

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