

## **The 4-H Council Role, Functions, and Expectations**

The basic purpose of the volunteers who serve on 4-H Councils is to meet the educational needs of enrolled youth. They must determine what those needs are and how to deliver programs to meet those needs.

Throughout the state, volunteers work in partnership with Extension professionals to develop programs that best serve the changing needs of youth in their county or area.

In each county an Extension professional is ultimately responsible for the 4-H program. They work closely with volunteers to plan, implement, and evaluate programs. 4-H Council members come from different vocations, lifestyles, and social and ethnic backgrounds. Their input and interaction helps to insure Extension provides needed educational programs.

There are at least three ways a 4-H Council can conduct business:

1. The Council as a whole does the work.
2. Work is done by committees with reports made to the Council.
3. A combination of number one and two.

Often the size (the number of regular Council attendees) determines which option works best. See Standing Committees for a description of possible committees.

### **The major functions of the 4-H Council are:**

1. Program planning
2. Policy development and recommendation
3. Resource development
4. Linkages
5. Accountability and overall governance
6. Dispute resolution process

### **Specific Functions of 4-H Councils**

Specific functions of the 4-H Council related to **program planning** are to:

1. Assume major responsibility for the development of a total county 4-H Youth Development program based on the needs of youth and the local situation.

2. Participate in efforts to assess and clarify youth and community needs.
3. Develop long range goals and short-term objectives.
4. Assume responsibility for carrying out the planned program.
5. Publicize objectives and philosophy of the 4-H Youth Development program; serve in an advocacy role.
6. Manage the volunteer system and see that volunteers are effectively recruited and then trained by extension staff.
7. Develop and implement marketing and promotion plans for the 4-H Youth Development program.
8. Provide active leadership in offering 4-H in a variety of delivery modes (school enrichment, out of school programs, clubs, etc.).
9. Encourage full participation by youth and adults in 4-H events and activities, including those outside of the county/area.
10. Provide active leadership in offering 4-H opportunities to all youth in the county.
11. Evaluate the total 4-H Youth Development program on a continuing basis.
12. Sponsor recognition of 4-H members and leaders.

Specific functions related to **policy development** in cooperation with Extension professionals are to:

13. Recommend policy for the 4-H Youth Development program when not determined by district, state or national regulations.
14. Help interpret Council policies.
15. Monitor the 4-H program in regard to existing policies.

Specific functions related to **resource development** are to:

16. Develop and manage a Council budget to support the planned program.
17. Support resource development as needed.
18. Provide recognition of those contributing to 4-H resource development.

Specific functions related to **linkages** are to:

19. Inform other volunteers about Council decisions.
20. Represent youth program interests on other policy-making groups.
21. Represent the interest of the local 4-H Youth Development program at other meetings or events.

Specific functions related to **accountability and overall governance** are to:

22. Develop and maintain a vigorous active Council membership that accepts the major responsibility for the 4-H Youth Development program in cooperation with the Extension staff.
23. Communicate regularly with Extension staff.

### **Expectations of 4-H Council Members and Extension Professionals**

The expectations of a 4-H Council member are to:

1. Regularly attend Council and committee meetings.
2. Represent community needs and concerns to Extension professionals.
3. Understand Extension goals, objectives and programs, and how they are decided and implemented.
4. Represent and promote Extension in the community.
5. Follow through on commitments in a timely manner.
6. Share concerns and views fully.
7. Consider what is in the overall best interest of young people when making Council decisions and recommendations.
8. Support the final recommendations of the Council.

In the working relationship between 4-H Council volunteers and Extension professionals, certain expectations exist. They are:

**Extension professionals can reasonably expect Council volunteers to:**

1. Fulfill commitments within agreed-upon deadlines.
2. Provide leadership as appropriate.
3. Use knowledge and ability to promote positive change.
4. Support Council/Staff decisions in controversial situations.
5. Be sensitive to organizational problems and limitations.
6. Maintain confidentiality.
7. Offer personal expertise as appropriate.
8. Share their knowledge of the community.
9. Assist with financial, human and other resource development.
10. Maintain consistence between policy decisions and program implementation.

**Council volunteers can reasonably expect staff to:**

1. Assist with meeting preparations.
2. Use Council and staff time wisely.
3. Respond in a timely fashion to requests for information.
4. Provide notification if deadlines cannot be met.
5. Provide complete, concise, and accurate information.
6. Be candid in individual and organizational relationships.
7. Maintain professionalism and confidentiality.
8. Share basic knowledge of the organization.
9. Interpret policy decisions and actions.
10. Be flexible and provide support so Council volunteers can work effectively.

