

Annual 4-H Club Program Plan  
Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Plans



# A Guide for 4-H Club Officers

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**Virginia Cooperative Extension**

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## Introduction

Being elected an officer of your 4-H club is an honor. Serving as an officer is a valuable life experience; the success of your club depends on you as an officer. The purpose of this guide is to help you to know what your duties are and how to perform them well. Study and discuss your duties with your 4-H officer team, 4-H leaders, your parents or guardians, and Virginia Cooperative Extension agents.

You and the other officers of your club will want to meet with your 4-H leader(s) for officer planning and training, attend county/city officer training meetings, and also attend county/city 4-H council meetings. You will talk often with your club leader(s) to get ideas and advice.

This guide will help you perform your duties in an organized and effective manner, and according to parliamentary law. For more information on parliamentary law, study “Roberts Rules of Order,” available online at <https://robertsrules.org/> or in book form.

## Club Definition

A 4-H club is an organized group of at least five young people and two trained adult volunteers who meet regularly for a long-term, progressive series of educational experiences. 4-H clubs must be chartered and renewed annually (see additional details below).

## Suggested Timeline for Officer Elections

The Virginia 4-H year runs from Oct. 1 to Sept. 30. To be sure officers are in place for the new 4-H year, it is recommended that clubs elect officers at the September meeting. When the October meeting begins, the new leadership will be in place. Any new members to the club are then able to enjoy club business and programming without the delay of officer elections.

## 4-H Constitution and Bylaws

In Virginia, every 4-H club is required to have a constitution and bylaws. The constitution and bylaws describe the organizational and governing structure of a 4-H club. Just like the Constitution of the United States, the 4-H club constitution is the highest law of the club. The constitution describes the purpose of the club, basic principles that govern the club, who can be members, how often the club meets, etc.

The bylaws are secondary principles that govern the club. Bylaws describe in detail the steps the club must follow in order to conduct business.

For more information, including writing tips and a sample club constitution and bylaws, see [“Virginia 4-H Constitution and Bylaws,” VCE publication 388-211.](#)

## 4-H Club Charters

All 4-H clubs and groups are required to have a charter signed by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and the Director of the National 4-H Headquarters and issued by the state 4-H office. This requirement includes 4-H Cloverbud groups, community clubs, project clubs, after-school clubs, and military clubs. For more information about the requirements for and privileges of a Virginia 4-H Charter, see [“4-H Charters: Frequently Asked Questions,” VCE publication 388-070.](#)

To apply for a new charter, work in partnership with your unit Extension office to complete the request online. Paper-based charter application forms may be submitted to unit offices, which will then enter information into Google Forms. The state 4-H office will mail the charter to the unit office according to guidelines set by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Charters must be renewed annually with the unit Extension office at the beginning of the 4-H year.

### **Minimum requirements for a 4-H charter for clubs include:**

1. Membership of at least five 4-H members (preferably both boys and girls).
2. At least two enrolled and trained adult volunteer leaders
3. Online enrollment must be completed annually.
4. Elected and trained youth officers. This guide can serve as a reference for training, but in-person, hands-on training should also take place.
5. An adopted club constitution and bylaws (see [“Virginia 4-H Club Constitution and Bylaws,” VCE publication 388-211](#)).
6. A written annual club program plan (see [“Virginia 4-H Club Annual Goals and Program Plan,” VCE publication 388-210](#)).

### **Requirements for the annual 4-H club charter renewal include**

1. Continue to fulfill the six minimum requirements for an initial 4-H Charter (see above).
2. Submit a 4-H Club and Organization Civil Rights Compliance Form (see [VCE publication 490-156](#)).
3. If handling funds, submit a 4-H Club Annual Audit Report, found in the 4-H Treasurer’s Record Book (see [VCE publication 388-025](#)).
4. If property is owned, submit a 4-H Property Inventory Report (see [VCE publication 388-140](#)).

## To be a good 4-H member and officer, you should

*(Check yourself with this list)*

- Be 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 the 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.
- Invite others to join your 4-H club and work to increase diversity of members. Welcome new 4-H members and visitors to your club.
- Ask questions during the meetings so you understand everything. If you miss a meeting, be sure to find out what happened at the meeting.
- Listen to what others have to say even if you don't agree with their opinions. It allows you to learn about different viewpoints.
- Read the 4-H club constitution, bylaws, and charter so you understand the rules of meetings and the importance of the club being chartered.
- Reach out to more reserved members who may be waiting to be asked to take on a role in the club.

## To conduct a good meeting

- Arrange the meeting room with a head table for the officers (at least the president and secretary, seated to the president's left). A podium is optional, but can be helpful. Include basic meeting supplies such as a gavel, flag set (U.S. and 4-H) and agenda. Consider storing meeting supplies in a small bag or box that is easily transported to meetings.
- Start and end meeting on time. Generally, a 4-H business meeting should not last longer than 20 minutes. Then you have time for a program. There are exceptions to this timeframe, but keeping the meeting orderly will help move the process along so there is more time for activities.
- Choose a suitable meeting place that is comfortable, productive, and complies with accessibility guidelines in the Americans with Disabilities Act. Arrange seats so that all members can see and hear the head table. Consider temperature, lighting, and outside noise. Family members may sit at the back or around the perimeter, but be quiet and attentive, not distracting.

