

Tips on Running a Coin Club Meeting

Here are some basic suggestions for organizing and presenting your club meeting.

1. Find a meeting area that is affordable and easily accessible to the needs of your group. Pick a leader, secretary, and treasurer (and keep good books).
2. Make sure you have liability insurance. Join the ONA as a Club for group rate club insurance. Most facilities today required proof of it before they rent out their facility.
3. Consider junior members when planning your meeting times as some may not be able to stay past 8:00pm. Even consider a day meeting on a weekend.
4. Charge a fee per member (juniors may be cheaper) to help cover the building rental and insurance costs. Most clubs today have their fee structure in the \$20.00-\$30.00 per year range, but some are less expensive.
5. Focus on the hobby, that's why people are there, and minimize the business aspect of the meeting, that's why some people leave and don't come back.
6. Establish a few basic rules such as mutual respect for others.
7. Make sure, once established, your Club information is updated with the Ontario Numismatic Association (ONA) Find A Club and Canadian Coin News (CCN) Collecting/Coin Clubs. This way people can find you and your membership may grow.
8. Keep records of the meeting and send them out to all the members. Some may be in the form of meeting minutes, or some may establish a newsletter.
9. Start and stop your meeting on time.
10. Determine a pattern to run your meeting such as but not limited to a welcome, brief news about what's going on in the Numismatic community, an educational presentation on a numismatic topic to others, Club News, a break to meet others in the group, draws, an auction of items submitted by members and closing remarks.
 - a. **The Welcome:** This can be a few simple words to start the meeting but as some clubs do they have an attendance or on-time-draw draw or some gimmick to get people there on time.
 - b. **News Brief:** This can be information about upcoming show dates, current numismatic related items from Canadian Coin News, Coin World, Local News, etc. It can also allow feedback from members on recently attended shows or item exchange experiences. Remember to keep it *brief*.
 - c. **Club News:** This could be membership information, including membership awareness drives at the local market, news about the meeting hall if required, etc. Regardless, keep it short, or prepare people for a longer 'business meeting' at the previous meeting.

- d. **The Presentation:** This can vary based on the size and establishment of the group. Visuals are always best as they keep people engaged. They can be simple show and tell of an item to more elaborate power point presentations. In any presentation the material should remain relevant and not tangent off into some other topic that will lose the interest of most people. Recommended length is 20 minutes but if the topic is longer, prepare the audience for it at the previous meeting. Again, depending on the group, Power Point presentations involve the most work with obtaining, setting up, and taking down. Availability of equipment may vary too from borrowing to renting the equipment.
- e. **The Break:** Set the return to meeting time up front and stick to it. The break can be just that, a break to get up and stretch, or a snack or even a light lunch can be made available. Determine a cost and apply it if possible, or allow for donations, whatever suits your group, but cover your costs.
- f. **Draws:** Technically, any game of chance wherever you live, may require a license, however if the event is restricted to within the club, with no advertising and not out of proportion (eg less than 50% of the prize value is returned to the ticket purchaser), then the event seems to be overlooked. Draws can vary from a penny -draw, where a ticket with 15-20 stubs is purchased and the ticket holder can submit as many of the stubs against the prize selection available, to a buy one ticket for a fixed price or 3 tickets for a reduced price. (This means the club takes a small cut). Some clubs hold what they call a Pirate's treasure where 5 foreign coins or \$1.00 can be exchanged for one ticket, winner takes all. (This means the club takes no cut).
- g. **Auctions:** Like draws, these are kept in house and are provided as a medium for members to sell their items to other members. Some clubs run the auction as a service to the members while other have a fee structure, either tiered or percentage based as a revenue generator. Auctions usually start with a reserve bid, set to protect the seller, and if two or more people are interested in the item an auction will occur, otherwise it becomes a simple transaction at the reserve price. Try and find out what people in you club are interested in so a bid start at 50% of the retail value will generate some bidding activity. It isn't always easy to find an auctioneer but whoever you get, it's up to the group to keep it fun and active.
- h. **Closing Remarks:** Conclude the meeting by thanking everyone for coming out with hopes of seeing them next meeting. Remind the membership about the next meeting event and request help for any take down of chairs, tables etc. as many hands make light work.

11. Additional Considerations:

- Once a year have a social, whether at Christmas or in the summer and invite the non-Numismatic members to attend.
- Consider information outreach at local markets or malls. Most people you encounter will want to know how to sell their inherited collections.
- Hosting a local coin show can be challenging and yet fun. Remember these events can be labour intensive so have lots of volunteers. Start off small and see how the interest grows.
- At your club meeting consider allowing members only to set up tables for commerce to buy/sell/trade with you if table space permits.
- Send out meeting reminder notices, most of us have good memories but they get shorter as the years pass.
- Structure your meeting times to your area. Some areas may want to run 12 meetings a year where some areas would have no attendees during the summer months and other during the winter months.
- Contact the ONA if you are considering starting a club as funds may be available for this.
- Check with other support groups such as Canadian Association For Numismatic Education (CAFNE), part of the Royal Canadian Numismatic Association (RCNA). They may be able to provide you with some project money or even club start-up funds.