## **Extension Professionals**

The Extension professional's role with the 4-H Council is varied. Here are several ways in which the Extension professional will help the Council run efficiently and effectively.

1. **Collect Information:** provide training in collecting procedures; help identify and locate sources of information; suggest techniques or provide forms to help collect information; help organize and coordinator collection effort.
2. **Identify Problems:** help committees interpret information; ask questions about information; arrange for an authority to help; insure that priorities are identified.
3. **Match Choices to Ability:** explain constraints and limits of program resources; explain Extension policy; relate experiences that indicate program ability or limits; related choices to overall 4-H concerns and objectives; assist with delegating tasks to appropriate volunteers.
4. **Help Establish Long-Range Goals:** help Council evaluate long-range goals in light of current events, information, and program results; present ideas for consideration; help Council understand overall 4-H goals related to education, youth development and civil rights; provide supportive services.
5. **Identify Annual Objectives:** explain relationship between long-range goals and annual objectives; emphasize that the objectives are this year's part of reaching the long-range goals; ensure that evaluation is considered.
6. **Identify and secure resources to support the program:** explain the responsibility of locating support for the 4-H program; assist Council in establishing a resource development committee.
7. **Evaluate and Report Program Results:** ensure activities are evaluated and that results are reported to appropriate audiences; coordinate evaluation activities; provide suggestions for reporting procedures and who should receive program results.
8. **Make Needed Revisions in the County 4-H Program:** help committee identify positive results as well as shortcomings of activities; arrange for members, volunteers, parents, authorities, and donors to provide reactions and suggestions.

## **Teens on Councils and Committees**

Teens are valuable resources for 4-H councils and committees. See publication EM4866 for more guidance in working with teens in these roles.

## **The Council Membership Process**

The 4-H Council membership is an ongoing activity. The 4-H Council Constitution and Bylaws explain the selection process. When recruiting new Council officers, does your Council consider the following?

1. **Image:** A strong community image of 4-H will make it easier to recruit key leadership.
2. **Selection:** Recruit strong candidates that represent the county or area and demonstrate leadership capabilities.
3. **Recruitment:** Provide an overview of the Council philosophy and role to persuade candidates to serve on the Council.
4. **Orientation:** Provide in-depth training on Council goals, current programs, and operating procedures.
5. **Continuing Education:** Conduct ongoing education of Council Volunteers in personal growth and development. Increase their awareness and understanding of youth related issues.
6. **Recognition:** "Thanks" for a job well done.
7. **Rotation:** Opportunities for the Council volunteers to experience different roles during their tenure on the Council.
8. **Conclusion:** The 4-H Council term should be clearly understood. Rotation of membership brings fresh ideas and enthusiasm for a strong youth program. Experiences on the Council should lead to further opportunities to help develop youth and build stronger communities.

## Standard Operating Procedures for the 4-H Council (SOP's)

Clear, concise, and functional operating procedures can help make the work of the 4-H Council easier for everyone involved. Mutually agreed upon operating procedures allow a group to move quickly and efficiently to the tasks at hand. Standard Operating Procedures vary from group to group and tend to evolve over time. In order for a group to function efficiently and effectively these procedures need to be made available to everyone in the organization. Early in the formation of the group, decide on the standard operating procedures that your group will function with. A written record of these procedures often referred to as "Working Rules," will be helpful to all.

In this section you should place:

1. Your Council's Constitution and Bylaws
2. Meeting agendas
3. Current list of Council actions pertaining to organizational policies and operating procedures

### Current Council Constitution and Bylaws

Insert your Council's current constitution and bylaws at the end of this section.

### Constitution and Bylaws

A **periodic review** of the constitution is important for an organization to evaluate and update procedures and thus strengthen effectiveness. The **constitution** provides structure for the Council to operate. It is an important document that assures the program is operated both efficiently and effectively.

The constitution provides overall structure. **Bylaws** describe the details of how the Council will operate. The **constitution** requires two thirds vote for adoption or revision. The **bylaws** can be modified with a simple majority. The constitution identifies mission and purpose. The bylaws focus on how the mission and purpose will be carried out.

A simple majority means 50% of those eligible (or present) to vote plus one.

The 4-H Council suggests direction and program management to a public agency (Extension) and therefore must be broad in its representation of the county/area.

Civil Rights legislation requires a specific plan to assure all youth have access to Extension 4-H youth development programs

The following sample constitution provides a model for developing or updating the 4-H Council's Constitution and Bylaws. Consider this model a tool for examining the Standard Operating Procedures of your organization.

