Conduct Businesslike Meetings

A cooperative is a business so its meetings should be conducted in a businesslike manner.

- Policy should be established for determining a reasonable quorum for membership and board meetings. A quorum is the specific or minimum percentage of members required to be present to conduct official business.
- Quorum requirements are sometimes written into State statutes, but should be discussed in the bylaws. As membership expands, the percentage quorum increases the actual number needed. Setting the quorum too high increases the risk of not getting enough member participants to deal with business matters needing attention.
- Parliamentary procedure is appropriate for orderly democratic group action. It enables the chair to lead a group smoothly and efficiently in determining the wishes of the majority while protecting the rights of the minority.

A good meeting results in carrying out several successive steps:

1. Planning ahead
2. Involving members
3. Following a published agenda
4. Following through on meeting actions

Some material adapted from USDA Rural Development publications on cooperative development