

Information in this brochure was gathered from these sources.

- Community Tool Box, <http://ctb.lsi.ukans.edu/>
- Salem, Oregon Neighborhood Handbook

If you have any questions or would like a copy of any of the following brochures, please contact Neighborhood Preservation at 913/895-6370.

Information to Help Your Neighborhood

- Organizing an Event
- Speaker's Bureau
- Preparing a Newsletter
- Working with Local Government
- Recruiting Members and Volunteers

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Planning a Meeting

Neighborhood Preservation

Guidelines for Neighborhoods



Planning a Meeting

Neighborhood meetings provide an opportunity for residents to learn, discuss issues, and solve problems. But if the meetings are not run efficiently, they will not be effective. More importantly, badly run meetings can discourage participation at future meetings and group activities.

Effective meetings result in residents feeling they have made a contribution, that the organization is worthy of their time and has good direction. This brochure provides guidelines and tips for facilitating an effective meeting.

1. Set goals

Think about why you are having the meeting. Determine what you want to accomplish. Does the organization need to make decisions? Do committee assignments need to be made to accomplish a larger goal?

2. Set up a meeting time and location

If your organization meets frequently, establish a standard meeting place, date and time. The location should be central and well-known with adequate parking. The size of the space should accommodate the anticipated attendance. Weeknight meetings after 6:30 p.m. often have the best attendance. City staff can assist neighborhood groups in the program with reserving public meeting locations. The group should complete and submit a Resource Request Form.

3. Prepare the agenda

The agenda should be designed to help you meet your goals. Each topic should have a time limit and the name of

the person addressing the topic. Limit the meeting to one and a half hours. Here is a sample agenda:

- Approval of the Minutes
- Guest Speakers
- Old Business
- New Business
- Committee Reports
- Neighborhood Concerns
- Police Officer Report
- Neighborhood Planner Report
- Announcements
- Other Business
- Set Agenda for Next Meeting

4. Decide who should attend

If a guest speaker is attending, consider inviting the entire neighborhood. If the goal of the meeting is to plan an event or special activity, maybe only the steering committee needs to attend. If the goal is to solve a neighborhood issue, invite everyone involved. For example, if traffic speed is a neighborhood issue, invite a police officer and traffic engineer.

5. Advertise the meeting

If the entire neighborhood is invited, prepare a flier that is simple, yet eye catching. The flier should include the meeting date, time, location and purpose or goal. Fliers can be mailed or hand delivered. Have steering committee members make reminder phone calls to their neighbors. If only the steering committee is meeting, mail a reminder notice or make phone calls. City staff will help prepare and mail fliers for neighborhood groups. The group should complete and submit a Notice Request Form.

6. Set up the meeting space

Arrange tables and chairs in a manner that is conducive to discussion. Set up displays or set out handouts before the meeting starts. Offer refreshments.

7. Facilitate the meeting

Have someone welcoming people as they come in. Start the meeting on time. Everyone should sign-in and someone should be taking notes or minutes. Start with introductions.

Follow the agenda, stick to the times allowed for each topic, and remain on-track. Encourage participation and summarize comments you hear. The meeting should focus on real problems rather than being a gripe session. Treat everyone with respect and remain open minded.

Make sure that once a discussion about an issue is finished that the group is aware of final decisions, assignments and deadlines.

Conclude the meeting on a positive note and thank everyone for attending.

8. Follow-up

Confirm assignments or deadlines with a phone call or memo. Distribute minutes of the meeting within 48 hours. Acknowledge help and significant contributions by others. Identify ways to improve the meeting and attendance.