work closes with the Achievement Day programs, which are usually held in April.

There should be at least seven members in a group which wishes to enroll for the project club work. Two of these are to serve as the leaders thruout the year. When clubs become too large, it is sometimes better to divide into smaller units, for unless those attending can see and hear the demonstration, the work has little value.

It is well for the local leaders to hold the local meeting within a week or ten days after they have attended the leaders' training meeting. They also should have two or three days in which to study and prepare their demonstration before they attempt to give it.

Clubs which enroll for project club work should be free to devote the afternoon to the demonstration, except for the short business meeting. Frequently clubs hold all-day meetings. Project club work is not planned for a social afternoon, but is a form of adult education which may be one of the many factors which adds to the joy of being a successful homemaker.

New clubs and perhaps others which have not had a constitution may be glad to have the following suggestions.

The articles found in a constitution should be those which are fundamental to the organization and which will not need speedy alteration. They should contain (1) the name, (2) the object, (3) the membership, (4) the officers, (5) a quorum, and (6) the amendments. If there is a need for by-laws, they should contain the duties of the officers, the duties of the members, meetings, the standing committees, and should state how the by-laws may be amended. As the by-laws contain less important features than the constitution, they should be easier to amend.

SUGGESTED CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

CONSTITUTION

Article I. Name

The name of this organization shall be the Home Demonstration (Home Makers, Extension Service) Club.

Article II. Object

The object of this organization shall be to study and practice approved methods of homemaking and of community betterment.

Article III. Membership

All women who are interested in home and community problems are eligible to membership.

Article IV. Officers

The officers shall consist of a president, vice-president, and a secretary-treasurer, and two project leaders. The social leader and the news reporter may be optional.

Article V. Quorum

A quorum to transact business at a meeting of the organization shall consist of not less than persons.

Article VI. Amendments

This constitution may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the **enrolled** members provided that the proposed amendment has been presented at a previous meeting or by letter two weeks in advance.

BY-LAWS

Article I. Duties of the Officers

Section 1. The president shall preside at all meetings of the club and shall perform the usual duties pertaining to the office.

Section 2. The vice-president shall, in the absence of the president, perform all the duties of that office. She may serve as publicity chairman for the club.

Section 3. The secretary-treasurer shall keep an accurate record of all the proceedings of the club, and shall have charge of the club funds, if there are any.

Section 4. The members shall elect the officers by ballot at a regular business meeting held in A plurality vote shall be sufficient for a decision. The officers shall hold office for one (1) year or until their successors have been elected and qualified. Officers may be elected for a second term, but are then ineligible for re-election until after two years.

Article II. Meetings

This club shall meet the day of each month at Special meetings may be called by the president.

Article III. Committees

Standing and special committees may be chosen or appointed from time to time as needed.

Article IV. Order of Business

A club should decide upon the order in which it wishes to transact its business and then should adhere to it.

1. Meeting called to order.
2. Song and roll call (roll call may be called later by a project leader).
3. Reading and approval of minutes.
4. Report of standing committees.
5. Report of special committees.
6. **Unfinished business.**
7. New business.
8. Adjournment.

Article V. Amendments

The by-laws may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the members **present** at any regular meeting, provided that the proposed amendment has been presented at a previous meeting or by letter two weeks in advance.

OFFICERS

Much of the success of a club will depend upon the wise selection of officers. Careful consideration should be given to select officers who are qualified and interested in the success of the organization.

Qualifications of Officers

The **President** should be chosen because she has the qualities of leadership and not merely because of her popularity. Important characteristics for a good chairman are: "self-control, clear-headedness, firmness, courtesy, tact, and ability to get things done," and also a sense of responsibility. The president will preside at the meetings, call the meetings to order, state the motions and put them to vote, make decisions in regard to points of order, keep calm and tactful if there should be "exciting debates or quick parliamentary moves". A good president will have a clear speaking voice, will not be dictatorial, but will be firm, good-tempered, and orderly, and have a pleasing manner. She will have the rules enforced so that everyone is given a square deal. Occasionally the president will wish to express her opinions, and, in that case, she should ask someone else to serve as chairman. A good presiding officer will make her meetings move like clock-work.

The **Vice-President** should have the same qualities as the president and preside if the president is absent. She should have some special duties; such as being chairman of the publicity of the club, or of arranging for meetings, etc.

The **Secretary-Treasurer** holds a responsible position and should be selected because she is a good penman and will be honest, careful, and systematic in keeping her records complete and straight. She should have

a clear voice for reading the minutes of the meetings. It is well for her to sit near the Chair.

The minutes should show everything that was done, and record all motions whether lost or carried. Details of reports are not needed, but a resolution, if adopted, should be copied in full. When voting by ballot, a record should be kept to show the number of votes on each side. A good secretary will not criticize favorably or unfavorably. She will have her minutes written only on the right-hand page of the book. This will leave the left-hand side for corrections or amendments. She will paragraph frequently and leave a two-inch margin.

It will be her duty to send out notices and to handle the correspondence unless there is a corresponding secretary. If the president and vice-president are both absent, the secretary should take the Chair. In some clubs there will be no money to handle, but if there is, the Secretary-Treasurer will keep account of it, collect the dues, and pay the bills upon the approval of the president.

Extension Circular No. 53, The Secretary and Her Job, may be secured from the Agricultural or Home Demonstration Agent.

COMMITTEES AND THEIR WORK

Conditions for Efficiency

"What is everybody's business is nobody's business." Results will be obtained by assigning a task to a certain number of people who form a committee and are responsible for it. The size of the committee will depend upon its purpose. If deliberation is desired, a large committee is better, while a smaller group will act more promptly. It is well to have a committee consist of an odd number.

