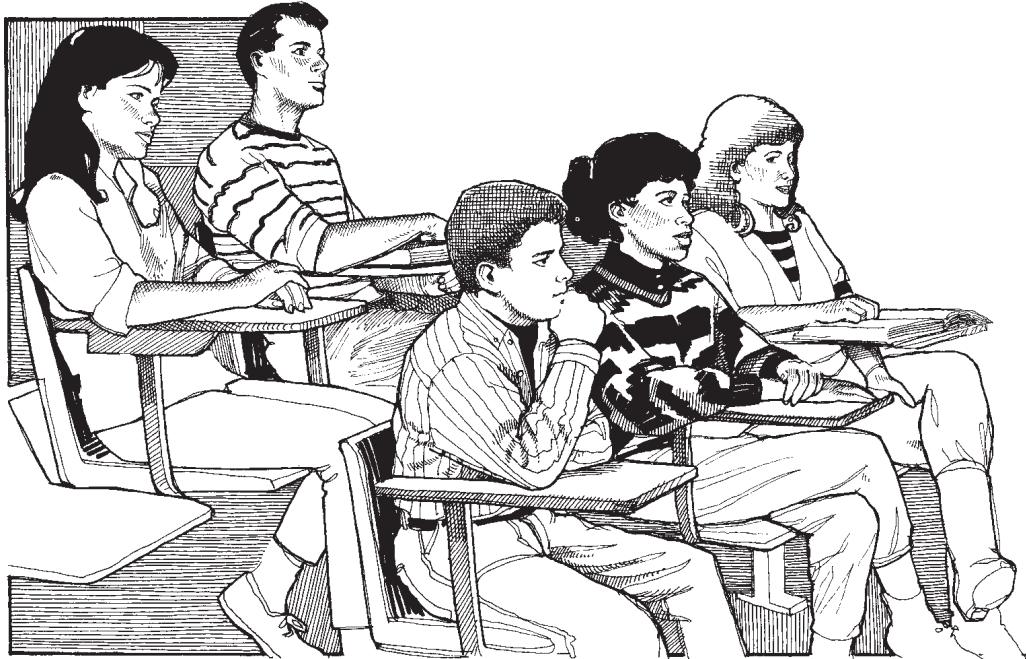
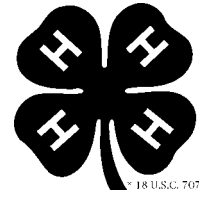


# A Guide for 4-H Club Officers



## Virginia Cooperative Extension



VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE  
AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Publication 388-274  
Reprinted 2001



VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY

Robert Ray Meadows, Extension Specialist, 4-H Youth, Virginia Tech

## Introduction

Being elected an officer of your 4-H Club is indeed an honor. Serving as an officer gives you valuable experience which you will use all your life. Much of the responsibility for the success of your club depends on you as an officer.

The purpose of this booklet is to help you to know what your duties are and how to perform them well. You will want to study and discuss your duties with older 4-H officers, 4-H leaders, your parents/guardians, and

Extension Agents. You and the other officers will want to meet with your 4-H leader(s) for officer training, attend county/city officer training meetings, and also attend county/city 4-H council meetings. You will want to talk often with your club leader(s) to get ideas and advice. The following suggestions will help you perform your duties according to parliamentary law. For further information, study “Roberts Rules of Order.”

## Contents

Qualities Which You Should Have to Be a 4-H Officer.....	4
Essentials of a Good Meeting.....	4
Job of 4-H Officer.....	4
President’s Duties.....	4
Suggestions to President.....	4
Vice President’s Duties.....	5
Secretary’s Duties.....	5
Suggestions to Secretary.....	5
Treasurer’s Duties.....	5
Suggestions to Treasurer.....	5
Reporter’s Duties.....	5
Suggestions to Reporter.....	6
Song Leader’s Duties.....	6
Suggestions to Song Leader.....	6
Recreation Leader’s Duties.....	6
Suggestions to Recreation Leader.....	6
Historian’s Duties.....	7
Suggestions to Historian.....	7
Suggested Order For Conducting Meetings.....	7
Suggestions for Conducting a 4-H Meeting.....	7
How to Make and Pass a Motion.....	8
Election of Officers.....	8
Committees.....	8
Parliamentary Terms.....	9
How to Use the Flag.....	9
Check List to Score Your 4-H Club.....	11