**CONSTITUTION  
OF THE  
KITSAP COUNTY 4-H COUNCIL**

Date Adopted October 13, 2005

Date Revised October 13, 2005

**ARTICLE I**

**Name**

The name of this organization shall be the Kitsap County 4-H Council hereafter referred to as Council.

**ARTICLE II**

**Section 1: Purpose**

The purpose of the Council shall be to fulfill the mission of the 4-H Youth Development Education Program of Washington State University Extension in cooperation with Extension professionals without regard to race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation, or handicap.

**Section 2: Mission**

The mission of the 4-H Youth Development program is to assist youth and volunteer staff, through informal education, to acquire knowledge, develop life skills and values that enable them to become increasingly self-directing, productive, contributing citizens.

**Section 3: Responsibility**

The responsibility of the 4-H Council is to:

1. Determine and make decisions on 4-H policy, subject to review by Washington State University.
2. Plan, execute, and evaluate a well-balanced program for 4-H youth with both short long term-goals.
3. Promote volunteer leadership development and empower adult and teen volunteers in the 4-H program.
4. Secure and manage the private resources available to the 4-H youth development program by:
  - A. preparing an annual budget.
  - B. giving direction to acquiring private funds.

## CONSTITUTION OF THE KITSAP COUNTY 4-H COUNCIL

- C. approving all expenditures from the Council budget
- D. holding title to any property owned by the Council and providing for management of such property
- 5. Serve as a link between the 4-H youth development program and the county 4-H professional, Fair Board, Agricultural Societies, schools, community agencies, and the public.
- 6. Serve as the 4-H Expansion and Review committee as required by the Civil Rights Act of 1974, Title VI. (If the membership of the Council meets the criteria found in chapter 6, pages 70-79).
- 7. Provide a recognition program for volunteers and youth in the 4-H youth development program.
- 8. Develop and maintain a vibrant, active Council membership that believes the major responsibility of the county 4-H program belongs to the Council in cooperation with the Extension professionals.
- 9. Publicize the objectives and philosophy of the 4-H youth development program and serve as an advocate for youth.

### ARTICLE III

#### Membership

##### Section 1: **Composition**

The membership shall consist of local volunteer leaders, men and women, adults and youth (14 AND OLDER), sponsors and other community leaders, and school, church and civic officials. Members should have interest in Extension education and youth, and should represent all geographic and economic groups. Membership on the Council shall be determined on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, or national origin.

##### Section 2: **Number**

There shall be FIFTEEN (15) members on the Council.

##### Section 3: **Term of Office**

Term of office will be three years for adult members and two years for youth members. Members of the Council may not serve more than two consecutive terms of office except to fill a vacancy. The terms shall be staggered in such a manner that one-third of the membership will be elected each year. Terms will be October 1 through September 30.

## **CONSTITUTION OF THE KITSAP COUNTY 4-H COUNCIL**

### **Section 4: Vacancy**

A vacancy will be declared if a member misses three consecutive meetings without requesting to be excused. Vacancies may be filled by a simple majority vote of the Council.

### **Section 5: Role of 4-H Professionals**

The 4-H professional shall be ex-officio member(s) of the Council and the executive committee, without the privilege of voting or holding office. The 4-H professional shall interpret local program needs, University and Extension policies, and state-wide programs and schedules.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **Section 1: Officers**

The current officers of the Council shall be the president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer.

### **Section 2: Term of Office**

The officers shall be elected at a predetermined annual meeting for a term of one year. Officers may be elected for a second term, but will not be eligible to serve more than two consecutive years.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **Executive Committee**

The current officers of the Council and the immediate past president shall make up the executive committee.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **Meetings**

- A. An annual meeting of the General Membership shall be held prior to October for the purpose of election of Council members.
- B. Monthly meetings of the Council shall be held as established by the executive committee.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **Committees**

Committees deemed necessary by the Council shall be appointed by the President. The members of all standing committees shall serve for a period of one year, such period to be concurrent with the fiscal year of the Council. Ad hoc committee members shall serve in accordance with the charge to that committee.

**CONSTITUTION OF THE KITSAP COUNTY 4-H COUNCIL**

**ARTICLE VIII**

**Quorum**

EIGHT (8) or more duly elected members present at any regular or special meeting will constitute a quorum.

**ARTICLE IX**

**Amendments**

Amendments to the constitution may be made at any annual, regular or special meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of the Council members present providing:

- A. A WRITTEN notice of the pending amendments was sent to all members of the Council at least two weeks and not more than four weeks prior to the meeting, and
- B. A quorum of the Council is present at the meeting.

**ARTICLE X**

**Parliamentary Authority**

Roberts Rules of Order shall govern the proceedings of the Council, not otherwise specified in the Constitution.

