**Checklist for Chairing an Effective Board Meeting**

* Be aware that your interest and enthusiasm are contagious. You set the tone for the meeting.
* Be future oriented. Use the past as a guideline; do not let it hold the board back.
* Build on the board’s discussion. Do not change the topic or compete with other board members to meet your own needs.
* Come prepared and expect other board members to do the same. Ensure agenda packages are sent to board members at least five days before the board meeting.
* Communicate that you value everyone’s time. Start on time. Call board meetings for odd times, such as 7:06 p.m. to bet board members’ attention. End on time, or perhaps even early. This approach lets board members know they have succeeded in accomplishing what they set out to do.
* Control dominant people without turning them off. Recognize that conflict is not necessarily a bad thing. Do not put people on the defensive.
* Focus on what can be done. Do not continuously struggle with your board’s and organization’s limitations.
* Give others a chance to run the meeting. Those who learn to lead also learn how to participate. This is a good way of preparing future chairs.
* Have a problem solving approach. Do not look for someone to blame.
* Keep all board members informed about what is expected of them. During the meeting, posting notes somewhere in the room that everyone can see is helpful.
* Listen carefully to everyone. Paraphrase to understand, not to judge.
* Only leave board meetings early for emergencies. Encourage others to stay for the whole meeting.
* Prepare the agenda for board meeting, with input from other board members and appropriate members of senior staff.
* Remember that everyone’s ideas have value to your board. Encourage creative thinking. Some of the best approaches and solutions have arisen out of ideas that at first seemed off the wall.
* Report back promptly. Be sure to get meeting minutes out no more than one week after a board meeting.
* Set a meeting norm that everyone’s contribution is valuable. Respect the ideas of others, even if you do not agree.

Source: “Board Development – Meetings that Work” PDF, Board Development Program, Alberta Culture and Community Spirit.