## To Be a Good 4-H Member You Should

*(Check yourself with this list)*

Be a good 4-H member, enthusiastic, and dependable.  
Be willing to learn and to work for a good cause.  
Work well with others - You do not want to accept all credit for club accomplishments.  
Inspire and encourage others to do their best.  
Always be kind, tactful, and courteous.  
Be neat in appearance.  
Speak in a strong and pleasing voice.  
Solicit suggestions and cooperation of others.  
Be prompt - on time and prepared for all meetings  
Conduct the meeting in an orderly and impartial manner.  
Check closely with your 4-H leader(s). Keep them informed of all club activities and get their suggestions and help in conducting club programs.

## To Conduct a Good Meeting You Should

1. Start and end meeting on time.
2. Have a suitable meeting place in readiness; seats arranged, good light, fresh air, heat, if necessary, and 4-H flags and banners in place. Study the picture on the front of this booklet which shows a good arrangement for an effective meeting - secretary seated at the president's left, the display of 4-H flag set, etc.
3. Have an appropriate, planned program. Check beforehand to see that those on program are ready.
4. Have short, snappy business meetings. By proper planning the business session can be complete and effective without consuming too much time, and becoming uninteresting. (rule of thumb: no longer than 10 minutes)
5. Conduct the meeting according to parliamentary procedure.
6. Plan for several members to participate in each program, and for all members to participate during the year.
7. Have a variety of things on the program. Include such items as business, singing, talks, demonstrations, recreation, movies, etc.



## The Job of a 4-H Officer

As an officer of your 4-H club, you have added opportunities and responsibilities. Learn what these are and be prepared to meet them. The following suggestions will help you.

### The President's Duties

1. Check on arrangements for meeting. This includes checking with your club leader(s). Be sure that each person listed on program is ready.
2. Preside over all meetings.
  - a. Call meetings to order and adjourn meetings at scheduled time.
  - b. Follow the order of procedure recommended for conducting club meetings.
  - c. Keep order and see that business is conducted according to parliamentary law.
3. Appoint committees as needed.
4. Cast deciding vote in case of tie vote.
5. Approve payment of bills on action by club.
6. Be familiar with the duties of other officers and all committees, and see that they perform their duties.
7. Attend 4-H council and officer training meetings.

### **Suggestions to President**

1. Stand when speaking to the group.
2. Avoid the use of the personal pronoun "I." Say, "your president," or "the chairman."
3. Remain seated during the reading of minutes, long reports of committees, and addresses. When the minutes have been read or a report is completed, you again stand and assume leadership of the group. Often there will be questions or discussion following a report. As president, you will preside, seeing that each person who wishes to speak has a chance to do so. You should remain impartial throughout.
4. If you wish to take part in a discussion, you must call the vice-president or someone else to the chair and take the floor as any other member. You must not return to the chair until the question under consideration is decided.
5. If you must be absent from a meeting, the vice-president presides, but you should notify him in advance. If the vice-president is also absent, the secretary calls the meeting to order and a chairman pro tem is elected.

## Vice President's Duties

1. Learn the duties of the president.
2. Be prepared to perform these duties on short notice.
3. Assist other officers in arranging for and conducting meetings.
4. Serve (usually) as chairman of program committee.
5. Attend 4-H council and officer training meetings.

### **Suggestions to Vice President**

1. When you preside, follow the same suggestions as listed for president.
2. When you serve as chairman of program committee, have this committee plan the programs several months in advance, list the topics, and state who is responsible. Check in advance of meetings to make sure that the persons are prepared for their part on the program. You will work closely with your 4-H leader(s) in planning and conducting programs.
3. Although you are in charge of being certain the program is ready for each meeting, it is a good idea to have other 4-H'ers in charge of various programs. This gives them a chance to help with club meetings, thus causing them to be more active club members.