The Constitution of the Kitsap County 4-H Council were adopted on (date) at (location.)

Approved:

Bruce H. Bradley October 13, 2005  
President of the 4-H Council - date

Wanda Meeker October 13, 2005  
Secretary of the 4-H Council - date

Reviewed by:

Cathy Moen October 13, 2005  
Extension 4-H Professional - date

**BYLAWS  
OF THE  
KITSAP COUNTY 4-H COUNCIL**

Date Adopted October 3, 2005

Date Revised October 3, 2005

**ARTICLE I**

**Members**

**Section 1: Selection of Council Members**

- A. Council membership should be divided among three groups: youth, leaders/parents and civic/business/education representatives. Ideally the membership should be divided equally among these three groups. A nominating committee of three people appointed by the Council President will prepare the ballot. At least two candidates for each position on the ballot will be nominated. All nominees on the ballot must have given prior consent and be willing to serve if elected.

**Section 2: Council Elections**

- A. Elections shall be held at the August meeting of the General Membership.
- B. All currently enrolled 4-H members and 4-H volunteers comprise the General Membership and are eligible to vote.
- C. Council vacancies may be filled with a simple majority vote of the Council.

**Section 3: Duties of the Council Members**

- A. Attend Council meetings and participate in the activities.
- B. Study and analyze the concerns of youth and assess the goals of youth and their families.
- C. Understand 4-H as a youth development program that offers a variety of delivery modes (school enrichment, out of school programs, clubs, etc.)
- D. Serve on work groups or task forces as needed.
- E. Make contacts with businesses, organizations and individuals on behalf of the 4-H youth program.
- F. Attend various 4-H and youth functions to evaluate the benefits and results.
- G. Look for communities and groups of individuals not being served. Help establish 4-H with those target groups.

## BYLAWS OF THE KITSAP COUNTY 4-H COUNCIL

### ARTICLE II

#### Officers

##### Section 1: **Officers of the Council**

Officers of the Council shall be president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer.

##### Section 2: **Election of Officers**

- A. Officers will be elected by the Council for a one year term at the annual meeting.
- B. Nominations will be made from the floor.
- C. Voting will be done by a paper ballot.
- D. Officers shall serve until their successors have been elected and duly installed.

##### Section 3: **Officer Duties**

- A. The **president** shall be the chief executive officer of the Council. She/He shall preside at all meetings of the Council, and meetings of the executive committee. The president shall appoint the members of all committees of the Council. She/he shall sign all documents requiring the president's signature and shall perform all other duties incidental to the office.
- B. The **vice-president** shall perform the duties of the president in the absence or incapacity of the president. The vice-president shall automatically become president of the Council upon the resignation or death of the president. In the event the vice-president becomes the president, a new vice-president shall be elected to fill the vacancy.
- C. The **secretary** shall keep an accurate record of the activities of the Council and its executive committee, shall issue all notices of the Council meetings, shall be responsible for the correspondence of the Council, shall prepare and keep a listing of all chairs and members of special and standing committees for the current and two previous years, and shall provide the county Extension professionals a copy of all records of the Council.
- D. The **treasurer** shall keep an accurate record of all monies allocated to the Council, shall supervise the disbursement of the funds subject to the direction and approval of the executive committee, and shall serve as A MEMBER of the finance committee.

##### Section 4: **Officer Vacancies**

Vacancies occurring in any of the offices due to illness, death or other incapacity to comply with assumed duties shall be filled by election by council members except in case of president, when the vice-president shall succeed the PRESIDENT. Such officers shall serve only until the next regular election.

## BYLAWS OF THE KITSAP COUNTY 4-H COUNCIL

### ARTICLE III

#### Committees

##### Section 1: **Executive Committee**

- A. The **functions** of the Executive Committee shall be to:
1. perform the essential Council activities that must be acted upon between meetings of the membership.
  2. formulate and recommend programs and activities to the members of the Council in consultation with Extension staff, for their consideration approval.
  3. identify and help formulate other committees necessary to further the purposes and functions of the Council.
  4. serve as liaison with other groups and to the total Extension program.
  5. serve as a planning group.
- B. The executive committee, in consultation with Extension professionals, will formulate the agenda and have it sent to the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE members prior to all regular and special meetings.
- C. A majority of the executive committee members must be present to constitute a quorum for the transacting of business.