## A Guide for 4-H Club Officers

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- Have an appropriate, planned program. The vice president is responsible for ensuring that guests are invited and program presenters are prepared and properly introduced.
- Conduct the meeting according to parliamentary procedure. This guide provides information about parliamentary procedure, and each Extension unit should offer an annual officer training workshop that includes more information.
- Plan for several members to participate in each program, and for all members to participate during the year.
- Follow the annual Club Plan of Work, which should include meetings, community service, fundraisers, socials, recreation, field trips, competitions, etc. Examples can be found in the [“Virginia 4-H Club Annual Goals and Program Plan,” VCE publication 388-210.](#)

## The Job of a 4-H Officer

As an officer of your 4-H Club, you have opportunities and responsibilities that other club members don't have. Learn what these are and be prepared to meet them. The following suggestions will help you.

In general, officers should

- Participate fully in as many club activities as possible.
- Serve as a role model for other members.
- Communicate regularly with your 4-H club leaders and the local Extension office.
- Attend 4-H club officer training annually.
- Work as a team for the good of the club. Set goals for the club.
- Encourage and welcome all members to participate.

## Performing as a Team of Officers

- Remember, there is no “I” in TEAM. To be a success, your officer team must work together.
- Communicate with each other on a regular basis. Everyone on a team may not agree all of the time, but you must know how to work out differences to be a team.
- Plan meetings together and provide input on the agenda. Consider members' reactions to potential business, be prepared for questions, and plan ahead to cover details of club business.
- Set a good example for others, both as an individual and as a team of young people working together for the good of the club.
- Set “S.M.A.R.T.” goals for your club as officers. S.M.A.R.T. goals are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely. Examples of such goals are setting a specific dollar value for a fundraiser goal; setting a number of new members to recruit; or setting a specific timeline for increasing promotion and marketing efforts of the club. There are times when goals need to be revisited and adjusted. That's where good communication and planning come into play.
- Call on the club leader if there's any question or if you feel you are losing control of the meeting. 4-H volunteers are not there to do everything for you, but they are there to support and guide you and handle situations that require an adult.
- Make sure you start and end the meeting on time. Time is valuable.

## Officer Responsibilities and Skills Needed

Responsibilities of 4-H Club President	Skills Needed by the Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Set the agenda with input from leader and officers. Remember to check with your Extension office for unit, district, and state level events.</li> <li>▪ Check on arrangements for meeting. This includes checking with your club leader(s). Be sure each person listed on program is ready.</li> <li>▪ Preside over all meetings.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Call meetings to order and adjourn meetings at scheduled time.</li> <li>♦ Follow the order of procedure recommended for conducting club meetings.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Appoint committees as needed.</li> <li>▪ Cast deciding vote in case of a tie.</li> <li>▪ Sign the approved minutes of each meeting once the club votes to accept them.</li> <li>▪ Work with treasurer to ensure your club follows Virginia Cooperative Extension funds handling policy, and that it votes on and approves all club expenditures.</li> <li>▪ Be familiar with the duties of other officers and all committees, and see that they perform their duties.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Knowledgeable of parliamentary procedure</li> <li>▪ Good speaker, confident</li> <li>▪ Able to keep control of a large group</li> <li>▪ Responsible</li> <li>▪ Experience with club activities, good attendance</li> <li>▪ Creative, able to think of new ideas</li> <li>▪ Organized</li> </ul>
Responsibilities of 4-H Club Vice President	Skills Needed by the Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Learn the duties of the president, and be prepared to perform these duties on short notice.</li> <li>▪ Ensure committees complete tasks as needed.</li> <li>▪ Serve as chairman of the program committee. Work with the club leader and officer team to complete an annual Plan of Work that shows club programs, community service projects, and club goals for the year. (<a href="#">Virginia 4-H Club Annual Goals and Program Plan,” VCE publication 388-210.”</a> provides additional information and a template.)</li> <li>▪ Arrive early to club meetings to greet your guest speaker or help the program leader set up for your meeting. Introduce the speaker to the club. Ensure the secretary sends a thank-you note to any guest speakers, or you take this responsibility.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Knowledgeable of parliamentary procedure</li> <li>▪ Actively involved in club activities</li> <li>▪ Creative, knowledgeable of the local community</li> <li>▪ Responsible</li> <li>▪ Ability to follow through</li> <li>▪ Works well with other youth and adults</li> <li>▪ Organized</li> </ul>

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Responsibilities of 4-H Club Secretary	Skills Needed by the Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Work with the local Extension unit to maintain club roll. (All members must enroll/re-enroll annually.) Include names and contact information, including phone number and email.</li> <li>▪ Keep record of attendance, either through roll call or a sign-in sheet. Attendance records can be kept on paper or electronically, such as in a spreadsheet.</li> <li>▪ Keep a record of the minutes of all meetings. Minutes should include all action and important details, but not all discussion. Read the minutes when the president calls for them.</li> <li>▪ Take care of club correspondence unless corresponding secretary has been elected. Send and post notices of 4-H meetings when instructed.</li> <li>▪ Call meeting to order when both the president and vice president are absent.</li> <li>▪ Furnish your 4-H leader and/or Extension agents with copies of club roll, minutes, and other reports.</li> <li>▪ Provide club records to historian when asked.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Organized</li> <li>▪ Neat</li> <li>▪ Access to a computer and email</li> <li>▪ Good speaker</li> <li>▪ Good listener</li> <li>▪ Excellent attendance</li> <li>▪ Responsible</li> <li>▪ Note taking skills; good writer</li> </ul>