## Secretary's Duties

1. Call or check the roll and keep a record of attendance.
2. Keep a record of the minutes of all meetings. Read the minutes when the president calls for them.
3. Take care of club correspondence unless corresponding secretary has been elected. Send and post notices of 4-H meetings when instructed.
4. Call meeting to order when both the president and vice-president are absent.
5. Furnish your 4-H leader and/or Extension agents with copies of club roll and reports.
6. Keep records of club: roll, minutes, programs, plan of work, etc. Provide a copy of these to the Historian for club scrapbook. Collect news articles, pictures, etc., for Historian's record.



### **Suggestions to Secretary**

1. Generally sit at front table with president. Stand when reading minutes, and sit when calling the roll.
2. Have minutes complete but briefly stated.
3. Never include personal comments and opinions in minutes.
4. If club membership is large, or if you do not know all members of the club - making it impossible to check the roll - then have someone assigned to help you with this responsibility. When new members join, their names and addresses, etc., can be secured by passing a sheet for them to sign.
5. Ask your 4-H leader(s) to help in writing minutes, preparing reports, etc.

Note: See Virginia Cooperative Extension Publication 388-024, 4-H Secretary's Record Book, for items to be considered in writing minutes and also for example of minutes.

## Treasurer's Duties

1. Keep an accurate account of all money received and deposit it in a bank in the name of 4-H club by treasurer.
2. Pay all bills on action by club and approval of club leader or agent. Checks should be signed by Treasurer and an adult leader (adult leader should not be from same family as the treasurer).
3. Keep an accurate account of all money spent.
4. Be prepared to give a report at each club meeting of money received and spent and balance in treasury.

### **Suggestions to Treasurer**

1. An inexpensive account book will be helpful to you.
2. Keep all cancelled checks and bank statements.
3. Have the account audited or approved.
4. Ask your 4-H leader(s) to help you check your records quarterly or as needed.

## Reporter's Duties

1. Write a brief report of club meetings and activities for newspapers, radio, and TV. Tell what was done and by whom.
2. Learn to write interesting news items and send them in on time.
3. Make a collection of all newspaper items referring to club for permanent records kept by secretary. Use loose leaf notebook.

### **Suggestions to Reporter**

1. Before you start writing your story, be sure you know WHO? WHAT? WHEN? WHERE? HOW? and WHY? Start with the most interesting facts. Spell correctly all names in your story. Use first name, initials, and titles.
2. Write as neatly as you can. Type, if possible, and double-space. Never write on both sides of the paper. Never use pencil.
3. Secure the names and addresses of local newspapers and dates news items are due. Send your news articles to the newspapers before that date.
4. Read newspaper reports of various clubs to get ideas that will help in writing news items.



### **Suggestions to Song Leader**

1. Always start with a familiar song.
2. Give clear instructions as to name or number of song, number of verses, and whether to stand or remain seated.
3. Be ready to lead an appropriate song on short notice. You may be called unexpectedly.
4. Enjoy what you are doing. Enjoyment is contagious.

### **Example of News Article**

Mountain View 4-H members will observe 4-H Sunday on May 20.

Plans for the observance were made at the regular monthly meeting of the club at the community center Thursday, January 20.

In cooperation with the Rev. R. S. White and the church board, club members will attend the Mountain View Presbyterian Church at the eleven o'clock service on May 20. A special section has been reserved so that all 4-H members may sit together. Some 4-H'ers will decorate the church with appropriate flowers, and others will read the Scripture, provide special music, and distribute the church bulletins. Parents of 4-H members are invited.

Another feature of the club meeting last Thursday was a discussion and demonstration on proper lighting for a study center by Mrs. R. M. Jones, project leader.