##### Section 2: **Finance and Budget Committee**

- A. The finance and budget committee will oversee the financial condition of the Council and determine a yearly budget accordingly. Specific functions to include:
1. report the financial condition and financial results of the operations of the Council.
  2. prepare a balance sheet and regular statement of financial activities.
  3. initiate an annual audit.
  4. determine the need of fundraising activities and provide leadership if necessary.
- B. THE PRESIDENT WILL APPOINT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FINANCE AND BUDGET COMMITTEE. THE treasurer will ALSO serve as MEMBER of the finance and budget committee.

### Section 3: **Expansion and Review Committee**

An Expansion and Review Committee shall be designated if the 4-H PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS DO not meet the minimum membership requirements as described IN THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1974 TITLE VI.

- A. The purpose of the Expansion and Review committee is to assure equal access by all youth and adults to all 4-H youth programs conducted by WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY Extension in accordance with the Civil Rights Act of 1974 Title VI.
- B. The Expansion and Review committee will comply with the membership requirements IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1974 TITLE VI.
- C. Specific functions are to:
  - 1. collect accurate data regarding the race of the county or area populations and the participation in 4-H programs. Determine which geographic areas include minorities.
  - 2. develop a plan to involve as many youth and adults as possible in the county 4-H program. Utilize all reasonable efforts in geographic areas which include population or more than one race, giving every opportunity possible to youth and adults of all ages, sexes, races, income, and physical abilities.
  - 3. develop a method for staying abreast of changes in the interests and needs of youth in the county.
  - 4. keep all members of the Council aware of the changes that need to be made in the 4-H program as shown by the results of the above functions; to assist in carrying out the actions necessary to facilitate these changes.

### Section 4: **Public Relations Committee**

The public relations committee shall:

- A. inform the public about 4-H through various media.
- B. develop community support for the 4-H program.
- C. get more people involved and increase membership in 4-H.

- D. assist all other committees in the Council with their public relations needs.
- E. assume responsibility for activities that promote the overall 4-H program.

### **Section 5: Program and Activity Committees**

Specific program and activity committee will be formed to plan, execute, and evaluate components of the 4-H program in the county. Duties will be specified in committee job descriptions.

## **BYLAWS OF THE KITSAP COUNTY 4-H COUNCIL**

### **ARTICLE IV**

#### **Meetings**

- A. **The regularly scheduled meetings of the Council shall be to** conduct the business of the Council as outlined under Article II of the Constitution. More specifically the meetings shall be to:
  - 1. approve, reject, amend or refer back to the committee for further study reports from special or standing committees.
  - 2. introduce new ideas with requests for the **PRESIDENT** to appoint committees to make further studies and report back their recommendations to the Council.
  - 3. evaluate reports of completed activities, projects or programs and make suggestions for improvement.
  - 4. provide Council members information concerning the area, district and state Extension programs helpful to them in their efforts to address identified needs.
  - 5. approve and disburse money in support of programs supported by the Council.
- B. Special meetings of the Council may be called by the **PRESIDENT**, the executive committee or upon request of any five **COUNCIL** members.
- C. Written notice shall be sent to all members of the Council at least one week in advance of all meetings. Notice shall include the **AGENDA**, date, time, and place of the meeting.
- D. Each member shall be entitled to one vote.

### **ARTICLE V**

#### **Amendments**

Amendments to the Bylaws may be made at any annual, regular or special meeting by a simple majority vote of the COUNCIL members present providing:

- A. A WRITTEN notice of the pending amendment was sent to all members of the Council at least two weeks and not more than four weeks prior to the meeting and
- B. a quorum of the Council is present at the meeting.

## **BYLAWS OF THE KITSAP COUNTY 4-H COUNCIL**

### **ARTICLE VII**

#### **Parliamentary Authority**

Roberts Rules of Order shall govern the proceedings of the Council not otherwise specified in the Bylaws.

The Bylaws of the Kitsap County 4-H Council were adopted on October 3, 2005 at Bremerton, Washington

Approved:

Bruce H. Bradley October 13, 2005  
President of the 4-H Council-date

Wanda Meeker October 13, 2005  
Secretary of the 4-H Council-date

Reviewed by:

Cathy Moen October 13, 2005  
Extension Professional-date

## 4-H Council Meeting Guidelines

The 4-H council meeting should be run in an efficient, orderly manner. As a member of an organized group you need to know at least the basic principles of parliamentary procedure in order to share in carrying on its regular business.

The chair or executive committee should decide at the beginning of the year or term of office how council meetings will be conducted. Will formal parliamentary procedures be followed or will the group use a consensus decision process?

Formal parliamentary procedures - Robert's Rules of Order or other procedure guidelines are followed. Formal motions and a second are required before a topic is discussed and action taken.

Consensus - Informal discussion regarding an issue or topic until the group reaches consensus on action to be taken. A record of the decision should be noted in the minutes or a motion confirming the decision should be voted on.

