



Running Successful Local Meetings

- 1. Why good local meetings matter**
- 2. Your local executive committee (LEC) meeting**

Local Executive Committee Meeting Checklist

- 3. General Membership Meetings (GMM)**

GMM Planning Checklist

- 4. A Quick Guide for the Treasurer's Report at Local Meetings**
- 5. Local Meetings Motion Form**

Why Good Local Meetings Matter

Have you ever attended a union meeting where?

- only a few people knew each other and it stayed that way
- one person (the president?) did all the talking
- there was no clear agenda or order of business
- there was no interaction with or between the people attending the meeting
- people left not knowing why they came and vowing never to come again?

If the truth were told, some of us have even run a few meetings like that. As activists, we often complain that people don't come to meetings because they don't care. What may be truer is that our meetings don't give people a reason to come.

This section of your *Toolkit* is designed to ensure that your meetings:

- energise and build a sense of community and belonging to the union
- deal with topics of interest even to apathetic members
- make decisions required to take necessary action in the local
- draw on the skills and interests of a growing group of local activists.

Your Local Executive Committee (LEC) Meeting

Your OPSEU constitution says (Article **29.2.2**) “The local executive committee shall administer the affairs of the local in accordance with this constitution, the by-laws of the local and the wishes of the members of the local. The committee shall meet at least once every three months. The local president may call a committee meeting at any time to deal with business of an urgent nature.”

One of the first things you should do as a new local president is to call your LEC together to decide how you will work together, and to agree on what the work is. Here's a checklist for preparing for, running and following-up on your LEC meetings.

Local Executive Committee (LEC) Meeting Checklist

Use this checklist to help you plan and run your first local executive committee meeting. These are tasks LEC members can share. Put the name of the person charged with each task in the “who” column, and a √ in the “done” column as each task is completed.

Steps	Who	Done
<p>1. Before the meeting (starting 2 weeks ahead)</p> <p>a) check local by-laws for any meeting requirements</p> <p>b) contact each LEC member to set up date, time, place, agenda items for the meeting, any accommodations required, roles people will play in prep and running the meeting. In particular, find out who needs to report and who wants to speak to a particular item</p> <p>c) ensure proposed location is accessible and has furniture & any equipment required</p> <p>d) arrange for food if the meeting is at a normal meal time</p> <p>e) confirm logistics and circulate minutes of last meeting and draft agenda to all LEC members</p> <p>f) invite staff rep</p> <p>g) pull together any documents (minutes, reports, resolutions, letters, etc) required by the agenda</p> <p>h) set up the room ahead of time, especially if using flipchart, or audiovisual equipment</p>		
<p>2. At the meeting</p> <p>a) greet everyone and ensure everyone knows each other’s name <u>before</u> the meeting starts</p> <p>b) start the meeting by <u>welcoming</u> people and reading the <u>statement of respect</u></p> <p>c) ask <u>each person to introduce themselves</u> – their name, job and unit, one thing they’d like to contribute to the local through work on the LEC. <i>This is important information for leaders to have about each other, and builds a sense of shared purpose as leaders.</i></p> <p>d) Review the <u>agenda</u>, (about 5 minutes) and identify: - ending time - which items are information sharing and which require a</p>		

<p>decision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - approximate times for each item <p>Amend the agenda with everyone’s input</p> <p>e) Review <u>minutes</u> of the last meeting (about 10 minutes) <i>You’re reviewing these for 2 reasons: to ensure they’re a correct record; as a basis for following up on decisions and actions taken last time.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - briefly review (people should have read this ahead of time) - ask for any corrections or clarifications - secretary (or whoever did the minutes) moves acceptance of minutes; ask for someone to second the motion; vote - review decisions recorded in the minutes and get brief updates on the action taken, obstacles, what else is required. - summarize any further decisions or actions required and suggest where these might be taken up in this agenda <p>f) For <u>each agenda item</u>, e.g., recruiting new stewards, planning for next GMM, etc, work with LEC members to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - summarize where this item came from – evidence of need - summarize what’s been done so far (good place to hear reports, etc) - lead a discussion to identify the next steps - identify what items must go to the membership for discussion (e.g. increased budget; help with recruitment); develop a motion if it requires a membership vote - decide who will do what by when - ensure all decisions are recorded in the minutes. <p>g) At the <u>end of the meeting</u> (about 10 minutes before the agreed-to adjournment)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - review decisions taken at the meeting and who has agreed to do what - review items still requiring discussion - identify how these items will be addressed – e.g. 1 or 2 people develop a proposal for discussion, conference call - agree on next meeting date and time and roles for that meeting (e.g. rotating chair). <p>h) Thank everyone for their participation and good work together.</p>		
<p>3. Follow-Up to Act on Decisions (within 2 weeks of meeting)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensure minutes go out to LEC members no more than two weeks after the meeting - call and e-mail LEC members to see how they’re doing, if 		

they're encountering any obstacles to the actions they undertook, and if they need any help

- brief staff rep (if unable to attend the LEC meeting) on the key outcomes of the meeting and any support you need from her/him
- do what you said you'd do

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING (GMM)

What should a general membership meeting try to do?