Responsibilities of 4-H Club Treasurer	Skills Needed by the Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Follow Virginia Tech and Virginia Cooperative Extension funds handling policies as listed in the 4-H Treasurer's Record Book, VCE publication 388-025. Keep an accurate account of all money received and spent in the treasurer's book or a similar record-keeping system.</li> <li>▪ Initiate payment of bills on action by club and approval of club leader or agent. Approval forms should be signed by treasurer and an adult leader (adult leader should not be from the same family as the treasurer).</li> <li>▪ Be prepared to give a report at each club meeting consisting of beginning balance, money received, funds spent, and the ending balance in the club account.</li> <li>▪ Reconcile your records with the monthly Quicken statement sent to your club by the Extension unit staff. Work with club leadership to have the club treasury records audited annually.</li> <li>▪ Work with club leadership to create an annual budget for the club.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Has parental consent (Note: Adults who handle funds must complete background check and volunteer enrollment. )</li> <li>▪ Organized</li> <li>▪ Excellent attention to detail</li> <li>▪ Completes tasks in a timely manner</li> <li>▪ Stays current, not a procrastinator</li> <li>▪ Very responsible</li> <li>▪ Trustworthy</li> <li>▪ Follows directions well</li> </ul>

*Note: There are two different types of 4-H club accounts. Most units establish Club Agency accounts within Virginia Tech, so the rules written here are for those accounts. There are a few units with individual 501c3 accounts for 4-H; in those cases, the treasurer's actions will need to be in accordance with the 501c3 group's policies.*

Responsibilities of 4-H Club Reporter	Skills Needed by the Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Write a brief report of club meetings and activities for local news media, including newspapers, blogs, radio, or TV. Tell what was done and by whom. Submit articles in a timely manner.</li> <li>▪ Take photographs and/or videos of club activities and share with news media outlets or on social media. Be sure that subjects have signed VCE media releases (option on 4-H enrollment, 4-H Health History form, or VCE form 388-054).</li> <li>▪ Maintain a collection of printed stories and file with club records annually.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Creative</li> <li>▪ Keeps good records</li> <li>▪ Access to a camera</li> <li>▪ Strong writing skills</li> <li>▪ Active in club</li> </ul>

Responsibilities of 4-H Club Historian	Skills Needed by the Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Create a scrapbook or other record of all club activities and events. Document with photos, news clippings, etc.</li> <li>▪ Work closely with the club secretary and reporter to include a club roster, reports, and other documents that describe the club year.</li> <li>▪ Follow VCE policies related to media releases, use of online publications, and social media.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Creative</li> <li>▪ Keeps good records</li> <li>▪ Access to a camera</li> <li>▪ Strong writing skills</li> <li>▪ Active in club</li> </ul>

*Note: If the club does not elect a historian, the reporter assumes these duties.*

## Special Leadership Roles

Not all clubs have these roles, but here are some ideas if you are looking to involve more youth in leadership or if you have a large membership and have a need for such leadership.

Responsibilities of 4-H Club Song Leader	Skills Needed by the Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lead a song or two at each meeting, either as an opening icebreaker or a closing action.</li> <li>▪ Select 4-H appropriate songs in advance of the meeting.</li> <li>▪ Practice the song at home so you can lead with confidence.</li> <li>▪ Include songs that are active and easy to learn, including “repeat after me” style, or are sung in rounds.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enthusiastic</li> <li>▪ Resourceful</li> <li>▪ Engaging</li> <li>▪ Active</li> </ul>

Responsibilities of 4-H Club Recreation Leader	Skills Needed by the Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Plan and lead a recreational activity for each meeting, such as icebreakers, problem-solving challenges, group games, skits, etc.</li> <li>▪ Guide members to be active and engaged in club activities.</li> <li>▪ Select activities that are inclusive of all abilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Playful</li> <li>▪ Inclusive</li> <li>▪ Perceptive</li> <li>▪ Engaging</li> <li>▪ Creative</li> <li>▪ Spontaneous</li> </ul>

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<b>Responsibilities of 4-H Club Service Learning Coordinator</b>	<b>Skills Needed by the Officer</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Chair the community service committee to plan opportunities for members to give back to the local community.</li><li>▪ Communicate with adult volunteers to arrange details for club service projects.</li><li>▪ Maintain a budget for service projects that have associated costs.</li><li>▪ Practice these skills: organization, communication, planning, ability to work with adults.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Aware of community needs</li><li>▪ Responsible</li><li>▪ Organized</li><li>▪ Communicative</li><li>▪ Thoughtful</li><li>▪ Empathetic</li><li>▪ Team player</li><li>▪ Able to delegate</li></ul>

