

*town meeting  
seventy-six*

**LOCAL SET-UP MANUAL**

## CONTENTS

The Town Meeting Design	4
Planning a Great Event	5
The Set-up Tasks	6
A Thirteen Week Timeline for the Set-up	7
Sponsorship and Authorization	10
Promotion and Reception	12
Facilities and Set-up	14
Materials and Production	16
Food Services	18
Child Care	20

THE WELCOME

coffee and registration

THE TIMES AND THE BICENTENNIAL ERA

THE PRESENT CHALLENGES

talk

workshop

THE INTERLUDE

buffet and drama

THE FUTURE AND THE AMERICAN CITIZEN

THE PRACTICAL PROPOSALS

talk

workshop

THE PLENARY

reports and closing

## PLANNING A GREAT EVENT

The day is approaching when your community will be participating with 5,000 other communities throughout the United States in celebrating the 200th anniversary of the founding of this nation.

Historically, America has demonstrated through her democratic principles and institutions the possibility for every person to realize his or her full human potential. Leading the world in economic and social progress, this nation has upheld equal rights and opportunity for all.

Recent events, however, have shaken the confidence of many Americans. Now we begin to see that many of our past solutions must be adapted to the new age in which we live. This, our nation's 200th birthday celebration, comes at a moment when we are again, like our forefathers in the American Revolution, challenged to look to the future and, as one people, to decide how we will act out our common destiny. The Bicentennial provides the opportunity to recreate the Town Meeting as a vehicle for rethinking and redeciding our nation's purpose for the next two hundred years.

Town Meeting '76 is a day-long locally sponsored community gathering of two hundred to four hundred persons. Using a common problem-solving methodology, the participants in the Town Meeting list and categorize the issues facing the nation, articulate the challenges to the nation that are implicit in those issues, and then create the practical proposals to meet these challenges. The climax of the day comes in the closing plenary when these are presented along with the new story of the community and the new national song. The heritage of the American people is celebrated at the lunch time buffet with singing and entertainment provided by local groups.

Broad in its scope, focused in its thrust, Town Meeting '76 is truly a product of the American imagination. This is reflected in every aspect of its preparation and execution. Planning and setting up this event requires careful orchestration and particular attention to detail. On the following page is a list of the various set-up tasks, together with a brief description of what's involved. The rest of the manual is an attempt to organize those details so as to objectify and somewhat simplify the set-up task.

## THE SET UP TASKS

The Town Meeting Coordinator oversees the entire Town Meeting event in a local community. He is responsible for supervising and enlisting help in various aspects of the Town Meeting. He serves as local liason with Town Meeting Seventy-Six. He oversees staff arrangements and finances. He appoints and works with coordinators of the following specific areas to see that every detail is taken care of.

Authorization and Sponsorship involves securing permission from governmental and business leaders for the Town Meeting and enlisting their support in various ways.

Promotion and Reception involves ensuring the attendance of 400 citizens at the Town Meeting. This includes engaging the broadest segment of the population in the Town Meeting through enlisting community support involving different groups of people to participate and plan the event. It also involves enlisting help to promote the Town Meeting through newspapers, radio and TV announcements, distributing posters and brochures, advertising the event, arranging parades or other special events the community decides upon. It also involves greeting registering and hosting local citizens who attend the event.

Facilities and Set Up involves securing a suitable facility and supervising and enlisting help for the set up and clean up of the site.

Materials and Production involves working with the promotion and publicity in printing posters and leaflets before the Town Meeting and getting supplies for the meeting, including typewriters, ditto machines, and the help of typists during the meeting for document production. It also involves the general coordination of all supplies and materials, including soliciting donated materials, and gathering all equipment for set up. It also includes the creation and mounting of decor for the day.

Food Service involves planning the menu, taking charge of food preparation, serving, clearing and cleaning and procuring necessary supplies, including dishes, paper products and food. Possibilities which allow good quality at minimal price might be solicited from commercial firms and/or pot luck.

Child Care involves providing structured activities for children whose parents are involved in Town Meeting. This would include activities similar to the adults and also recreational opportunities and possible heritage field trips for the day.

The next pages contain a 13 week timeline for your use in setting up your Town Meeting. The first week of this timeline corresponds to the week that is 13 weeks before your Town Meeting. It would probably be helpful to figure that date out and put it on the timeline. Then fill in the rest of the dates for the various weeks. This timeline is intended to be a helpful tool in planning your Town Meeting. If you find it necessary to deviate from it because of your particular circumstances, please do so.