Those selected for the committee should be representative club members, and be especially adapted to the work and willing to do it. The club usually informs the Chair the number desired upon the committee and the manner in which they are to be selected. Frequently, the Chair is asked to select them in which case the one whose name is mentioned first serves as temporary chairman and may be selected as the chairman by the committee when it meets. The meetings of the committee are open to any member of the club unless otherwise stated. When a committee is at work they should proceed according to parliamentary rules, and when their report is completed all of the committee who approve of it should sign it. If there is a minority report it may be submitted in connection with the report of the majority. In such case the club itself may decide which report it will adopt. In any case the club may amend the committee's report before it is adopted.

Kinds and Selection of Committees

Committees may be of two kinds, **standing** or **special**. The standing committees may be designated in the by-laws. They are the ones that continue for some time, frequently over a year, while the special committees are appointed for a particular piece of work and are released as soon as the work is accomplished. There are different ways of forming committees:

1. Appointment by Chair.
2. Resolution, subject to amendment or resolution naming members. *"I move to refer this question to a committee consisting of, and"* This might be amended by inserting other names or by striking out names.
3. Nomination from the floor. *"I move to submit this question to a committee of three nominated from the floor and elected by a show of hands."*
4. By ballot. *"I move to submit this question to a committee of five selected by ballot."* This is slow and used only in cases requiring extreme caution.

Reports of Committees

When the president wishes to have a committee report, she says: *"Will the chairman of the committee please report?"* The chairman rises, addresses the Chair, is recognized and reads her report. She may herself make a motion that the report be adopted or accepted before she is seated. Or the president may say, *"Will someone move that this report be adopted?"* The motion is made, seconded, and stated by the president. Then follows the regular procedure of discussion and amendments, ended by a vote on the adoption. The secretary records the motion and the name of the one proposing it. When reports of committees are merely an expression of opinion or the statements of facts, a formal motion is not necessary. If, however, the report contains recommendations or resolutions, the chairman may move its adoption or acceptance after it has been read. In case the group does not wish to adopt the report as yet, but does wish to discharge the committee and consider the report later, the motion would be: *"I move to receive (place the report on file) the report and to discharge the committee."*

MINUTES

Procedure for Reading Minutes

After the president has called the meeting to order, she remains standing and says, *"The secretary will read the minutes of the last meeting."* The secretary rises, addresses the Chair, is recognized, reads the minutes, and resumes her seat. The president says, *"Are there any additions or corrections to the minutes as read?"* She then pauses and if no one responds, she says, *"If not, they stand approved as read."* If, however, there are some corrections, the president informally directs the secretary to make the change unless the objection is such that a formal vote as to the wording is necessary. If the minutes are approved and a mistake is found later, then a vote is necessary to make the correction.

Order for Minutes of Meeting

Roberts' Rules of Order gives the essentials of the record or minutes of the meeting as follows (page 247, Revised Edition):

- a. The kind of meeting, "Regular" or "Special".

- b. Name of organization holding meeting.
- c. Date of meeting and place, when it is not always the same.
- d. The fact of the presence of the regular chairman and secretary, or in their absence, the names of their substitutes.
- e. Whether the minutes of the previous meeting were approved or their reading dispensed with.
- f. All main motions (except such as were withdrawn) and points of order and appeals, whether sustained or lost.
- g. Usually the hours of meeting and adjournment, when the meeting is solely for business.
- h. The name of member introducing a main motion but not that of the seconder.
- i. The signature of the secretary.
- j. The note "approved" at the end of the minutes after they have been read at the succeeding meeting, giving the date of the approval.
- k. The record to be entered in ink in a well bound record book.

Sample Set of Minutes for a Meeting of a Community Organization

The regular meeting of the Happy Hour Demonstration Club held at Mrs. Will Jordan's home on Thursday afternoon, March 17, 1935, was called to order promptly at 1:30 p. m., by the President, Mrs. J. R. Morris. In the absence of the regular secretary, Mrs. C. S. Jones served in this capacity. In the roll-call 15 members responded by telling the number and kind of approved practices adopted from the February demonstration. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved.

Reports from committees were called for and Mrs. David Kearney reported for the 4-H Club committee that they had found 12 girls who wished to form a clothing club. The mothers of the girls were all anxious to have the club. The girls have asked Miss Elsie Logan to be the leader of the club and she has consented to do so. Miss Logan would like to have Miss Jane Knox to serve as her assistant.

As a matter of unfinished business, Mrs. Perry reported that she had made further inquiry into the desire of the club for entertaining all of the families in the community at an April-Fool's Day party, March 31. The sentiment of everyone seemed to be in favor of the party. A motion was made, seconded, and carried that the President appoint a committee of three to serve as the general committee, they to have power to appoint other committees as needed.

Under the consideration of new business, Mrs. Earl Martin reported that her son was anxious to have a pig club in the community. She thought there were enough other boys interested to form a club. A motion was made, seconded, and carried to have Mrs. Martin and Mrs. Davis talk to the agricultural agent about the requirements for a pig club and find how many boys in this community and those adjoining would be interested in forming a club. They are to report at the next meeting.

A motion was made by Mrs. Jenkins and seconded to have the President invite the home demonstration agent to Miss Logan's home on March 23, to organize the clothing club. After some discussion, the motion

was amended to read March 25 at 3:30. The amended motion carried. The meeting was adjourned by the president to meet at 1:30, April 21, at the home of Mrs. Benson.

After the business meeting the two Project Leaders, Mrs. Morton and Miss Chase, gave the demonstration project work for the month on "Serving Vegetables so They Appeal to Children".

Signed
Acting Secretary.

(Prepared by Mary-Ellen Brown. Read and approved by F. M. Gregg.)

For the Parliamentary Procedure in a Club, see "The Business Side of a Club, Part II, Extension Circular 52."