<b>Responsibilities of Unit/County 4-H Council or Advisory Committee Representative</b>	<b>Skills Needed by the Officer</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Attend unit meetings, representing the interests of the club.</li><li>▪ Participate in and help plan unit-level 4-H events.</li><li>▪ Inform your club of unit council/committee initiatives and activities.</li><li>▪ Practice these skills: leadership, communication, gathering ideas from others, ability to partner with adults.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Represents others' ideas</li><li>▪ Good listener</li><li>▪ Regular attendance</li><li>▪ Thoughtful</li><li>▪ Speaks up in a group</li></ul>

<b>Responsibilities of Sergeant at Arms/Parliamentarian</b>	<b>Skills Needed by the Officer</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Assist the president in keeping order.</li><li>▪ Ensure proper procedures are followed for conducting club business.</li><li>▪ Lead the pledges if asked.</li><li>▪ Help count votes during meetings.</li><li>▪ Distribute and collect items during the meetings.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Assertive</li><li>▪ Knowledgeable of procedures</li><li>▪ Authoritative</li><li>▪ Fair</li></ul>

## Resources for Officers

### President

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#### Suggestions for Success

- Stand when speaking to the group. Remain seated when other officers or committees are giving reports. If audience members have questions or comments after these reports, stand and manage the order of speakers.
- Remain impartial throughout discussions. In order for the president to take part in the discussion, the vice president or another officer must lead the meeting and continue doing so until the subject being discussed has completed (either voted on or tabled).
- Notify the vice president in advance if you cannot attend a meeting so the VP can be prepared. If the vice president is not available, the secretary is next in line to chair.
- Choose the best method for members to cast their votes. This can include voice (most common), raising a hand or standing when it is difficult to determine a close vote, roll call (if it is important to know how each individual voted; rarely used in 4-H, more so in government), or secret ballot (most often used for officer elections in 4-H).

#### Resource: Sample Meeting Agenda

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

4-H Pledge

Roll Call (aloud or sign-in sheets)

Reading and Approval of Minutes—Secretary

Correspondence

Treasurer's Report

Committee Reports

    Standing Committees

    Special Committees

Unfinished Business

New Business

Adjournment

Program

Social Time and Refreshments

#### Resource: Room Setup Considerations

Officers should sit at the front of the room at a head table.

Club members should face the officers, either:

    Auditorium style, where there are only chairs.

    Classroom style, where members are seated at tables facing the front.

    U-shaped, where members' chairs are arranged in a U-shape, facing each other, with the officers' table at the open end of the "U."

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Round tables may be used, but are better for program activities, not a business meeting.

Place the flags at the front of the room, either behind the officers if using large auditorium-style flags on base stands, or on the head table if using a desk set of flags. (Your Extension office can order flag sets for your club.)

Auditorium-style U.S. flags should be to the speaker's right, the audience's left. The 4-H flag should be displayed on the speaker's left, the audience's right. The U.S. flag should have prominence.

Offer seating for family members at the back of the room or along the perimeter.

Make sure persons with disabilities are accommodated to participate in meeting activities.

Consider using a microphone if your meeting room is exceptionally large, if you have a large group, or if an officer is soft-spoken.

## Vice President

### Suggestions for Success

- Read, know, and practice the president's duties as listed above so you can assume leadership when needed.
- Work hard to involve officers and club members in committees and club planning efforts. Make sure everyone's voice is heard. You may need to reach out to more reserved members who may be waiting to be asked to take on a role in the club.
- Work with fellow officers and club leaders to complete the annual Club Plan of Work (see figure 1 for an example) and submit it to the unit Extension office.

### Resource: Sample 4-H Club Plan of Work

#### Annual 4-H Club Program Plan

Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Date	Time	Place	Plans	Responsible persons
Sept	6:30	Ext Ofc	Officer Elections	Leader + Officers
Oct	6:30	Ext Ofc	Parliamentary Procedure Wkshp	VP → Ext Agent
Nov	4:00	Community Kitchen	Prepare Thanksgiving dinner for family	Comm. Svc. Chair
Dec	6:30	Ext Ofc	Winter Social	Committee
Jan	6:30	Ext Ofc	Public Speaking Workshop	Young Alumni
Feb	6:00	Ext Ofc	Presentations Contests	Leader
Mar	6:30	Ext Ofc	Healthy Living / Yoga Speaker	Vice President
Apr	5:00	Fairgrounds	Spring Clean-up Service Project	Comm Svc Chair
May	6:30	Ext Ofc	Poster Making Clinic	Mrs. Jones
Jun	All Day	TBD	Field Trip to National Zoo	
Jul		County Fair	Club Display, Animal + Home Arts Entries	All + Fair Committee
Aug	No Meeting - Back to School Preparations			

Figure 1: An example of an annual 4-H club program plan. This should be completed at the beginning of the 4-H year.

## Secretary

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### Suggestions for Success

Sit to the president's left during the meeting so you can ask questions when necessary and provide clarification for motions stated.