Twenty of the 24 members were present. Tom Jones, president, presided. Signed—Mary Brown, Club Reporter

### **Song Leader's Duties**

1. Select appropriate songs in advance of the 4-H meeting.
2. Lead the singing at 4-H meetings and other 4-H events.
3. Develop good singing among the group.
4. Learn and teach new songs.
5. Keep song books and music of club. Distribute and collect song books at meetings.

### **Recreation Leader's Duties**

1. Select appropriate type or form of recreation in advance of meeting - include games of various types - opening, mixers, quiet and active group games, relays, skits, stunts, musical, etc.
2. Lead the recreation at 4-H meetings and other 4-H events.
3. Help members of your 4-H club learn and enjoy many types of recreation. Teach them to lead recreation instead of doing it all yourself.
4. Serve as chairman of the recreation committee. This committee should include the song leader and two or three other club members.

### **Suggestions to Recreation Leader**

1. Always start with a familiar type of recreation.
2. Give clear instructions as to what is to be done, etc.
3. Be ready to lead appropriate recreation on short notice.
4. Be enthusiastic and enjoy what you are doing. This will encourage participation and increase enjoyment by all.
5. Have access to a book of games, stunts, relays, etc. Check with your club leader(s), or Extension agent for other ideas and materials.

## Historian's Duties

(In club with no historian, these duties are usually assumed by the club secretary or reporter.)

1. Keep a record or scrapbook of all club activities and events. Include in this names of all club members and leaders each year, copies of the club program plans, news clippings, and pictures about club events and activities, etc.
2. Work closely with the secretary and reporter in keeping a record or history of all club activities and

### **Suggestions to Historian**

1. Use a scrapbook or other appropriate means for keeping club history.
2. Ask members of your club to collect and give to you news articles, pictures, etc., of club activities and events.
3. Get from the secretary and place in club scrapbook the following:
  - a. list of club membership
  - b. list of projects selected and completed by each member
  - c. program plans for the year
4. Check closely with the club president and 4-H leader(s) to be certain you obtain information about all 4-H activities and events participated in by members of your club. Place this information in your scrapbook.
5. Keep your club scrapbook or record neat, attractive, and up-to-date.
6. Place the club scrapbook on display at club achievement programs, parent's night programs, etc.

## **Suggested Order For Conducting Meetings**

### Opening

Call to order - pledges, devotions, song

### Business

Roll call (this may be checked instead of called)

Reading and approval of minutes

Report of treasurer

Report of committees

Unfinished business

New business

### Program

Educational presentation, talks, demonstrations, skits, review of program for next meeting, etc.

Project instructions where group projects are selected by club

### Adjournment

### Recreation

Songs, games, etc. (refreshments optional)



## **Suggestions for Conducting a 4-H Meeting**

President: (stands, and, if he uses a gavel, strikes the table to get attention.) The meeting will please come to order. Let's stand for the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag and the 4-H Pledge. Please remain standing as we sing (name of song).

President: (Standing) Mary Jones will lead our devotional - devotional given

President: (Standing) Thank you, Mary. The secretary will please call the roll. (clubs may check rather than call the roll in order to save time.)

Secretary: (If roll is called, the secretary remains seated.)

President: (standing) The secretary will please read the minutes of the last meeting.

Secretary: (standing) Mr. President.

President: (call secretary by name)

Secretary: The regular meeting of the Mountain View 4-H club was held (etc.)

Respectfully submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_  
President

Ruth Brown, Secretary

President: (standing) Thank you, Ruth. You have heard the reading of the minutes. Are there any additions or corrections? (Pause) If not, they are approved as read. (If there are corrections, the president says, "they are approved as corrected.") We will now have the treasurer's report.

Treasurer: (standing) Mr. President.

President: (call treasurer by name)

Treasurer: The balance on hand last month was \$34.50.

Since then, we received a total of \$62 for sale of tickets to our 4-H Share-the-Fun program, with the following expenses: materials for decorations and posters - \$10.25; prizes awarded - \$20; leaving a profit of \$31.75 from our Share-the-Fun program. Balance on hand - \$66.25. Respectfully submitted, James Smith, Treasurer

(Note: No official action by the club is required to accept the treasurer's report.)

