4-H Volunteer Information Series

Nebraska 4-H Youth Development

Selecting 4-H Club Officers and Committee Members

Being a club officer is a great way to learn leadership skills and how to conduct a business meeting. It may be best to elect officers at the second or third meeting, after members have had a chance to get to know each other.

Election of Officers

There is no right way to hold elections for 4-H club officers. Depending on the size of the club, it might be possible for everyone to be an officer or committee chairperson.

Here are some acceptable ways officers can be selected:

- Have a nominating committee. This is most often used in a larger club. The appointed committee selects a ballot of persons for each office. Usually two candidates for each office. Each candidate is asked if they are willing to serve in that office. If they agree, the slate of officers is presented at the club meeting and voting takes place on those candidates. It is appropriate to ask for further nominations from the floor before voting.
- Interested members complete an interest sheet and present a short statement of why they should be elected to the office. Voting takes place for each office.
- A past officer or the leader calls for nominations from the floor for president. Once nominations close, voting takes place. The new president presides and continues to ask for nominations for each office. Each officer is voted on before proceeding to the next officer nomination.
- In a younger group or a small group, names of those interested in holding an office may be put in a hat and the names drawn for each office.
- An effective method to help young members learn officer responsibilities would be to rotate jobs at each meeting.

When voting takes place, it should be by secret ballot with members writing the name of their choice on a slip of paper. One by one, each office is filled with a member elected by the majority of votes that are cast.

Installation of Officers

An installation ceremony is one way to stress the importance of officers and their contribution to the club. Plus, it helps inform the members of the officer roles. Being chosen as a 4-H club officer is an honor which deserves recognition. There are various installation ceremonies that may be used.

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4-H Club Officers

- **President**
  The president conducts the meeting. A good president helps everyone in the club work together. The president listens to ideas and directs actions, but does not dictate.
- **Vice President**
  The vice president is the president's assistant and presides at meetings when the president is absent.
- **Secretary**
  The secretary keeps records of membership, club activities (minutes) and handles club correspondence.
- **Treasurer**
  The treasurer is responsible for keeping an accurate account of the 4-H club's money received and expenditures and pays approved bills.
- **Historian**
  The historian collects pictures and mementos of the club and puts together the 4-H club's scrapbook.
- **News Reporter**
  The reporter prepares news reports about activities of the club for the newspaper, radio and TV stations.

Other officers may be added as appropriate. The size of the club and the age of the members may determine the number and kinds of officers to be elected.

Committees

Committees can help all members develop a sense of teamwork as they become actively involved in the club. These groups plan and supervise various club activities. Committees may be appointed by the president or leader or members may volunteer. If the club is of mixed ages, it is good to include younger and older members on the same committee.

Following are suggestions for club committees:

- **Program committee:** Finds speakers, videos, field trips and other resources.

- **Membership committee:** Helps recruit members and leaders.

- **Community service committee:** Identifies community needs and presents ideas for service project.

- **Special committees:** Work on special activities that may occur during the year such as a float or entry in a community parade.

Adapted from: Lindsey, S. 4-H club officers and committees fact sheet. Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University Extension, 4-H Youth Development. http://ohioline.osu.edu/4h-fact/0014.html; *Piecing It All Together.* Etling, Melang, and Stanley. UNL Extension 4-H.