

How To Conduct a Business Meeting

The success of a business meeting is determined how prepared one is for the meeting. Most pastors and organizations desire to have smooth transition between items discussed or voted on. Having a Robert's Rules of Order is nice to have on hand but it is not necessary to conduct a successful business meeting.

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Listed below is an outline that most churches and organizations use for their business meetings. It is a simple outline that can be used with any type of meeting, big or small. It is good to also prepare an agenda outline for all members. A sample is provided at the end of this article.

Suggested Outline:

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER. The chair will call the meeting to order, which means that the meeting is officially starting. The secretary calls roll to establish a quorum (50% + 1) to establish that one has a majority of its members attending this meeting to conduct business, changes, or elections on behalf of the church or organization. Once the roll has been called the secretary will record this number in the business minutes and give this number to the chair.

FINANCIAL REPORT. The treasurer will make a financial report of the church or organization. It is recommended that every voting member has a copy of the financials in hand while the treasurer reads the report. The financial report for a monthly meeting may not be as detailed as a year-end business meeting, but it should include as many items necessary to conduct business. Most churches have computer software that makes their reports simple and concise.

Note: It is our recommendation that the financials include all the items that are usually listed in the year-end report. This allows a church board to budget and make adjustments if needed.

Financials will report the beginning balance, incomes and expenses of the church or organization, and an ending balance. The **income** should be detailed as to list tithes, offerings, special offerings, projects, designated funds or departmental funds, and donations. (Some churches prefer to have a separate breakdown of each department or fund to show their income and expenses.)

The **expenses** should include salaries, utilities, mortgage payments, loan payments, insurance, benevolence, office supplies, etc.

If providing a monthly report, it is wise to have a column for current monthly income and have year-to-date totals to the right-hand side to help with budgeting decisions.

Chair makes a motion to accept the financial report as read. A second is needed. The chair will ask if there is any discussion. The chair may ask that question 2-3 times or until they are sure there are no further questions or discussions needed. The chair will then state all in favor of accepting the financials as read say, Yea, all opposed. He will then state whether it carried.

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING. The secretary usually provides a copy of the minutes to every voting member to read over. The secretary usually reads the minutes with the chair asking for a motion to accept as read. A second is needed. The chair will ask for discussions or corrections. If there is none, the chair will ask for a vote to accept the minutes as read. “All in favor of accepting the minutes as read, say Yea, all opposed say Nay. Chair reports whether motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS. This is a list of items that are needed to be addressed before the new business has been established. If this is a yearly election, there will probably be no old business. If this is a monthly business/board meeting, there will be some unfinished business that will either be decided upon or tabled. The chair continues to entertain motions on each item along with votes with the secretary recording minutes of the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS. This is a list of items that the pastor or board wishes to discuss or bring up for consideration. The chair will entertain a motion, second, and discussion before voting on items or tabling to another date.

If elections are the order of new business: An outline of the qualifications is read or given to each member for consideration. A list of candidates for each position can be nominated from the floor for consideration. Some churches prefer to bring a list of qualified people for positions being voted on to eliminate confusion, save time due to some who might not be willing to serve that position, and acts like a screening process to talk to prospective candidates prior to business meeting.

Nominations are presented, the type of position is read, and the chair states, “We are voting on the position of_____.” A ballot is given to each voting member. The chair states, “Please mark which candidate you wish to vote on.” Most churches pray before the vote is being marked. The ushers or board members pick up the ballots. If a candidate receives a 2/3 vote on the nominating ballot, it is deemed that candidate has won that position. If not, there will be another vote and will continue for 3 times and then the chair will state that the two receiving the largest amount of the votes will be considered and voted on for that position. The one that has the majority on the last vote wins. (The secretary and chair will confer on the number needed to win by dividing the number of voters by either two thirds or one half plus one)

To conserve time, some churches will allow the first vote to take place and will continue voting until the chair asks, “Does someone want to make a motion to accept the two with the largest number of votes to be voted on?” A second is needed. The chair will ask, “All in favor say, Yea, all opposed, Nay.” A simple majority of that vote is the winner.

The chair will recognize the winner. Sometimes the winners are allowed to share a statement or thoughts about being newly elected.

MOTION TO ADJOURN. Once all new business has been completed, the chair may state, “With no other business, is there anyone who would like to make a motion to adjourn?” A second is needed along with a yea or nay. If passed, the chair will say the meeting is adjourned.

Sample Business Meeting Agenda

January 1, 202x

Opening with prayer

Financials

Minutes

Old Business:

- a. **Roof repair**
- b. **Purchase of new computers**
- c. **Workday planned**
- d. **Youth Minister candidates**
- e. **Raise for staff**

New Business:

- a. **New carpet in hallway**
- b. **Monitors and sound equipment**
- c. **Christmas play expenditures**
- d. **Purchase or rental of copier**

Adjourn