The order of business or agenda remains the same regardless of the decision making procedures used by the group.

### Basic Meeting Agenda

- Call to Order
- Opening Ceremonies (if appropriate)
- Approval of Minutes
- Treasurer's Report
- Officer Reports
- Committee Reports
- Unfinished Business
- New Business
- Announcements
- Adjournment

The agenda is prepared by the Council president in consultation with the executive committee and the Extension professionals. The prepared agenda should be printed or listed on a blackboard or flip chart during the meeting. Give members an opportunity to add agenda items if time allows.

For meeting effectiveness - submit agenda items in a timely manner. Allot time for discussion and list the action desired. (See "Agenda Planning Guide" at the end of Chapter 2.) An advanced agenda is preferred.

Call to Order - The chair gains attention and calls the meeting to order.

Opening Ceremonies (if appropriate)

Pledges

Approval of Minutes - Treasurer's Report. (A time save is to send the minutes to the members with the agenda or the newsletter. Call for corrections without taking meeting time for reading the minutes.)

Officer Reports - The chair calls for a treasurer's report and other officer reports as appropriate.

Committee Reports - Reports may be given by active committees that have progress or status of interest.

The executive committee will report meetings conducted without full membership attendance. Standing and special committees report progress or recommended action. The person delivering the report will initiate the desired action by saying *I move the acceptance of the report or I move the specific action to be taken by the Council.*

Unfinished Business - Minutes from previous meetings will indicate any unfinished business. The chair, officers or the group may decide if the timing is appropriate to deal with unfinished business.

New Business - New business to be brought before the group may be proposed by the officers, council members, staff or by 4-H constituents.

Announcements - The date and location of the next meeting, social activities and other items or interest are announced to the members.

Adjournment - The chair will declare the meeting adjourned by saying *the meeting is adjourned.* A vote is not taken.

Simple Parliamentary Procedure

Refer to EM4875 Parliamentary Procedure Made Easier.

## **Consensus Building Tools**

Consensus building is a collaborative approach to problem solving. This process brings council members together to develop consensus for needed actions on problems. A variety of consensus building tools may be used, such as mediation and collaborative problem solving. A competent facilitator can be helpful with issues that are controversial.

The potential advantages of consensus building approaches include:

*Better decisions.* As group learn about each others' views and needs, and develop common ground for action, they can create solutions that better reflect the concerns of other parties as well as their own.

*Faster implementation.* Parties are less likely to block implementation if they understand that a plan or policy reflects their input and has been crafted to meet their basic interests. Parties involved in consensus building often make commitments to participate in the implementation.

*Bridge community differences.* Consensus building processes allow communities and the affected interests to bridge differences and work together to find mutually acceptable solutions based on common interests.

*Educate constituencies.* Consensus building processes can educate constituents on the complex nature of the problems and issues and on others' concerns that will need to be addressed in solutions.

*Deal productively with shared power for decision-making.* Consensus building processes bring a wide array of stakeholders to the table to seek mutually beneficial solutions as a response to the reality that power has become widely and thinly distributed with many interests able to block or veto the possibility of action.

*Create new resources.* There are fewer federal, state and local dollars available to deal with critical issues facing our society. Consensus building processes can engage a range of public, private, and community institutions and leadership to bring a wider array of resources to bear on the problem.

*Manage diversity and build common ground.* Consensus building processes can help increasingly diverse communities improve inter-group relations, build trust and find common ground.

*Intergovernmental collaboration.* Consensus building can effectively involve different governmental units and non-governmental actors in building a collaborative agreement on issues that cut across jurisdictional lines.

### Deciding whether to use consensus building

When To Consider Using	When Not To Use
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An issue is complex</li> <li>• Many parties are involved</li> <li>• No one entity has complete control over the solution to the problems, or access to resources</li> <li>• The issues are negotiable and/or</li> <li>• People are willing to participate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When a council faces an emergency</li> <li>• When level of concern is not great</li> <li>• When a fundamental value or principle is the focus of problem</li> <li>• Legal clarification is needed; and/or</li> <li>• Community is so polarized that face-to-face discussions are not possible.</li> </ul>

### Addressing concerns with consensus building

Concern	Response
Abdication of power?	Leaders retain their legal responsibility and final decision making authority in consensus processes
Does it undermine representative government?	Public consensus processes supplement democratic processes
What about accountability?	Implementation of consensus processes is controlled by elected leaders
Will it take too much time?	Difficult issues require patience, time and participation in order to develop a plan of action that is supported and can be implemented
Do these processes thwart the will of the majority?	Consensus processes contribute to identifying the agreement of the majority after all views are shared and fairly heard

A strong 4-H Council is concerned with effectiveness and efficiency.