You've had your LEC meeting and done some of the necessary preparation for an effective general membership meeting. But there's a bit more to do. Remember, you want your membership meeting to:

- energize and build a sense of community and belonging to the union
- deal with topics of interest even to apathetic members
- make decisions required to take necessary action in the local
- draw on the skills and interests of a growing group of local activists.

Make the agenda interesting

Your OPSEU constitution, Article 29.7.2, (or your local by-laws) outlines the standard agenda for your general membership meeting. It's a good list to ensure that everyone gets heard and things get done. However, for someone not involved in the union, this agenda may sound dull and may not attract them to a meeting. Here are a couple of tips:

- Highlight an issue you want the meeting to focus on (e.g. "a union take on accommodation"; "welcoming temp workers to the union"; etc). Ensure that at least 1/3 to 1/2 of the meeting deals with this.
- Shorten reports (i.e. 1 page each with a few key points; limit each report to 1 minute unless there's a decision the membership needs to make).
- Make agenda headings for reports interesting. Rather than "committee reports", the agenda could read, "upcoming education in the local"; "human rights are workers rights"; "it's bargaining time", etc.
- Spread discussion and decision-making throughout the meeting rather than leaving it to the end ("new business") when people are most tired.
- Serve food and highlight the chance to get to know people.

Publicize the meeting(s)

- Prepare an attractive flyer that highlights how interesting the meeting will be.
- Distribute the flyer by hand through the stewards or information stewards.
- Ensure that all activists bring at least one new person to the meeting.
- Use the phone tree (1 person calls 5 other people) to encourage people to come.
- Post the flyer throughout the workplace(s).

GMM PLANNING CHECKLIST

STEPS BEFORE THE MEETING – Discussion with LEC	TIME
<p>Prepare the logistics of the meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ***Review local by-laws to ensure you are meeting all requirements. • Agree on a meeting location – ensure location is accessible (by transit, wheelchair); room is suitable for size of meeting; chairs and equipment are available. • Identify the issue of most interest to uninvolved parts of the membership – e.g. part-time issues; shift allocations, etc. • Agree on how this issue will be addressed at the meeting – e.g., film, speaker, survey results and discussion (allow 30-60 minutes of the meeting for this). • Agree on how to deal with the business meeting in 45-60 minutes, maximum. • Finalize agenda headings. • Agree on dates and time(s) for the meeting(s) – more than one meeting may need to be scheduled due to work schedules. • Arrange for food/snacks and beverages. • Set up childcare arrangements. • Design and print meeting flyers that excite people about the meeting. • Post meeting notices on union bulletin boards. • Distribute flyers in person through stewards, by e-mail, etc. • Invite the staff rep and executive board members to attend. • Ensure you have all necessary equipment, including ballot box and a supply of ballots if needed for the meeting. • Pull together necessary documentation and materials for the meeting. • Brief the speaker/resource person/ facilitator if using one. <p>***Be sure to check local by-laws. If changes to local by-laws are required special notice to the membership must be given</p>	<p>2 weeks before the meeting</p>
<p>Identify who will do what</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local president <u>should not</u> be the focus of the entire meeting. • Share tasks at the meeting amongst LEC members (including greeters, who will move which motion, secretary/minute taker, etc). • Each LEC member should bring two new people to the meeting – people who have never attended a union meeting. 	<p>1 week before the meeting</p>

AT THE MEETING (ARTICLE 29.7 of the Constitution)	
<p>Set up the room prior to members arriving</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up a table for the LEC to work from. • Set up a flip chart and/or audiovisual equipment you may be using so that everyone can see. • Set up chairs in a semi-circle so that the room is inviting and that people can see each other as well as LEC members. • Put meeting materials on chairs. 	
<p>Have Greeters welcome people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't be afraid to introduce yourself to people coming, and help people to meet each other. It creates a climate of inclusion helpful for a productive meeting. 	
<p>Ensure meeting has quorum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to the meeting, check that you know what quorum is in Article 29.8.2 of the constitution. • Before you start the meeting, check that you have quorum. 	
<p>Chair welcomes people and calls the meeting to order</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Try to start the meeting on time.</u> • Welcome everyone. • Have people stand as you call their worksite/unit. • Welcome any new members to the meeting and the local. This is an opportunity to recognize members who are coming out to a local meeting for the first time. • Ask the stewards to stand and the officers of the LEC and introduce them. 	5 minutes
<p>Read the OPSEU Statement of Respect or have a couple of different people read different paragraphs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Statement of Respect can be downloaded from the OPSEU website. 	3 minutes
<p>Adopt the Agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Agenda should have been sent out before the meeting. • Post the agenda on a flip chart at the meeting or give members a handout at the meeting that could include the agenda, previous minutes, treasurers report etc. 	5 minutes