**A THIRTEEN WEEK TIMELINE FOR THE PREPARATION OF A TOWN MEETING**

	<b>Beginning Steps</b>	<b>Enlisting Support</b>	<b>Concrete Engagement</b>
<b>Week</b>	<b>One through Five</b>	<b>Six through Nine</b>	<b>Ten through Twelve</b>
<b>Dates</b>			
<b>Sponsorship and Authorization</b>	Initial contacts Research in-kind possibilities	Secure local sponsorship Finalize in-kind commitments	Invitations to city officials Presentation to service clubs
<b>Promotion and Reception</b>	Decide promotional materials Write local story Printing estimates	Print promotional materials Research possibilities for media coverage	Billboard promotion Distribute promotional materials (flyers, posters, etc) Mass media campaign
<b>Facilities and Set-up</b>	Secure facilities		Secure tables, chairs, and blackboards
<b>Production and Materials</b>	Research in-kind paper and materials		Acquire decor material Make decor Line up typewriters and reproduction machinery
<b>Food Service</b>			Prepare menu Secure in-kind non-perishables
<b>Child Care</b>			Enlist staff

A THIRTEEN WEEK TIMELINE FOR THE PREPARATION OF A TOWN MEETING (continued)

Final March		Follow-up
Week Thirteen		
Monday through Thursday	Friday and Saturday	
		Send acknowledgements
Accelerate mass media campaign Prepare registration forms	Host reporters Assist photographers and TV cameramen  Set-up registration desk Greet and register participants	Promote other Town Meetings through media coverage of the day  File Records
Designate set-up troops	Set-up facility	Clean-up and reset Check out with management and extend thanks
Procure remaining materials  Make decor	Put-up decor Organize materials for distribution Distribute materials set-up production area at facility Coordinate typing/printing of document	Remove decor Collect materials Clean Equipment Return equipment and extend thanks
Procure needed supplies  Solicit in-kind perishables	Shop for groceries Pick-up in-kind perishables Prepare food for lunch and snacks	Clean food area Return equipment and extend thanks
Create decor Gather materials Teacher orientation	Set-up and decor space  Teach curriculum	Clean-up Remove decor



## SPONSORSHIP AND AUTHORIZATION

### Sponsorship

An important objective in organizing a Town Meeting is to get a broadly based sponsorship from community groups. Sponsorship means that a group will support the Town Meeting by one or more of the following: (1) encouraging its own members to attend; (2) donating money to help meet Town Meeting expenses or offering in-kind goods or services to help defray the costs; or (3) sending volunteers to help with the Town Meeting. The sponsors should be recognized in the Town Meeting. Sponsors may be sought by mail, phone, or personal visit. Some of the types of groups that could sponsor the event include:

1. Service organizations
2. Fraternal societies
3. Special interest groups
4. Professional societies
5. Industrial groups
6. Church groups
7. Political groups

### Authorization

Political leaders on various levels need to be contacted and made aware of the Town Meeting. These should at least include local leaders from the district to the county level. Your congressmen, senator, and governor also might be interested. All should be encouraged to give their endorsement. Suggest that they mention this event in their newsletter. The mayor or his designated representative could be asked to convene the Town Meeting. It may be important for other community leaders such as doctors, businessmen, church and school leaders to be asked to give their support.

**SPONSORSHIP PRACTICAL CHECKLIST**

BEFORE	DURING	AFTER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> list community groups</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> develop story of sponsorship</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> contact leadership of groups</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> visit groups and tell story of Bicentennial</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> prepare list of sponsors for publication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> host sponsoring groups</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> recognize sponsors publicly in the Town Meeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> send letter of gratitude to sponsors</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> return borrowed materials</li> </ul>

**AUTHORIZATION PRACTICAL CHECKLIST**

BEFORE	DURING	AFTER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> make list of key local leaders</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> contact leaders relative to their endorsement of Town Meeting</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> contact city official to convene the Town Meeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> greet the selected convenor and enable his role in meeting</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> welcome the distinguish citizens present at the meeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> inform local leaders of the implications of the Town Meeting for the future of the community</li> </ul>

## PROMOTION AND RECEPTION

### Promotion

Promotional activities should be planned so that they impact a broad audience and thereby elicit a widely representative group of people to participate in the Town Meeting. At all times donations of time, goods and services should be encouraged as a way of participating in the national birthday celebration. A local promotional story should be written which would use the national story of the town meeting but would make more particular by including people and events from local history as examples. Printing of local promotional materials should include specifics such as date, location and time of the Town Meeting.

Use of the public communications media is a key to Town Meeting promotion. A visual advertising campaign using imaginal printed material would impact people initially and provide exciting images of the Town Meeting. Local billboard companies and mass transit companies should be contacted and encouraged to donate space for this advertising. Newspapers are another possibility in this arena. Brochures and posters can be distributed throughout the community.