- Write, read, and store minutes that show club action, such as reports given, motions made, votes conducted, etc. Minutes should not include all discussion points, nor should they include the secretary's personal comments or thoughts. Remain objective. Minutes may be typed or handwritten (see figure 2).
- Take notes during the meeting. Do not rely on your memory.
- Consider writing minutes soon after the club meeting while the details are still fresh in your mind.
- Organize your notes, minutes, and roll sheet in the [4-H Secretary's Record Book \(VCE publication 388-024\)](#) or in a three-ring binder or pocket folder.
- Using technology such as email, consider distributing the minutes so absent members may know what business occurred. The minutes will still need to be approved at the next club meeting, and signed by the president and secretary once adopted.
- Work with the officer team and leader to determine a communication plan for the club. Plan how you will distribute messages such as meeting dates, last-minute changes to the meeting (such as might occur due to inclement weather), etc.
- Consider creating a club email list. One option available through Virginia Tech and your unit Extension staff is a Google Group; the address would look like: [clubname-g@vt.edu](#).

### Resource: Sample Meeting Minutes, Typed

The Helping Hands 4-H Club met Monday, Nov. 3, at the Glendon Community Center. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by President Zara Ali. Heather Smith led the Pledge of Allegiance and Robert Whim led the 4-H Pledge. Secretary Kajiya Jones took roll, with 14 members present and two absent. Treasurer Adam Whitlock reported an ending balance of \$517.19.

There were no committee reports nor unfinished business. In new business, Adam Whitlock made a motion to contribute \$50 to the Unit 4-H Council to host an Achievement Night picnic. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. Next, Heather Smith moved that club leader Mrs. Jackson be allowed to purchase craft supplies up to \$30 for the next club meeting and be reimbursed for those expenses. The motion was seconded and passed 13-1.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m. The Jackson family provided snacks and City Council member Adrian Rockwell conducted a program on Parliamentary Procedure.

Respectfully submitted,

Kajiya Jones

Helping Hands 4-H Club Secretary

### Resource: Sample Meeting Minutes, Handwritten

The Jumping Jack 4-H club met on Thursday, April 11, at Peak Elementary School. President Lindsay called the meeting to order at 3:45 pm. Vice-President Adam led the pledges. Secretary Imani called roll asking members to answer with their favorite flavor of ice cream. There were nine members and three leaders present. Treasurer Jackson reported \$41.52 in club funds; there were no transactions this month.

In unfinished business, Jayden moved to cancel the June meeting due to a conflict with 4-H Junior Camp. Alison seconded, there was no discussion, + the motion carried. There was no new business to discuss. The business meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m. so members could take a hike on the school walking trail and identify springtime flora.

Teen leader Lucinda provided snacks.

Figure 2: An example of handwritten meeting minutes.

## Treasurer

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### Suggestions for Success

- Keep all treasurer paperwork (Quicken statements, copies of invoices, copies of deposits, etc.) in an organized fashion, such as a three-ring binder. Consider page protectors with pockets for uniquely sized papers.
- The [4-H Treasurer's Record Book \(VCE publication 388-025\)](#) should be completed to keep track of income and expenses.
- Select an enrolled, background-checked, trained adult 4-H volunteer not from your family to mentor you and check your records each month. This may be your club leader or another enrolled volunteer approved by the unit Extension staff.

**Resource: Sample Treasurer’s Report**

**Helping Hands 4-H Club Treasurer’s Report**

[month, year]

<b>Beginning Balance</b>	\$450.00
<b>Income</b>	
Donation from Midstate Business Supply	<u>\$100.00</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$100.00
<b>Expenses</b>	
Entry fee, Town of Glendon Parade	\$15.00
Snacks for Service Project at Nursing Home	<u>\$17.81</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$32.81
<b>Ending Balance</b>	\$517.19

**Predicted Expenses; Club Vote and 4-H Payment Processing Form Required:**

- Donation to Unit 4-H Achievement Picnic
- Reimbursement to Club Leader for Craft Supplies

**Reporter**

**Suggestions for Success**

- Type concise, grammatically correct articles with interesting facts that tell the 4-H story.
- Establish a relationship with local media outlets and follow their suggestions for ways to get published.
- Take clear, well-composed photos that tell a story.
- Work with your local Extension staff or volunteers to publish club news on social media outlets. Seek their guidance so you meet VCE guidelines.

**Resource: Sample News Article**

**4-H Club Visits Nursing Home, Sparking Memories of 4-H Past**

Helping Hands 4-H Club members visited Clovergreen Nursing Home in Glendon on Oct. 6 in celebration of National 4-H Week. Nearly 25 youth were present to distribute green and white carnations to residents.

During the in-room visits, club members shared their own 4-H story and were met with stories of the residents’ own experiences in 4-H. “I was surprised to meet a lady who had the same 4-H project as me, baking, over 50 years ago,” said Brianna Jones.

“I met a man who used to grow vegetables in 4-H and sell them to his neighbors. His son was in 4-H and he was one of the first members to become a 4-H All Star from their city,” said Jordan Rogers.

Carnations were purchased with funds raised by the club during a spring bake sale fundraiser.

Helping Hands 4-H Club will meet again Nov. 1 at 4 p.m. at the Glendon Community Center.

For more information about 4-H in [name of unit], please contact [Extension office phone number].

[Include the VCE indicia, statement of non-discrimination, and ADA statement with all distributed materials. Unit Extension staff can provide you with this wording as it changes periodically. Also include photos of club activities and attempt to get those published.]

