

Spotlight On...



MAKING MEETINGS MAGIC

August 2026

Where the real work of governance comes to life

They're the moments when the Committee of Governance comes together to steer the Neighbourhood House—checking in on progress, weighing up decisions, and making sure the House stays true to its purpose and community.

But effective meetings aren't just about agendas and procedures. They're about people: how we communicate, how we listen, how we raise concerns, and how we make space for ideas and solutions. When meetings run well, they build confidence, clarity, and connection. When they don't... well, everyone feels it.

Most Neighbourhood Houses meet monthly or bi-monthly, following a structured agenda to keep things on track - see the annotated resource in the link below. Within that structure, though, is plenty of opportunity to shape meetings so they're smooth, purposeful and—even better—enjoyable!

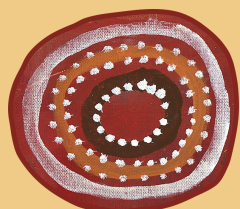
This edition of **Spotlight On** explores the “how” of great meetings: what to expect, when to speak up and ways your committee can continue strengthening its practice.

[**DOWNLOAD TEMPLATE
AGENDA AND MINUTES**](#)

What should a meeting look like?

This format is based on good practice and includes requirements from Associations Incorporation Reform Act, ACNC and CAV Model Rules of Association:

1. **Welcome & Acknowledgement of Country**
2. **Apologies & Attendance** - who is there and who has let you know they can't come
3. **Conflicts of Interest Declaration**
4. **Minutes of Previous Meeting** – review and approve these are correct, or take action to correct them
5. **Business Arising** – updates or next steps on previous actions
6. **Manager's Report** – overview of programs, staffing, key operations – responding to the NH's Strategic Plan and Risk and Finance responsibilities
7. **Financial Report** – review income, expenditure, and budget status
8. **Strategic Items** – planning, policy updates, risk management
9. **General Business** – other matters raised by members
10. **Meeting Close & Next Meeting Date**



Balarinji Collective

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands we live and work on, and honor the enduring connection that Aboriginal and Torres Strait people have to the land. We pay our deepest respects to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all First Nations People.

Beyond the Agenda

When committee members have the right information in front of them, conversations become clearer, decisions become easier, and the whole meeting feels more purposeful.

Good governance relies on asking:

- What do we really need to know about how the organisation is tracking?
- How do our programs and activities reflect our strategy and purpose?
- Are our finances secure—and where can they be strengthened?
- Are our staff and volunteers safe, supported, and able to do their best work?

When committees focus on the information that genuinely matters, there is less rehashing, less confusion, and more confidence in the direction being set.

“Ok, But When Do I Speak Up?”



Speaking up is not just allowed—it’s expected.

Here’s when and why to do it:

- If you don’t understand something – ask for clarification. It’s your legal responsibility to understand decisions.
- If something feels risky or unclear – raise concerns. Oversight is part of your role.
- If you have relevant experience or insight – share it. Diverse perspectives strengthen governance.
- If you disagree – respectfully voice your view. Silence can be misinterpreted as agreement.
- If you notice a gap or missed item – speak up to ensure nothing important is overlooked.

*Tip: If you're unsure whether to speak, ask yourself: “Would I be comfortable being legally responsible for this decision?”
If not—ask the question.*

DOWNLOAD ACTIVITY
MEETING REFLECTION

Has this been useful? Now it’s time to talk about it.

If this edition of **Spotlight On** has got you thinking, talk about it!

- In your next Committee meeting
- With your Neighbourhood House Network or other NHs
- In [this feedback link!](#)

Spotlight On is a shared neighbourhood house networks initiative created by CHANH, RANCH and EGNNH. Previous editions can be found on chanh.org.au/spotlight-on/