The electronic media should be used for maximum public exposure of the story of the Town Meeting. Press releases to radio and TV stations would be part of this effort. Encourage feature presentations by all of the media. Radio and TV talk shows and interview shows would provide an excellent forum for promoting the Town Meeting. Contact media relative to participating in the Bicentennial celebration in this manner.

Special attention should be paid to the leading citizens of your community. Compile a list of names and addresses of these selected persons. Using this list send each of them a personal invitation to participate in the Town Meeting.

### Reception

When the day of the Town Meeting arrives each participant needs to be graciously received in the finest American tradition. The reception a person gets will influence his participation in the whole day. Have hosts or hostesses at the door to greet participants, help them with their registration, and orient them to the space of the Town Meeting.

PROMOTION PRACTICAL CHECKLIST

BEFORE	DURING	AFTER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> write local story</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> print promotional materials</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> seek advertising space in printed media</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> seek air time on radio &amp; TV</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> prepare news release</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> speak to local groups</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> send personal invitations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> handle all inquiries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> host reporters</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> assist photographers and TV cameramen</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> send notes of gratitude</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> publicize plans coming out of the Town Meeting</li> </ul>

RECEPTION PRACTICAL CHECKLIST

BEFORE	DURING	AFTER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> enlist hosts and hostesses</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> enlist registrars</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> secure registration material</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> set-up reception at Town Meeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> greet participants</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> register participants</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> orient people to meeting hall</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> serve morning snack</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> collect registrations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> send copy to Horizons '76 Town Meeting</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> handle distribution or further collection of registration money</li> </ul>

## FACILITIES AND SETUP

The practical setup for the Town Meeting is extremely important, because decisions about such things as the choice of facility, the quality of meals, and care for the children affect the ability of people to willingly engage themselves in the events of the day.

### Facilities

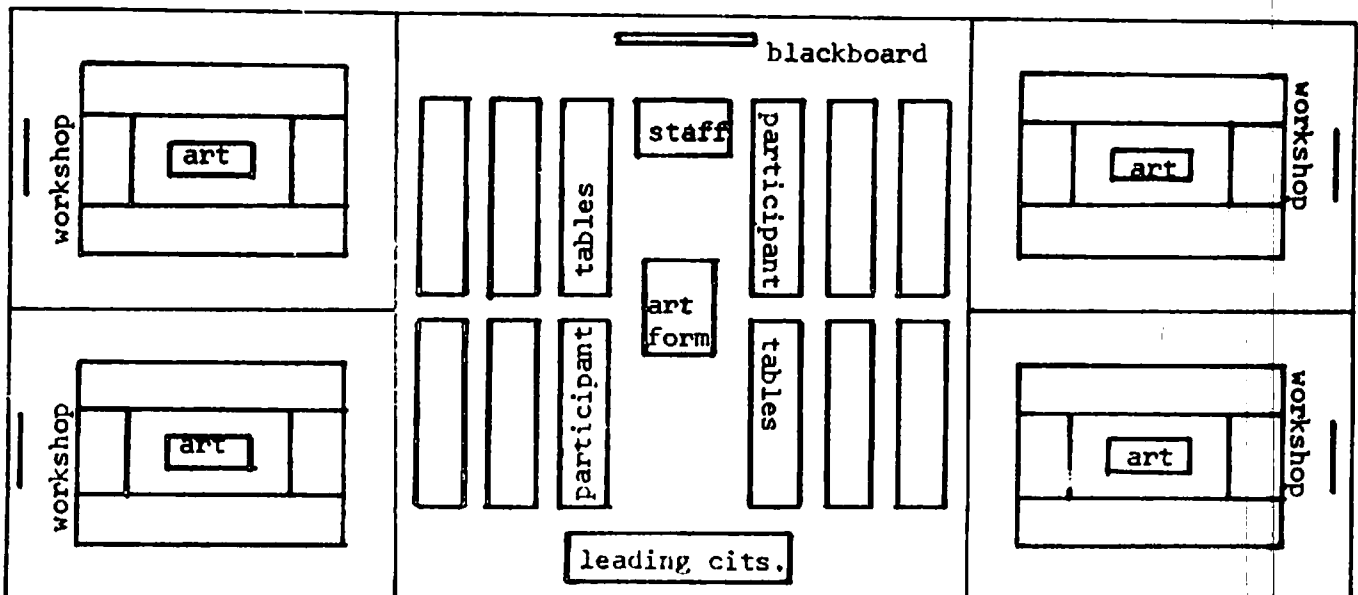
The ideal facility for the Town Meeting would be a school cafeteria or gymnasium, a large room in a YMCA, a hall in a service organization facility or a community center. It would be helpful if this facility were one familiar to the community and used for total community gatherings. The Hall would need to support the dynamics of the Town Meeting in terms of space, acoustics, and fixed decor.