### Historian

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#### Suggestions for Success

- Consider your options between a traditional scrapbook or one created electronically and printed commercially.
- Ask other club members to contribute photos and memorabilia.
- Embellish photos and pages with stickers, colored paper, and other ornamentations, but don't overpower the club story and documentation of the year.
- Look for a competition in which to enter your club scrapbook, such as the county fair or through the local Extension office.
- Display your book at your club/unit's annual recognition event.

## Parliamentary Procedure: Six Parts of a Motion

A motion starts with an idea. After the idea is formalized as a motion, it requires a second, discussion, a vote, and action.

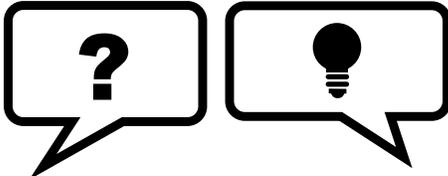
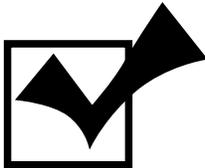
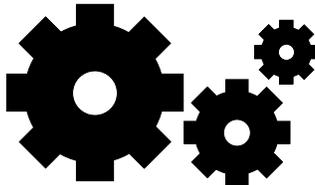
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>IDEA</b></p> <p>What is it you want your club to discuss? Remember to keep ideas relevant to and appropriate for the club.</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MOTION</b></p> <p>This formalizes your idea. After being recognized by the President, start your motion stating, "I move..." and then complete a sentence relaying your idea to the group.</p> 
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SECOND</b></p> <p>A second is needed to discuss a motion. A second doesn't necessarily mean you agree with the motion, but that you agree it's worth talking about further.</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>DISCUSSION</b></p> <p>This is where you debate the merits of a motion. Discuss details. Argue for or against. The President must recognize each speaker and maintain order.</p> 
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>VOTE</b></p> <p>Each club member in good standing gets one vote on the matter. The President restates the motion, "All those in favor of _____, say 'aye'. All those opposed, 'nay'." If a voice vote is too hard to distinguish, members should raise their hand or stand to be counted for the vote.</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ACTION</b></p> <p>This is the part 4-H clubs sometimes forget. Once a motion is voted and passed, it must be followed through upon. The president should delegate a member or committee to ensure action is taken as the club directed.</p> 

Figure 3: The six parts of a motion.

## Key Phrases Used in Parliamentary Procedure

Phrase	What it Means
Obtain the floor	Recognized to speak by the president.
I move...	This is the action statement that starts any motion.
I second	This motion deserves to be discussed in our meeting. One's "second" does not necessarily mean that the person agrees with the motion or will vote yes in the end.
Question	I want to end discussion. However, one person cannot end discussion. The president should ask if the membership is ready to vote. If a member still has discussion to contribute, he or she can. For the membership to force the closure of discussion, there must be a formal motion to end discussion and a two-thirds yes vote. Speakers must be recognized by the president before speaking.
Aye (pronounced "I")	Yes. In favor of.
Nay	No. Disagree with. Not in favor of.
Majority Vote	When more than 50% of the membership votes the same way
Table	To delay/postpone discussion or action on a motion, reintroducing the topic in the "Unfinished Business" portion of the agenda during a future meeting. Caution: Use this function only when a definite timeline is established. If the timeframe is unclear, it is best to defeat the motion (vote no) and establish a new motion during a later meeting.
Refer to Committee	<p>Sometimes there are too many details surrounding an issue to effectively discuss in a club meeting. The president can appoint a committee of three to five members to research a topic, discuss the advantages and drawbacks, and report back during a meeting, either with more information or a recommendation to the club. If a committee makes a motion during a meeting, a second is not required because the committee members are essentially the "second" needed.</p> <p>There are standing committees that are established to consider business or act throughout the year. Examples include financial, community service, and programs. Special committees are those appointed for a specific project, term, or idea. Examples include a town parade entry, club apparel selection, or bylaws revisions.</p>
Amend a Motion	Offer alternative (different) or additional (extra) language to an original motion. To do so, once recognized by the president, state, "I move to amend the motion by [...state the desired word change]." The amendment requires a second, discussion, and positive vote of two-thirds in order to approve. If the amendment passes, then the original motion as amended gets voted on. If the amendment doesn't pass, the original motion is still "on the floor" and needs to be voted on.
Abstain	Refrain from voting. (This is most often done when there is a conflict of interest, such as the club is deciding whether to buy picnic food from your family's delicatessen/cafe.)
Adjournment	End the meeting as there is no more business to discuss.
Use of gavel	The presiding officer uses the gavel in meetings. One tap is used after a vote to signify a motion passing or failing, two taps call the meeting to order, and three taps are used to restore order during the meeting.

## Election of Officers

Election of officers occurs annually, generally in September, in order to start the new 4-H year in October with a slate of officers ready to lead. Club bylaws may specify differently. Elections can be held at any regular meeting to fill vacancies if a member moves out of the area or resigns from a position.