President: Is there any old business to come before the club? (Pause) If not, is there any new business? (Pause) If not, we will now turn the meeting over

to the program chairman.

Program Chairman: (standing) Mr. President.

President: (call program chairman by name)

Program Chairman: (Announces the program, introduces any persons on the program, and remains in charge until program is completed.)

President: Thank you,\_\_\_\_\_. That was an interesting and helpful program, and we wish to thank each of you who took part. Are there any announcements? If not, the meeting is adjourned. (If gavel is used, the president should strike the table once to declare meeting officially adjourned.)

## **How to Make and Pass a Motion**

Motions are made during the business session of the meeting. To make a motion, raise your hand and wait until the president calls your name. This is called "obtaining the floor." Then state the motion, "I move that, etc."

A motion must be seconded by another member before it is discussed or voted upon. Any member may second it by saying, "I second the motion." This can be done without rising or addressing the president. If no one immediately seconds a motion, the president should ask, "Is there a second to the motion?" If a motion is not seconded, the president declares the motion lost.

After a motion has been properly made and seconded, the president generally repeats the motion and asks, "Is there any discussion?" After a reasonable length of time for discussion, the president puts the motion to a vote by first stating the motion, as "The motion has been made and seconded that, etc." Then, "All in favor of this motion say, 'Aye'." (Pause for the vote.) "All opposed, 'No'." The president then announces, "The motion is carried" or "The motion is lost," as the case may be. During a lengthy discussion or after reasonable length of time has been given to discussion, any member may call for a vote by saying, "Question." This may be done without standing or obtaining the floor. The vote is then taken in the usual manner. Most motions require a two-thirds vote for approval.

If the vote was taken vocally ("Aye's" and "No's") and was close, the president may ask the members to vote by standing. This permits counting first those in favor of the motion and then those against it. If the vote was taken vocally and was close, any member may call for a re-vote by calling for "a division of the house." (This may be done without obtaining the floor, but must be done before another motion has been stated.) If "a division of the house" is called for, the president again takes the vote by having the members vote by standing.

After a motion has been properly made and seconded, a motion may be made to amend the motion. If this is seconded, it takes precedence over the original motion and must be voted on first. Then a vote must be taken on the original motion as amended. An amendment requires only a majority vote for approval.

Only one motion can be on the floor at one time, with the exception of an amendment motion, as explained above. Other motions are out of order.

## **Election of Officers**

Election of officers occurs annually, unless otherwise specified. Elections can be held at any regular meeting to fill vacancies.

A nominating committee is usually appointed to nominate a slate of officers (one person for each office to be filled). This usually results in a more representative set of officers. When the committee makes its report, the president asks if there are any other nominations. They may then be made from the floor. The committee's nominations are treated just as if made by members from the floor, no vote being taken on accepting them. Nominations do not have to be seconded.

When the nominations have been completed or when a reasonable time has been given for nominations, the president may ask, "If there are no other nominations, is there a motion that the nominations be closed?" After obtaining the floor by addressing the president and being recognized, a member may say, "I move that the nominations be closed." This motion must be seconded and approved by vote.

After the nominations have been closed, a limited time is usually given for those making nominations to state the qualifications of their candidates. Voting then takes place. Vote in the order of nominations. Usually the candidate receiving the most votes is considered elected.

## **Committees**

A committee (2 or more persons) is usually used for preliminary work in the preparation of matter for action by the club. This saves time in club meetings, usually assures more effective results, and also provides training and opportunities for more members. The number and kinds of committees may vary but are



classified as:

1. Standing committees appointed for a definite time, as a session or a year, such as Executive, Program, Recreation, Membership, etc.
2. Special committees—appointed for a special purpose, such as tours, exhibits, etc.

With the exception of the executive committee (composed of the officers, with the 4-H leaders as ex-officio members), all committees are appointed by the president. Unless otherwise specified, the first named on a committee is chairman. His/her duties are: (1) call a meeting of the committee; (2) have discussion and action on question referred to committee; and (3) make report at next club meeting on the recommendations of the committee.

