

# PREPARING FOR YOUR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

## WHY HAVE AN AGM

- Rules - say you must
- Accountability
- To elect others
- To be effective and successful, you need good people - these people must be elected.

## PREPARATION

2 main problems often faced when planning the AGM

- Recruiting the right people
- Attendance

In the past there may have been a reluctance to attend for a variety of reasons:

- The members/public have been bored
- Time was inconvenient
- Venue was inaccessible/lacked parking facilities
- Venue was uninspiring cold or uncomfortable
- Speaker was uninspiring or uninteresting
- They were not made to feel welcome
- There was no time for discussion

Because of the tradition AGM's may have always been held on a set date each year, at a set venue, at a set time. The date may often clash with a major community fixture or it is a cold and wet time of the year in a hall without creature comforts

Consider **Why** would people want to attend your meeting?

Consider **What if**.....

- What if we held the meeting in a really nice place
- What if we served interesting food
- What if we provided some entertainment
- What if we had a dynamic speaker
- What if offered child care
- What if provided transport
- What if we changed the time

So, instead of feeling negative about the next AGM and bemoaning the fact that no-one wants to attend, try turning it around.

Look at the rules or constitution and see if there is flexibility as to when the AGM must be held. If so, set a time and date that you feel would be most popular.

Understand your likely audience their limits, likes, dislikes and interests.

## **WHY CAN'T WE GET THE RIGHT PEOPLE TO STAND?**

- Is it because the recruitment process does not exist?
- Is it because it is left until the last minute?
- Is it because the role of the committee is not seen as interesting and positive?
- Is it because there is conflict in your organisation?

**What** skills are you seeking? **Who** has these skills? **Who** can we approach and who will make the approach? A personal contact is the most effective and the person being recruited may be flattered to be invited to stand for election. It is very difficult to get an effective committee by mail - approach people directly and ask them if they are interested.

The right mix of committee will be an asset, the wrong people, a liability and the latter can be difficult to remove from office.

## **CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

Most rules will state that an AGM must be advertised, so many days prior to the meeting.

Ensure that you:

- Advise all your members within the required time frame
- Place the advertisement in the Public Notices of your newspaper to comply with the constitutional requirements.
- Have your audited accounts ready for presentation
- Fulfill your requirements for nomination of office bearers
- Minutes of last years AGM
- Report from the Chairperson

## **PREPARING THE AGENDA**

Prepare the agenda, this should be either issued with the notice of meeting or be available at the meeting and only that which is shown on the agenda dealt with at the meeting. A suggested agenda would be

- Minutes of previous AGM
- Matters arising from these minutes

- Presentation of the annual reports and accounts
- Discussion following the reports
- Election of officers - (according to the rules /constitution)
- Other business - the incoming chairman and secretary

### **WHOM DO WE INVITE?**

As well as your members you should also invite any other stakeholders in your organisation. Examples of these would be:

- Funders
- Sponsors
- Clients
- Contractors
- Landlords
- Service providers
- Friends of the organization

### **AT THE AGM**

Now that all the preparation is done you will need to have with you;

- The Agenda
- A copy of the rules or constitution and deal with any controversy by understanding the relevant rule. Delegate the task to someone who enjoys rules and regulations.
- The annual audited accounts
- Annual reports from the chairman or from any sub committee or branches
- The list of nominations for the various Officers
- Minutes of the previous AGM
- General business

Some AGMs are short. Remember it is important in some cases to make the outing worthwhile by allowing time for the members to mix and get to know the committee. Good will engendered by refreshments can make the expense worthwhile.

### **AMENDMENT OF RULES OR CONSTITUTION**

From time to time rules need updating and amending and there will be a process to follow. In general, the proposed amendment will be advertised along with the notice of AGM. The rules change will have been discussed fully, so that the reasons for the change are fully understood and can be explained at the meeting.

These maybe controversial e.g. change of name of group.

After the notice of rule change has been issued, there may be intensive lobby groups for or against the change, so be prepared for a debate and view these as a healthy interest in the organisation. Maybe the amendment will be lost at a vote, but that is democracy at work.

## CLOSING THE MEETING

When all business is completed, the chairman thanks everyone for attending and simply declares the meeting closed.

If there is any outstanding business, the chairman must ask, if someone will propose a motion to adjourn the meeting to be held at another time.

With good planning and good chair skills, the business should be completed in the time allowed.

## FILING REPORTS

After your AGM your annual report must be filed with the Ministry of Economic Development or online at [www.societies.govt.nz](http://www.societies.govt.nz)

## FURTHER RESOURCES

The Role of the Treasurer - Community Resources  
Chairing Meetings - John Milligan

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**If you would like a list of our other community resources, or to be put on our mailing list, contact us at:**



Phone (09) 486-4820

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Visit North Shore Community and Social Services Inc.  
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