

CLUB SECRETARY Roles @ NZYF



The efficiency of a Young Farmers Club depends on the efforts of the Secretary. To be a successful Secretary, you need a capacity for regular and consistent work. You must be enthusiastic for ventures undertaken by the Club and display initiative and tact in your dealings with people and situations.

All correspondence and records are the property of the Club and should be carefully looked after. This makes it much easier for a newly elected Secretary to follow the development to date.

Like your Chairperson, you should show an interest in all members, even if at times some irritate you almost to the point of distraction - never let it show.

Communication

The greatest barrier in Young Farmers is the lack of communication at all levels. This is evident at Club meetings when the Chairperson and Secretary have private discussions during the meeting, while the remainder of the members are kept waiting.

It is necessary to meet with your Chairperson before the meeting so that you are both fully aware of all matters likely to be discussed. Some clubs have an exec pot-luck dinner a week before the club meeting to set their agenda and all get on the same page, others have an exec meal before the meeting to touch base.

If anything of importance arises between the meetings, then advise your Chairperson in case immediate action is needed.

Where possible, provide your members with a written agenda. Otherwise use a blackboard and chalk or a large piece of paper and marker pen to make a display agenda. This is one certain way of ensuring that you are breaking the communications barrier between the committee and members. This will make the members feel that they have a part to play in the Club.

You should answer all correspondence that requires a reply and where necessary send appropriate letters of congratulations and appreciation.

Encourage members to give comprehensive reports about District and Regional meetings and activities that they have attended. This will help build self-confidence especially among new members.

Club Secretary Job Description

1. Maintain effective communication with Chairperson and Committee members, this is essential.
2. Keep up to date the following items:
 - The final copy of minutes as soon as possible after the meeting.
 - Headline correspondence as it arrives and liaise with the Chairperson on this.
 - Ensure the Publicity Officer has all the correct details regarding dates, times and venues for upcoming activities.
3. Attend district and regional meetings as this will give you a more in-depth appraisal of the organisation.
4. Some Clubs draw up a calendar (or diary) for the year, which includes meeting and activity dates, guest speakers each month, etc. The Secretary can use this as a check throughout the year. This calendar can be added to the official records throughout the year and be used as resource material by future secretaries. (Facebook is taking over this, in regard to 'official records for future reference' but it does pay to have a record/ book/ file)

Hints for the Secretary

- You are one of the doers of your Club. Be a doer.

- Your efficiency will ensure an easier job for the Chairperson as well as yourself. The Club will prosper from your efforts.
- Handle items as they arrive, do not let them build up.

Meeting Preparation

Before the meeting the Secretary needs to undertake the following duties:

1. Give notice of meeting to all members in accordance with procedure. This can be done via e-mail, phone or Club newsletter or Facebook (event or post).
2. You may invite a guest speaker. If so, do so at least two weeks prior to the meeting date, never leave the invitation until 24 hours prior. A personal approach by telephone or in person is the most valuable means of contact.
 - If a guest speaker is invited, collect all the necessary information for the introduction, i.e. (name, title, occupation, special interests etc). Introductions are normally made by the Chairperson, and remind him/her to arrange before the meeting begins, a proposer of a vote of thanks before the meeting begins.
 - Follow up with the guest speaker about 24 hours before the meeting to remind them of their expected arrival time.
3. Prepare the agenda. This will require some consultation with the Chairperson and maybe sub-committee members. Include all activities to be reported on during the meeting.
4. Make sure that the Chairperson has a copy of the agenda in sufficient time for them to prepare for the meeting.
5. Prepare all the paperwork in sequence to avoid searching for papers during the meeting.
6. Just before the meeting, get together with the Chairperson to discuss the agenda and all the business (including matters arising from the previous meeting) to be brought up at the meeting. This will include all incoming and outgoing correspondence.
7. Also notify any members who are to give reports to enable them to gather their thoughts and prepare their reports.
8. If your Club calls for written nominations for officials, send out or hand out nomination forms prior to the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

At the Meeting:

1. Arrive early for the meeting to be prepared. Arrange for the preparation of the meeting room to be organised by the members.
2. Greet and mix with new members. If the Publicity Officer is busy, introduce the new members to the Chairperson and other members. Remember that you and the Chairperson are the focal point at a meeting and it is best for people to meet you, or at least know your names. This job may be better handled by the Vice-Chairperson as the Club Secretary has plenty to organise before the meeting.

The role of Secretary has an important public relations aspect to it. You are the Club's letter writer, the person everyone turns to for help or information, and in many cases as a guide to Club procedure. Remember, the public will tend to judge the Club on the image its members present.

3. Read aloud the minutes of the previous meeting when asked by the Chairperson. (Note: Minutes read at an AGM are those recorded at the previous year's AGM.)
4. Ensure the minutes are signed and dated once they are confirmed as a true and correct record.
5. Read all correspondence when requested by the Chairperson. Long letters need not be read in full. Read them before the meeting and mark any important sections to be read. Remember to include important dates etc.
6. It is important your voice carries around the room so all attendees hear you. Speak clearly and with appropriate volume.

7. Record the motions accurately and legibly in clear language, taking care to record all proceedings. Include the full name of the mover and seconder of motions and amendments. All motions, whether carried or lost, need to be recorded - those that are withdrawn do not. Keep the minutes brief and informative so that time is well used at subsequent meetings. Rough minutes are best written into an exercise book and completed in a minute book or folder later.

8. You can move or second any motion, if you wish.

9. When recording the minutes, make a list of all letters to be written and duties to be performed (action points), so these can be actioned.

After the Meeting:

1. Arrange for the venue to be cleaned up, lights turned off and all doors locked if necessary.

2. Write any letters that are necessary and perform any duties required.

3. Amend the Minutes if need be as soon as possible to ensure that they are an accurate record of the meeting, while they are still fresh in your mind

4. Write a thank you letter to the guest speaker and express the Club's appreciation.

5. Action the decisions of the meeting (post on Facebook- maybe tag those with action points to do).

6. Check with the Chairperson before leaving the meeting to ensure there are no additional items which need attending to.

Memberships and Emails

You will receive an email at the end of each month with your club membership list and recently expired members. You may want to print this and take it to meetings, and possibly have a laptop there for new members to sign up online, or expired members to renew. This is also a very effective tool of getting members to enter district competitions!

The monthly emails come from your Regional Field Officer and include the basic information of what is happening in the region and local opportunities.

It is also highly recommended that you read the weekly Hotwire e-newsletter as it is always full of exciting opportunities for you and your club. Read it and encourage your club to go for these opportunities!!!