Effectiveness - Deciding what ought to be done. Deciding the right things to do. This is vision and leadership.

Efficiency - Doing things right. Determining how things are to be done.

## Using 4-H Committees Effectively

### Role and Function of Committees

It may be more effective for a 4-H Council to appoint a committee to perform a task, make a recommendation or develop a plan for the Council to address as a whole. The number and nature of 4-H committees are at the discretion of each Council.

#### Consider the following to form a successful committee.

1. **A clearly defined task:** Committee members need to understand what they are to do and why they are to do it.
2. **An effective chairperson:** He/she sets the tone, pace and strategies for the committee. He/she must be thoroughly acquainted with the goals of the organization and the part the committee plays in the achievement of these goals. He/she delegates and coordinates work and provides a climate in which thoughtful deliberation is possible.
3. **An effective Extension professional:** The Extension support professional needs to effectively support the chairperson.
4. **Effective committee meetings:** If the first three ingredients are present, a good committee meeting generally results. Such meetings are action-oriented, based on a sound agenda with all necessary data available for the decisions to be made.
5. **Committee members thoughtfully appointed:** Committee members should be appointed with a clear view of the goals the committee must achieve and of the skills brought by each committee member to assist in the achievement of those goals.
6. **Evaluation of work:** Periodic evaluation of committee work is valuable in achieving goals.

Adopted from: *The Effective Voluntary Board of Directors*, Conrad & Glenn, Swallow Press, 1983.



## Ways to Make Committees Work Effectively

1. Make sure the committee has a real purpose.
2. Make sure everyone knows what the purpose is.
3. Have the right people on the committee.
4. Remove committee members who are not right for the committee or who do not participate.
5. Don't hold meetings without a clear reason.
6. Give advance notice of meetings.
7. Whenever possible, distribute materials in advance.
8. Encourage everyone to participate during the meeting.
9. Discourage members who monopolize the discussion.
10. Start and end meetings on time.
11. Schedule important items first on the agenda.
12. Allocate time for discussion according to the importance of each issue.
13. Send members a summary of the meeting, keying on the decisions made and on the assignments given.
14. Don't have more than eight people on a committee.
15. Be specific about tasks and deadlines.
16. Don't discuss, re-discuss, and continue to discuss items.
17. Provide an agenda for each meeting.
18. Conclude each meeting with a summary of what is to be done by whom.
19. Double-check for agreement on important issues.
20. Don't allow unrelated discussions during meetings.
21. Make sure everyone gets credit for the accomplishments of the committee.
22. Use seating arrangements that allow everyone to interact.
23. Use name cards if attendees don't know each other.
24. Allow some social time following each meeting.

*Source: McCurley, Steve, and Sue Vineyard. 101 Ideas for Volunteer Programs. Heritage Arts Publishing: Downers Grove, IL. 1986. p. 60.*

## Types of Committees

Several ways to organize work:  
Main areas of focus  
Committee operations and functions

There are different types of committees for different functions of an organization. **Standing committees** have ongoing functions and are an integral part of the Council structure. **Program or activity committees** are organized around specific goals, educational programs, activities or projects. **Ad Hoc** or special committees are created for specific short-term projects, studies or one-time events. Understanding what types of committee are best suited for your Council is important in a progressive 4-H program. Carry out work in cooperation with Extension professionals (partnership).

## Standing Committees

Standing committees deal with the ongoing processes of an organization. They are concerned with system maintenance and evaluation. Common standing committees for the 4-H Council include the executive, expansion and review, budget and finance, and public relations and marketing. A brief description of these committees and their functions follows:

### Executive Committee

Composed of all of the elected officers and the immediate past president, with the Extension professionals serving as ex-officio member. The executive committee has the following functions.

- perform the essential Council activities that must be acted upon between meetings of the membership,
- formulate and recommend programs and activities to the members of the Council for their consideration and approval,
- identify and help formulate other committees necessary to further the purposes and functions of the Council,
- carry on such other business as may be delegated to it by the Council membership,
- formulate the agenda and have it sent to members prior to the serve as liaison with other groups and to the total Extension Council,
- serve as a planning group.

### **Expansion and Review**

The 4-H program has thrived over the years because it has adapted programs and projects to keep pace with changes over time. This committee helps see that the Council keeps pace with these changes. This committee has the following functions.

