

Nonprofit Board Meeting Agenda Sample

Traditional Nonprofit Agenda Sample

The most common type of agenda format is the traditional agenda. There's some room for flexibility based on the organization's needs, but this agenda generally follows the following format.

- Welcome
- Call to order
- Approve the minutes of the last meeting
- Executive director's report
- Finance committee report
- Nominating and governance committee report
- Program committee report
- Fundraising committee report
- Unfinished business
- New business
- Board development
- Guest presentations (you may move this up earlier in the agenda so guests don't have to sit through the entire meeting)
- Adjournment

The finance committee usually distributes quarterly reports, and the board may have a brief discussion about the projected budget and the actual budget. The agenda may also include cyclical items, such as the audit, elections or other annual events.

Strategic Nonprofit Agenda Sample

- Welcome
- Opening thoughts. A different board member opens the meeting with an opening thought.
- Call to order
- Consent Agenda. This usually includes the minutes of the last meeting and other routine items that require little or no discussion. Board members can move to withdraw an item from the consent agenda if it needs additional discussion.
- Finance committee report
- Nominating and governance committee report
- Program committee report
- Fundraising committee report
- Discussion of strategic initiatives
- Board development
- Unfinished business
- Adjournment

The idea behind a strategic agenda is to streamline routine items to allow board members to spend most of the meeting time on strategic planning. Some nonprofit boards have found that it's helpful to throw out a brainstorming question like, "What's keeping you up at night?" to get board discussions started.

Customized Nonprofit Agenda Sample

Taking a nontraditional approach to the agenda forces board members to pay attention. They'll usually keep their agendas front and center because they won't be able to memorize the order of the agenda. Place important information like important dates or other critical information at the top of the agenda, because board members will see them repeatedly as they look for their places on the agenda.

- Welcome
- Call to order
- Reading of the mission statement
- Board chair remarks
- 7-minute briefing
- 7-minute question-and-answer session
- Upcoming events or program planning
- Open-ended discussion on outside factors
- Minutes and commitments review
- Finance committee report
- Nominating task force
- Executive Director responds to questions

Board chair remarks refers to anything that's been weighing on the mind of the board chair. This could be an opportunity for a new fundraising idea, board development, organizational culture, potential risks or anything else that may be weighing on someone's mind.

The board member briefing gives boards a short time to hear from a board member about the knowledge or expertise that they've gained in their professional life that may help other board members. Boards can also use this time to hear from a board member who uses the services of the nonprofit. Rotate speakers so all board members have a chance to share their knowledge and experiences. Follow the brief with an additional seven minutes of questions and answers.

The reason for offering a short time to discuss outside factors is because many changes happen in communities over the course of a year. Nonprofit boards can address outside changes in a shorter amount of time when they make time on the agenda to discuss them as they occur, as opposed to discussing multiple changes in an annual meeting.

Prior to approving the minutes, boards may take a few minutes to review any follow-up actions that board members promised to take after the last meeting.

Board members should get a copy of the Executive Director report with their board packets. They should receive it in enough time to review it and to prepare questions. Provide a few minutes toward the end of each meeting for board members to ask questions.

Many boards find that this format offers them increased opportunities for two-way communications and sets the tone for strengthening their relationship with the Executive Director.

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