

Conducting All Candidates Meetings

First: These are simple to conduct. The hardest part is contacting and lining up the candidates.

Second: There are three levels of government (Municipal/Provincial/Federal) and the same meeting format can be used with all three.

The **benefits** to your organization are:

- Your organization become known to the candidates
- Your organization is seen as being helpful to people, candidates especially
- Helps connect your organization with “new/more/other” people in your area
- Creates a political connections for your organization
- Adds to your organizations status in your community big time

Steps and time line leading up to actual candidate meeting

Steps Leading To Meeting	Time Line In Weeks/Days Before Meeting
Find Out/Know election day date	At least 10 weeks in advance
Set tentative meeting date Contact Local Paper(s) for best meeting date against their publishing plans and invite them to meeting	At least 10 weeks in advance
Estimate attendance expected	At least 10 weeks in advance
Estimate length of meeting – 2.5 hours (10 min. for late start, 10 min. opening introductions, ½ hour for trustees, ¾ hour for mayor and ¾ hour for candidates, 10 minutes for closing)	
Find and book meeting room Room needs mikes and sound system, adequate chairs, tables, and lectern. Book meeting room for 3 hours as start meeting a half hour before formal part to provide community time to socialize with candidates	At least 10 weeks in advance
Contact Radio, TV, etc and involve them in meeting	At least 10 weeks in advance
Contact Candidates Start with incumbent or front running candidate Once confirmed with incumbent/leading candidate, the other candidates will fall in line too. Need: each candidate’s correct name, address, email address and phone numbers. Note campaign manager’s name if given, as s/he can often be your best contact.	At least 10 weeks in advance
Find, select and confirm meeting Master of Ceremonies or Moderator	At least 8 weeks in advance

<p>Advertising Meeting Plan and use everything you can. We use flyers, sign board at meeting facility, emails, newspaper articles, web page on org's web site, radio/TV interviews, talk it up, word of mouth, etc. (Mailings and newspaper ads cost too much for this activity.)</p>	<p>Plan 8 weeks in advance. Implement 2 to 3 weeks in advance</p>
<p>Plan meeting (with moderator) Three parts possible in municipal elections Trustee, Mayor, and Councillors Parts. Meeting Plan for each Part: Moderator welcomes everyone and introduces candidates and explains process to all Introductions – presentation order determined by draw names from a hat – each candidate speaks for 3 min. Moderator times and give 15 sec. warning. Issue debate (if issues) followed by audience questions Questions from audience either in writing or verbal into mikes in audience area. Written is better as it is impossible for the moderator to control/cut off people being long winded on the audience mikes. Allow only 2 min. for each person's response to a question. Closing Candidate Comments – moderator gives each candidate 2 min. closing comments. Moderator Closing thanking everyone including host organization.</p>	<p>At least 1 to 2 weeks in advance</p>
<p>Other Meeting Considerations If written question used: 1) set up side table, 2) provide jar/bowl for questions beside moderator so moderator can read, select and combine questions, 3) need pencils and notepads roughly 4 X 6". (Large paper leads to impossible questions.), 4) funnel questions to moderator as appropriate. Coffee – provide free, people appreciate gesture, and think better of sponsoring organization. Doors open a half hour in advance so community can socialize with candidates before meeting starts. Tables for Candidate materials on a side wall are a must. Donation Jar – On table with notepads and pencils for questions and on the free coffee table.</p>	