- collect and review population and 4-H enrollment data and determine geographic areas that include minorities,
- develop a method for staying abreast of changes in the interest and needs of youth in the county, utilizing all reasonable efforts in geographic areas that include a population of more than one race,
- develop a plan to involve as many youth and adults as possible in the 4-H program,
- develop a plan to involve all segments of the community in the 4-H program, giving every opportunity possible to youth and adults of all ages, sexes, races, income and physical abilities.
- keep all members of the Council aware of the changes that need to be made in the 4-H program as shown by the results of the above function, to assist in carrying out the actions necessary to facilitate these changes.

### **Budget and Finance**

The budget and finance committee develops the budget in keeping with the purpose, philosophy and long-term goals of the organization, sets appropriate financial objectives and identifies steps to achieve them.

Specific functions of a Council budget and finance committee include, to:

- develop a proposed budget for the year based upon planned programs and activities and prospective income,
- report the financial condition and financial results of the operations of the 4-H Council,
- prepare a balance sheet,
- prepare a regular statement of financial activities,
- conduct an annual audit,
- submit County Financial Summary annually to the State 4-H Office

### **Resource Development**

Resources are human (adults and youth) and financial (fund raising and grants.) Committees can plan and conduct training, hold fund raising events (raffles, bake sales, fun runs) and write grants to benefit 4-H youth.

### **Public Relations and Marketing**

4-H is a great youth development program. However, in order to be successful in fulfilling the mission of 4-H, we must do an effective job of marketing. This means we need to carefully plan the right Programs at the right Place and time, and at the right Price. These P's are the basic elements of a marketing strategy. Specific functions of the Public Relations and Marketing committee include, to:

- inform the public about 4-H through various media
- develop community support for the 4-H youth development program,
- get more people involved in the 4-H program,
- ultimately increase membership in 4-H, assist all other committees on the council with their public relations needs.

### **Program/Activity Committees**

Committees can have many and varied functions. Program committees have broad responsibilities for a program area such as health, clothing, water quality, or youth at risk. They will employ a range of methodology to reach the educational goals.

A specific event or activity is the focus of an activity committee. Examples could include the speech contest, county fair or selection of awards.

The committees work closely with the Extension professionals and often share some of the responsibilities with the staff, but the primary responsibility rests with the committee. Remembering the details it takes to run an activity successfully is not easy. Job descriptions, work files, reports from previous committees and complete committee commissions all will help the committee do their job.

## **Ad Hoc/Special**

Ad-hoc or special committees are short duration committees formed to accomplish a specific task. There must be a clear differentiation between ad-hoc and standing committees. Remember, standing committees deal with the ongoing processes of an organization. They are concerned with system maintenance and evaluation. Ad-hoc committees are formed to accomplish specific tasks such as research, study, evaluation, or problem-solving.

Some special considerations for ad-hoc or special committees are, they:

- should be of predetermined duration,
- can be formed either from within a specific committee, or from any or all of the committees of the Council,
- can elicit participation from outside of the Council and committee structure of the organization,
- should understand their purpose and goal.

As stated before, a committee need not be composed only of Council volunteers. Many Councils increase involvement through non-Council members on committees. Some Councils require that the committee chairpersons be Council volunteers.

## **Job Descriptions**

A job description is a general explanation of a specific area of responsibility. Its purpose is to clarify the overall focus of a job and explain why it is important. Committee job descriptions should be developed for each on-going committee. Position descriptions can then be developed for specific individuals.

A job description should include the following components:

- Date:
- Name of Committee:
- Purpose:
- Responsibilities:
- Responsible to:
- Time Commitment:
- Qualifications:
- Training:
- Resources Available:

How does a **Position Description** differ from a Job Description?

A position description is written specifically for a particular person. It provides a way for the volunteer and the supervisor to communicate and agree on expectations and time frames. Position descriptions are based on the general job descriptions, but focuses on specific responsibilities and duties.

Why are Position Descriptions important?

Position descriptions serve as a communication tool. This will help volunteers and paid staff to:

- document roles and responsibilities,
- clarify individual needs,
- organize programs and projects,
- manage time,
- stimulate volunteer growth and development,
- recognize volunteer involvement,
- determine strengths and weaknesses,
- expand and strengthen the goals of the organization,
- develop training experiences based on specific identified needs.

Position descriptions are not, however, an inflexible listing of rules and boundaries. They are merely guidelines for building and protecting people and programs. To be effective, they must be revised and refined frequently.

A position description is written by the volunteer and the supervisor. In doing so it becomes an agreement documenting what the volunteer is willing and able to do for 4-H and what Extension will do and provide for the volunteer.

A template can be found as part of the WA State 4-H web page <http://4h.wsu.edu>  
The specific website for the template is <http://4h.wsu.edu/voluntr/indexpage.htm>