

1. President's opening remarks

The president would call the meeting to order and welcome any new members and guests.

2. Apologies

The president would ask the secretary whether any apologies had been received and would then ask if any member had an apology to record. These apologies ought to be recorded in the minutes. The secretary would record the names of those present or circulate a book for those present to record their names.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The secretary should have these minutes prepared for the meeting. The secretary can read these minutes to the meeting. Where the minutes have been distributed with the notice of meeting, the chairperson may ask the meeting if there is any objection to taking the minutes as read.

It is then necessary for the meeting to confirm that the minutes are an accurate record of the last meeting and for the chairperson to sign them. It is usual for a member who was at the previous meeting to propose this motion and for another to second the motion. The motion is simply, "I move that the minutes be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the last meeting". All present may vote on the resolution whether they were present or not at the last meeting. If the minutes are not correct in some aspect, a member may propose a motion to correct them. The members may vote on whether the minutes ought to be changed. This procedure is to agree to the record of the last meeting, not to re-open the debate or reverse previous decisions.

The chairperson then signs the minute book and the secretary may do the same.

4. Business arising from the minutes

The secretary may at this stage report briefly on the actions taken since the last meeting arising out of the resolutions passed at that meeting. Members may engage in limited discussion, usually in the form of questions to the secretary and other officers. Often these matters will be dealt with later in the agenda and full discussion is left until then.

5. Correspondence

Associations should keep a record of correspondence received and correspondence sent. This is usually known as outward and inward correspondence. Associations deal with correspondence in different ways. Some associations are so large that such correspondence is dealt with by the management committee. If this was not done, the whole general meeting would do nothing but deal with correspondence. In a small association with no employed staff, it may be appropriate to deal with such correspondence at the general meeting. Even in small associations, the management committee tends to deal with all but the most crucial correspondence.

In small associations the secretary usually does not read the contents of all inward letters to the meeting, but merely summarises the major points. The outward letters are merely noted.

In most small associations the secretary moves that the outward correspondence be endorsed and the inward received. Another way to proceed is to deal with each letter individually, resolving to take appropriate action. Again, this can be very time consuming.

6. President's report

It may be appropriate for the president to make a statement reporting on various matters that the management committee has dealt with since the last general meeting.

7. Treasurer's report

The treasurer's report to a general meeting includes details of receipts and expenditure for the past period. It may also show a comparison against the budget to date and other comments. Where the financial affairs of the association are substantial the treasurer has the report printed and distributed at the meeting. The treasurer moves the adoption of the report. Then it can be discussed by the members.

In larger associations with complex financial transactions, the detailed scrutiny is delegated to a committee. The treasurer would present a summary report, any committee recommendations and answer questions from the floor.

8. Adjourned business

Matters that were adjourned (uncompleted) at the last meeting are dealt with at this stage. It may be helpful if the motion is restated by the chairperson and of the debate at the last meeting summarised.

9. Special business

Special business consists of matters placed on the agenda by the management committee or the secretary. The secretary would list such matters as rejection or termination of membership. The special business may also be a motion to change the name of the association, or its rules, or some matter of importance that is to be discussed because of a requisition by the members or management committee calling a meeting.

10. General business

At this stage of the meeting any member may raise a question or move a motion to be dealt with by the meeting. Members raising complex issues might consider advising the chairperson of their intentions and provide a written copy of the motion they intend to move.

11. Date of next meeting

This may be a regular date such as the first Monday of the month or an agreed date.

12. Close

It is usual for the chairperson to close the meeting and thank members for attending. It may be appropriate for the chairperson to thank guests for attending and invite them and members for refreshments after the close of the meeting.