### Parliamentary Terms

*The House* - the official meeting of the 4-H club.

*The Chair* - the presiding officer.

*Minutes* - the official record of work done in a meeting.

*Motion* - a proposal that a certain action be taken by the club.

*Second the Motion* - to approve a motion that has been made.

*Amend a Motion* - modify or change a motion that has been made and seconded.

*The Question* - the motion before the house.

*Unfinished Business* - business carried over from the previous meeting or meetings.

*New Business* - business started in the meeting now in session.

*To Refer to a Committee* - to place certain work in the hands of a small committee which must report at a future meeting.

*Standing Committee* - a committee appointed by the president to carry on some regular or permanent work of the club or the organization.

Example: Executive, Program, Membership.

*Special Committee* - a committee appointed by the chair to perform a special service for the club or organization.

*Pro Tem* - "for the time being." This is an abbreviation of the Latin phrase, "pro tempore."

Example: "She is secretary pro tem" means that she is acting in place of the secretary.)

*To Obtain the Floor* - to obtain from the presiding officer the right to speak.

*To Put the Question* - to take the vote.

### How to Use the Flag

1. It is the universal custom to display the flag only from sunrise to sunset on buildings and on stationary flagstaffs in the open. However, the flag may be displayed at night upon special occasions when it is desired to produce a patriotic effect.
2. The flag should be hoisted briskly and lowered ceremoniously.
3. The flag should not be displayed on days when the weather is inclement.
4. The flag should be displayed during school days in or near every schoolhouse.
5. The flag, when carried in a procession with another flag or flags, should be either on the marching right; that is, the flag's own right; or, if there is a line of other flags, in front of the center of that line.
6. The flag should not be displayed on a float in a parade except from a staff or so suspended that its folds fall as free as though the flag were staffed.
7. The flag should not be draped over the hood, top, sides, or back of a vehicle or of a train or a boat.
8. No other flag or pennant should be placed above, or, if on the same level, to the right of the flag of the United States of America.
9. When the flag is displayed over the middle of the street, it should be suspended vertically with the union to the north in an east and west street or to the east in a north and south street.
10. When used on a speaker's platform, the flag, if displayed flat, should be displayed above and behind the speaker. When displayed from a staff in a church or public auditorium, if it is displayed in the chancel of a church, or on the speaker's platform in a public auditorium, the flag should occupy the position of honor and be placed at the clergyman's or speaker's right as he/she faces the congregation or audience. But when the flag is displayed from a staff in a church or public auditorium elsewhere than in the chancel or on the platform, it shall be placed in the position of honor at the right of the congregation or audience as they face the chancel or platform. Any other flag should be placed on the opposite side.







**You and every 4-H member should know the following:**

**The National 4-H Emblem -**

is the four-leaf clover with the letter “H” on each leaf. The four “H’s” represent the four-fold development of Head, Heart, Hands, and Health.

**The National 4-H Motto -**

“To make the best better”

**The National 4-H Pledge -**

“I pledge  
my head to clearer thinking,  
my heart to greater loyalty,  
my hands to larger service,  
my health to better living for my club, my community, my country and my world.”

**The national 4-H colors -**

green and white

White is characteristic of purity and green is nature’s most common color in the great out-of-doors. It is emblematic of springtime, life, and youth.

**The National 4-H Creed -**

I believe in 4-H club work for the opportunity it will give me to become a useful citizen.  
I believe in the training of my head for the power it will give me to think, to plan, and to reason.  
I believe in the training of my heart for the nobleness it will give me to become kind, sympathetic, and true.  
I believe in the training of my hands for the dignity it will give me to be helpful, useful, and skillful.  
I believe in the training of my health for the strength it will give me to enjoy life, to resist disease, and to work efficiently.  
I believe in my country, my state, and my community, and in my responsibility for their development.  
In all these things I believe, and I am willing to dedicate my efforts to their fulfillment.