Officer candidates may be determined through several methods:

- A nominating committee appointed by the president can discuss, identify, and recruit candidates for positions. The nominating committee presents its “slate” (list of candidates for each office) during the meeting in which officers are elected.
- Candidates may self-nominate. The president opens the floor for nominations and a candidate may indicate his or her desire to serve as an officer.
- Members may nominate other members. The president opens the floor for nominations and a member may state, “I nominate [candidate] for [office].”
- 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 candidates to give speeches, stating their qualifications and plans for the office.

Voting then takes place. Vote in order of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Reporter, Historian, and specialty leaders. A youth may run for more than one office, but should only hold one position each year. Youth officer elections are usually conducted by secret ballot, meaning that each enrolled member present in the meeting is given a printed ballot to indicate the candidate for whom they wish to vote. Ballots should have an area for write-in candidates or persons who are nominated from the floor during the meeting. Clubs determine two or three people to count the ballots.

The candidate receiving the most votes is considered elected and the officer’s term starts at the next club meeting, unless stated otherwise in the club’s bylaws.

## Committees

A 4-H club committee consists of two or more members, ideally three to five, unless the club or task is exceptionally large and it’s helpful to have more members on a committee. Committees discuss matters outside of the club business meeting, often researching possibilities for moving forward on certain projects, and reporting their findings to the club. Committees can make recommendations to the club, and a motion brought forth by an established committee does not need a second in order to be discussed. Committees save time in club meetings and help get more members involved in active club roles.

For example, few things slow down club business like choosing a club T-shirt. There are considerations such as shirt color, material, available sizes, price, and vendors. There are design choices, colors of ink, logos, and so much more. It’s impractical to expect a club of 15-20 members to discuss and vote on a shirt when the idea is first raised at a meeting, due to all the factors listed above. A committee can meet outside of the club meeting, research the options, narrow the choices, and present one or two recommendations to the club. Then the larger group can vote on a shirt and save time and frustration.

Standing committees meet regularly, giving updates to the club generally throughout the 4-H year. Examples include finance, community service, and program.

## A Guide for 4-H Club Officers

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Special committees are appointed by the club president, generally for a specific purpose, event, or timeframe. Examples might be: planning a club trip for spring break, selecting club apparel, or a nominating committee to suggest a slate of officers.

The president and officer team should work to attain diversity of committee members and encourage new or reserved members to get involved. Some members may not be comfortable leading an entire club, but they perform well in small groups. The president should also select members who are knowledgeable of or passionate about a subject, as they will generally contribute the most.

Each committee should have a chairman who calls meetings as necessary, facilitates discussion and committee work on the issue at hand, and reports back to the club on the committee's action. A committee's recommendation to a club, presented during a business meeting, does not need a second in parliamentary procedure

## Sample Script of a Meeting

**President:** (Stands, and, if using a gavel, strikes the table to get attention.) The meeting will please come to order. \_\_\_ (member name) \_\_\_ will lead the pledge. Please stand and remove your hats. (Pledge leader leads Pledge of Allegiance, followed by 4-H pledge.)

**President:** (Standing) The secretary will please call the roll.

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

*(Note: To save time, clubs may use a checklist or sign-in sheet rather than calling the roll.)*

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

**Secretary:** (standing) The regular meeting of the Helping Hands 4-H Club was held (etc.) Respectfully submitted, (name), secretary

**President:** (standing) Thank you. You have heard the reading of the minutes. Are there any 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) The balance on hand last month was \$34.50. Since then, we received a total of \$62 from ticket sales to our 4-H Share-the-Fun program, with the following expenses: materials for decorations and posters, \$10.25, and prizes awarded, \$20. That left us a profit of \$31.75 from our Share-the Fun program. Balance on hand: \$66.25.

Respectfully submitted, (name), 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:** (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 the meeting is officially adjourned.)

## Motions

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 to a motion, as explained above. Other motions are out of order.

### What to do if.....

**Additional training is needed:** As an officer, if you are struggling with handling your duties, ask your club leader or your Extension staff for additional training. Do not feel embarrassed to ask for help.

**Meeting space is too crowded:** This is a great problem to have. Ask the audience to fill every seat available. If all seats are taken, attempt to locate extra chairs. If lack of space becomes an issue often, the adult leaders should work to find a new meeting space to meet the needs of the club.

**Officers cannot be heard:** If you identify another officer as being too soft-spoken, respectfully ask them to speak up so all may hear. If the fellow officer continues to be soft-spoken, it is best not to bring it to his or her attention in the meeting or in front of others. Ask your club leader or your Extension agent for advice. A microphone may need to be provided.

**Parents/guests are disruptive:** As an officer, it is expected that everyone at the club meeting will be respectful to all. Your club leader will identify if parents or guests are being disruptive and will know how to handle that situation. It may be necessary to use a meeting space with a secondary location for family members to wait or talk.

**Tangent discussions occur:** When you find a particular discussion going on a tangent, politely ask participants to stay focused on the topic at hand and ask them to bring up the “tangent” item in the New Business section of the meeting.

