

PART VII: LOCAL MEETINGS

1. Membership Meeting

PURPOSE

The officers should always keep in mind the purpose of membership meetings. Membership meetings are held in order to:

- Make decisions that guide the officers in carrying out the Local's programs and the policies of CWA. Democratic control can be assured only by broad participation by members.
- Educate the membership on what is happening and why, and what might happen and why, on matters like the following:
 - Current collective bargaining developments.
 - Developments in the Labor Movement locally.
 - Legislative and political activities.
- Highlight CWA's involvement with allies in the community
- Develop spirit of solidarity among the members.
- Identify new activists.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Each Local should have a regular order of business which can also be included in the Local Bylaws. Meetings generally are conducted as follows:

CALL TO ORDER

The Call to Order is handled by the presiding officer.

READING THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

This is done to correct any errors and inform members who were absent of the business transacted in the last meeting. Corrections may be made at the request of any member. Should there be a difference of opinion, the matter must be settled by membership vote. After any corrections are made, the presiding officer takes a vote to approve the minutes.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Active Local committees should present reports at this time. If the report requires Local action, motions should be made accordingly and settled by vote.

OFFICER REPORTS

These are made by the presiding officer and generally consist of matters that have come to his or her attention since the previous meeting. The Local membership must also act to receive the Treasurer's report on receipts and disbursements made since the last meeting.

UNFINISHED AND NEW BUSINESS

UNFINISHED and NEW BUSINESS, generally encompass the substance of the Local's current activities. But they won't command attention unless they are presented in a way that ties them directly to each member's well-being. Here are some suggestions:

- There should be a high point, a main feature, at each meeting. Where possible, it should involve some important happening in the worksite, the community or Labor Movement.

- Consider what is likely to be on members' minds and what is happening that is important to them. A new health care plan? An arbitration case? Rumors of layoffs? A new tax bill before the legislative body? Pick out one topic and plan to cover it at the meeting.
- Don't be afraid to tackle public issues. You might want to invite a community ally to give a ten-minute talk on the issue and why CWA members should care about it.
- A good guest speaker with a short, timely topic can attract an audience.
- Always start on time and end on time. It is best if the meeting is over in an hour and a half. (unless it is a special occasion such as bargaining).
- Promote meetings. Don't just announce them. Think up a catchy title.

If the members won't come to the union, take the union to the members. Have short worksite meetings right after work or announce a brown bag lunch union meeting.

CWA belongs to the members -- it cannot be effective if only a dozen members are actively involved. Remember, if the members don't come to the union, then take the union to the members.

ADJOURNMENT

When all business is completed, any member may make a motion to adjourn or the presiding officer may adjourn the meeting.

2. Executive Board Meetings

It is the responsibility of the President to draw up the agenda for Executive Board meetings. The agenda normally includes:

- Approval of previous meeting minutes
- Reports of officers.
- Reports of committees.
- Approval for payment of routine bills.
- Evaluation of goals and progress made on goals.
- Other pending items of business.

Local Executive Boards should meet regularly. Special meetings can be called when deemed necessary by the President or a majority of the board. (Refer to your Local's Bylaws on this.)

Board meetings ensure that the officers get together as a group from time to time which is an essential element in a united efficient Local leadership team.

Local Executive Boards must keep a record of their meetings with the secretary taking minutes. A digest of the minutes comprises the Board's report at membership meetings.