

Sample Family Foundation Meeting Agenda

Created by Sarah Cavanaugh, Board Member, Russell Family Foundation

5 minutes Opening Reading

A story that reflects one of the values of your foundation (serious or humorous). Focuses Trustees and sets the tone for the meeting.

15–30 minutes Executive Session

What keeps the executive director up at night? Trustees are active listeners, building a trusting relationship with the executive director

1–3 hours Plenary Session

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.

5 minutes Joke

Insert humor whenever possible. This assignment can be given to a quiet Trustee to encourage participation.

1–3 hours Grantmaking Session

15 minutes Consent Agenda & Parking Lot

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.

15–60 minutes Celebrate

Allocate time to share stories, historical family pictures, build on family heritage and history. Treat this time as sacred.

30 minutes Executive Session

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)