**Plans change:** Whether it’s a summer thunderstorm that sends a planned outdoor meeting inside or a guest speaker who doesn’t show, make sure you have a backup plan for a meeting program. This can include having a list of rainy-day activities to enhance team building, or a lesson plan that applies to any club. One suggestion for this is a lesson on writing thank-you notes. University of Kentucky Extension has an easy-to-follow lesson plan online, but there are others. The Kentucky lesson is available online at [https://4-h.ca.uky.edu/files/4.0\\_write\\_touch\\_combined\\_files\\_pdf\\_final\\_9-6-2016.pdf](https://4-h.ca.uky.edu/files/4.0_write_touch_combined_files_pdf_final_9-6-2016.pdf).

## Score Yourself as an Officer

Ideally, officers should strive to be able to answer “always” to each of the statements below. If you are not there yet, brainstorm ideas on how you can attain these standards. Setting goals and planning can help you as a 4-H club officer.

As an officer, I...	Never	Sometimes	Always
Attend and participate in club meetings			
Complete my duties for the office I hold			
Demonstrate good character (trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, citizenship)			
Welcome others; encourage their ideas and participation			
Do what is best for my club, not just myself			
Serve as a positive role model			
Work with my officer team to get things done			
Follow through on what I’m supposed to do and what I say I’m going to do			
Serve as a leader, not a boss			

## Checklist to Score Your 4-H Club

Use the criteria below to score how your club meets 4-H standards.

This Year, My Club...	No	We're Working on It	Yes
Had 10 or more members			
Added new members			
Held eight or more meetings			
Had a planned program each month			
Completed at least two community service projects as a club			
Had trained officers			
Started and ended meetings on time			
Was youth-led			
Held at least one social event, such as a picnic or party			
Had members participate in 4-H contests			
Had members attend 4-H Camp and/or 4-H Congress			
Had at least one member become a 4-H All Star			
Conducted meetings by parliamentary procedure			
Had at least 80% of members complete 4-H project work and records			
Promoted 4-H through media, parade floats, or talks to civic groups			
Participated in 4-H Achievement Night (recognition program)			
Used committees for 4-H club business			
Followed an agenda and recorded monthly minutes			
Followed 4-H and VCE funds policies			
Has a current 4-H club charter			

If you can answer yes to:

5-10 questions, your club would earn a white ribbon! Keep setting and achieving goals. Work with your club leader and fellow officers to make plans to achieve a higher rating.

11-16 questions, your club would earn a red ribbon! Look at areas where you're weak and set goals to perform there next year.

17+ questions, your club would earn a blue ribbon! You're meeting the standards for 4-H club work! Thank you for your work!

## Observation Sheet for an Adult to Complete During a 4-H Meeting

It is often helpful to get an observer’s perspective on how well a meeting is run. Once or twice per year, ask an adult attending your meeting to complete the table shown below and provide the feedback to the officer team. This can be a parent, someone from another club, or a member of the community that is perceptive and knows what a business meeting should look like. The officer team can then use the feedback to determine what is being done well and how you might improve your leadership of the club.

During the meeting I observed...	Not at all	Occasionally	Consistently
Youth leading and participating in the meeting.			
Adults refraining from discussions except where pertinent for safety, logistics, etc.			
An agenda being followed.			
Parliamentary procedure being used to conduct club business.			
Members engaged, paying attention, and participating.			
Tangential discussions or side conversations kept to a minimum.			
A meeting space that was welcoming and conducive to club business.			
Youth and adults demonstrating good character (trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, citizenship).			
Evidence of learning and life skills development.			
An element of fun for youths’ social development.			

Comments:

## 4-H Emblem



Figure 4. The official 4-H emblem.

The official 4-H emblem is a green stemmed four-leaf clover with white H's in the leaves. Green and white are the 4-H colors: White symbolizes purity, and green represents nature's most common color and is emblematic of youth, life and growth.

The H's stand for Head, Heart, Hands and Health:

**HEAD**—Problem-solving: ability to sort out complex problems.

**HEART**—Emotional development: developing good attitudes toward work and learning; developing acceptance and appreciation of other people.

**HANDS**—Skills development: ability to do, skill in doing and habit of doing.

**HEALTH**—Physical development: understanding and appreciating a growing and changing body.

The 4-H flag consists of the green 4-H clover emblem on a white background. The "H" on each leaf may be white or metallic gold.

### Use of 4-H Colors, Symbols and Emblem

The use of 4-H symbols is encouraged, but they must be used according to federal regulations, including colors, placement, endorsements, promotions, and more. In addition, Virginia Cooperative Extension logos, indicia, and ADA statement for events are required on publicly distributed items. Work with unit Extension staff to insure proper and appropriate use of 4-H and Extension symbols.

### 4-H Motto

The 4-H motto is "To Make the Best Better." Its intent is to inspire young people to continue to learn and grow; to make their best efforts better through participating in educational experiences. The 4-H motto supports the Virginia 4-H mission to "assist youth, and adults working with those youth, to gain additional knowledge, life skills, and attitudes that will further their development as self-directing, contributing, and productive members of society."

## The 4-H Pledge

# The 4-H Pledge



I pledge my **HEAD**  
to clearer thinking,  
my **HEART**  
to greater loyalty,  
my **HANDS**  
to larger service,  
and my **HEALTH**  
to better living,  
for my **club**, my **community**,  
my **country**, and my **world**.

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