Sample Family Meeting Agenda
Developed by Sarah Jane Cavanaugh, Board Member, The Russell Family Foundation

**Opening Reading | 5 minutes**
A story that reflects one of the values of your foundation (serious or humorous). Focuses trustees and sets the tone for the meeting.

**Executive Session | 15–30 minutes**
What keeps the executive director up at night? Trustees are active listeners, building a trusting relationship with the executive director.

**Plenary Session | 1–3 hours**
Educational session on a topic determined by a board survey, trustees have compelling interest. Might also be a visit and story by a constituent who has benefited by a grant from your foundation.

**Joke | 5 minutes**
Insert humor whenever possible. This assignment can be given to a quiet trustee to encourage participation.

**Grantmaking Session | 1–3 hours**

**Consent Agenda & Parking Lot | 15 minutes**
Reports are mailed to trustees in advance, they approve all in one motion. Put issues to be discussed at future meetings on the Parking Lot.

**Celebrate | 15–60 minutes**
Allocate time to share stories, historical family pictures, build on family heritage and history. Treat this time as sacred.

**Executive Session | 30 minutes**
*Pass a Sacred Object:* give a quiet trustee the assignment of bringing a meaningful object to pass around the Board table. The Trustee explains why this object is sacred and why it relates to the family and/or the foundation.

**Rules:**
1) No interruption or rebuttal
2) May pass without speaking

*(Note: This agenda does not allow for breaks or lunch which can be scheduled as necessary)*