<p>Minutes of the previous meeting (to be done by the secretary)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you've had a previous meeting, handout copies of the minutes when members come to the meeting or you can read off the minutes • Ask for any corrections or clarifications of the minutes • Have the secretary move a motion to accept the minutes • Ask for someone to second the motion. • Vote; if accepted, the minutes are adopted. 	5 minutes
<p>Business arising from the last meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any items that need to be dealt with from the last meeting before proceeding? • Did any items from the last meeting result in something else needing to be done? If so, suggest a place for this in the meeting's agenda. 	5 minutes
<p>Treasurers Report (to be done by the treasurer)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce by saying that the treasurers' report is about how we are spending the local's money for the benefit of members and the local. • Distribute the treasurers' report (not more than 2 pages) and ask the treasurer to draw people's attention to the 3 or 4 most important items in the report • Ask for any questions on the report. • Have the treasurer move a motion to accept the report. • Ask for someone to second the motion. • Vote; if accepted, the report is adopted. 	5 minutes
<p>Correspondence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight to the members any correspondence that may be of interest to them. The secretary should have prepared a list of these items for information, and should only flag anything requiring a decision from the membership. 	3-5 minutes
<p>Reports of Officers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If LEC members have been assigned any tasks, they would report the results to the membership. The thing to remember is to keep any reports short (no more than 2 minutes) so that you can keep the meeting flowing. 	5 minutes
<p>Reports of Committees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports from committees should be prepared in advance of the meeting by committee chairs. • Local committees could include health and safety, labour management, bargaining, human rights or equity committee, social 	5-10 min

<p>committee etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full reports could be posted on the local's website. Ask each committee chair to highlight one or two items they want the membership to know about. Again, keep it moving and keep it interesting. (See tips above in terms on how these could appear more interesting on the agenda.) • Copies of the reports should be given to the secretary to include in the meeting minutes. 	
<p>Call for nominations or elections if there are any vacant positions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there are any vacancies or you need to elect new stewards in certain areas or locations in the local, this is the time to open the floor for nominations for those positions. • Make sure that anyone running is a signed up member in good standing. <p>If you need assistance to run elections, contact your staff rep or a board member with enough notice prior to the meeting</p>	
<p>NEW business - <i>education highlight of the meeting.</i> Here's what most people will have come for.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce this part of the meeting with a few words about why this issue has been chosen, and what we're trying to do about it at this meeting (e.g. share information, make a decision, get people talking and acting in the workplace(s), etc). • Say something about the process (film, speaker, discussion, presenting the results of a workplace survey and discussion, etc). • Let the process unfold, and wrap-it up on time. 	30-60 min
<p>Adjournment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call for a motion to adjourn. • If accepted, the meeting is adjourned. • Make sure to note time of adjournment on the meeting minutes. 	
<p>Build social solidarity in the local</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite everyone for food and get to know each other. • Include children if childcare on site. • Play music if you have some. 	

A QUICK GUIDE FOR THE TREASURER'S REPORT AT LOCAL MEETINGS

The treasurer's report on finances is a standing item on the agenda of each membership meeting. This allows the members to know the state of the local treasury and to take necessary corrective steps should the need arise.

Make sure to keep your locals' books up to date, i.e., list all receipts and cheques, and calculate the remaining balance prior to each membership meeting. Prepare a written treasurer's report to be distributed at the membership meeting. At a minimum the report should contain the following information:

Book balance at the end of the previous period (e.g. month)	\$ _____
Total receipts for the period	\$ _____
Total expenses for the period	\$ _____
Book balance at the end of the period being reported	\$ _____
Bank balance at the end of the period being reported	\$ _____

NOTE: Be sure to have with you all details of receipts and cheques issued in the event a member questions the amounts.

After you have read the report and it is adopted, a copy is placed in the official minute book, attached to the original copy of the minutes.

If for any reason a treasurer's report is not acceptable, the meeting may direct the treasurer to make minor changes on the spot. The report is then adopted as amended. In the case of substantial disagreement, direction may be given for the report to be reviewed and resubmitted by either the treasurer or by a standing committee on finances if one exists, or by a special committee appointed for that purpose.

LOCAL MEETINGS MOTION FORM

Motion submitted by _____

Motion seconded by _____

Whereas

Therefore be it resolved that

Rationale (reason for the motion)

Signature(s): _____

Date: _____

Please submit the completed *Local Meetings Motion Form* to the local secretary at the meeting to ensure that the motion is recorded accurately.