

CHAPTER 4

Guidelines for Keeping Records and Council Minutes

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Minutes are the record of action and decisions of 4-H Council meetings. An "official" set of minutes should be kept by the secretary for easy reference during Council meetings. Council members will likely keep their own copies of minutes in their Council notebook. If your county hosts a 4-H webpage, it is an excellent opportunity to have a file for Council agendas and minutes so the entire 4-H family will have access to the same information.

Meeting Preparation

Approval of the minutes of the past meeting assures that all members, whether in attendance or not, have current information.

A time saver--Have the minutes of the last meeting sent with the meeting announcement and the agenda at least five days before the meeting date. Members can then read them carefully, be reminded of assignments they may have, and be prepared for discussion. Dispense with reading the minutes at the meeting and save the time for discussion.

Council members should be attentive to topics that need follow-up.

- Council decisions--What has been the follow-up action to implement the decision?
- Unfinished business--Is the Council prepared to take further action?

Writing the Minutes--suggestions for the secretary

The minutes should be brief and concise. Include:

- Attendance—those present and not present
- Reports given--include the key points if appropriate
- Motions made, action taken, including names of people who make and seconded motions. Include key points that may be of value in supporting the action of the Council. Do not include what each person said.
- Resolutions and decisions reached by consensus (no vote taken, but agreement by the group to act)

Minutes from Past Years

The secretary's records should include an "official" copy of the minutes (with corrections noted) for the past three to five years. Again, keeping files of such records as archives on a website is easy and efficient. Older records should be moved to the 4-H Council archives or historical file located in the Extension office. While reference is seldom made to past records, they do allow for study of past actions of the Council.

Council Minutes and Agendas

Insert a copy of current 4-H Council minutes and agendas.