### Room Setup

The Town Meeting requires one large meeting room in which the whole assembly meets and four smaller workshop rooms. For a meeting of 200 people the large room needs to be approximately 60' x 60'. The large room is used for the talks, plenary reporting sessions, and lunch. The seating area is arranged to allow participation by the whole group in the discussion sessions. The image of the room is a forum. Seating is by rows as is indicated in the diagram below. One-half of those seated face the other half across a center table on which is placed a Bicentennial art form. The rows are tables with chairs placed behind. At the front of the room is a blackboard in front of which is a table for the staff. At the back of the room tables are placed for seating leading citizens. The four seminar rooms are arranged similarly in forum-style. It would be possible to hold the Town Meeting in one room with the workshop areas in the corners of the room.

### Atmosphere

During registration, a medley of music of America's heritage could be played as background. Closing music might be some of the great marching music of our nation.



FACILITIES AND SETUP PRACTICAL CHECKLIST

BEFORE	DURING	AFTER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— locate a suitable facility</li> <li>— organize enough people for set-up</li> <li>— plan a setup party for the night before</li> <li>— procure enough tables and chairs to set-up both the total group meeting place and the 4 workshop areas</li> <li>— secure 5 blackboards</li> <li>— find a place to store materials for distribution for the day</li> <li>— secure adequate kitchen facilities for the day</li> <li>— speak with the supervisor of the facility about:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— when you need it</li> <li>— specific access times for setup &amp; clear</li> <li>— specific time of beginning/ending</li> <li>— location of bathrooms</li> <li>— fire exits, extinguishers and any restricted areas</li> <li>— use of making tape on the walls</li> <li>— if smoking permitted</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— act as liason with the facility superintendent</li> <li>— identify yourself and serve as host during the meeting</li> <li>— check bathrooms for supplies and cleanliness</li> <li>— help to neat up the area throughout the day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— supervise the cleanup and resetting of the facility</li> <li>— thank the superintendent for his cooperation</li> </ul>

## MATERIALS AND PRODUCTION

Materials Coordination includes the acquisition and distribution of all supplies and materials for the Town Meeting, including the assembling and/or creation of decor.

Production Coordination involves taking responsibility for ensuring that each participant leaves the Town Meeting with his own copy of the work of the Town Meeting. The focus of this operation will be the period between the end of the afternoon workshop and the end of the Plenary session. During this time the work of all the afternoon workshops will be typed, printed, and collated together with the work of the morning workshop which will have been typed and printed earlier in the afternoon. In order to do this, printing or reproducing equipment must be acquired.

MEETING EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS CHECKLIST		
ROOM SET-UP AND DECOR	WORKSHOP	REPRODUCTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>___ tables</li> <li>___ chairs</li> <li>___ 4 chalkboards</li> <li>___ ashtrays</li> <li>___ masking tape</li> <li>___ American flag</li> <li>___ Bicentennial poster</li> <li>___ Local community decor</li> <li>___ community symbol</li> <li>___ community grid</li> <li>___ old maps of area</li> <li>___ historical documents</li> <li>___ old pictures of the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>___ chalk</li> <li>___ erasers</li> <li>___ pencils R/W/B</li> <li>___ paper to take notes on</li> <li>___ magic markers</li> <li>___ masking tape</li> <li>___ large sheets of paper to use on wall (white)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>___ rulers</li> <li>___ 4 typewriters</li> <li>___ duplicating machine(s)</li> <li>___ duplicating materials</li> <li>___ duplicating paper</li> <li>___ razor blades</li> </ul>
REGISTRATION	THE INTERLUDE	FOOD SERVICE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>___ registration forms</li> <li>___ name tags</li> <li>___ R/W/B pencils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>___ record player or tape recorder</li> <li>___ records or tapes of music</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>___ tablecloth</li> <li>___ coffee cups</li> <li>___ R/W/B napkins</li> <li>___ paper plates</li> <li>___ coffee stirrers and/or plastic silverware</li> <li>___ serving trays</li> </ul>

**PRODUCTION PRACTICAL CHECKLIST**

BEFORE	DURING	AFTER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> acquire reproduction machinery and supplies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> find out how to use the machinery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> coordinate typing, printing, and collating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> clean equipment</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> return equipment and extend thanks</li> </ul>

**MATERIALS PRACTICAL CHECKLIST**

BEFORE	DURING	AFTER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> acquire materials</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> organize for distribution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> distribute materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> collect materials</li> </ul>



## FOOD SERVICES

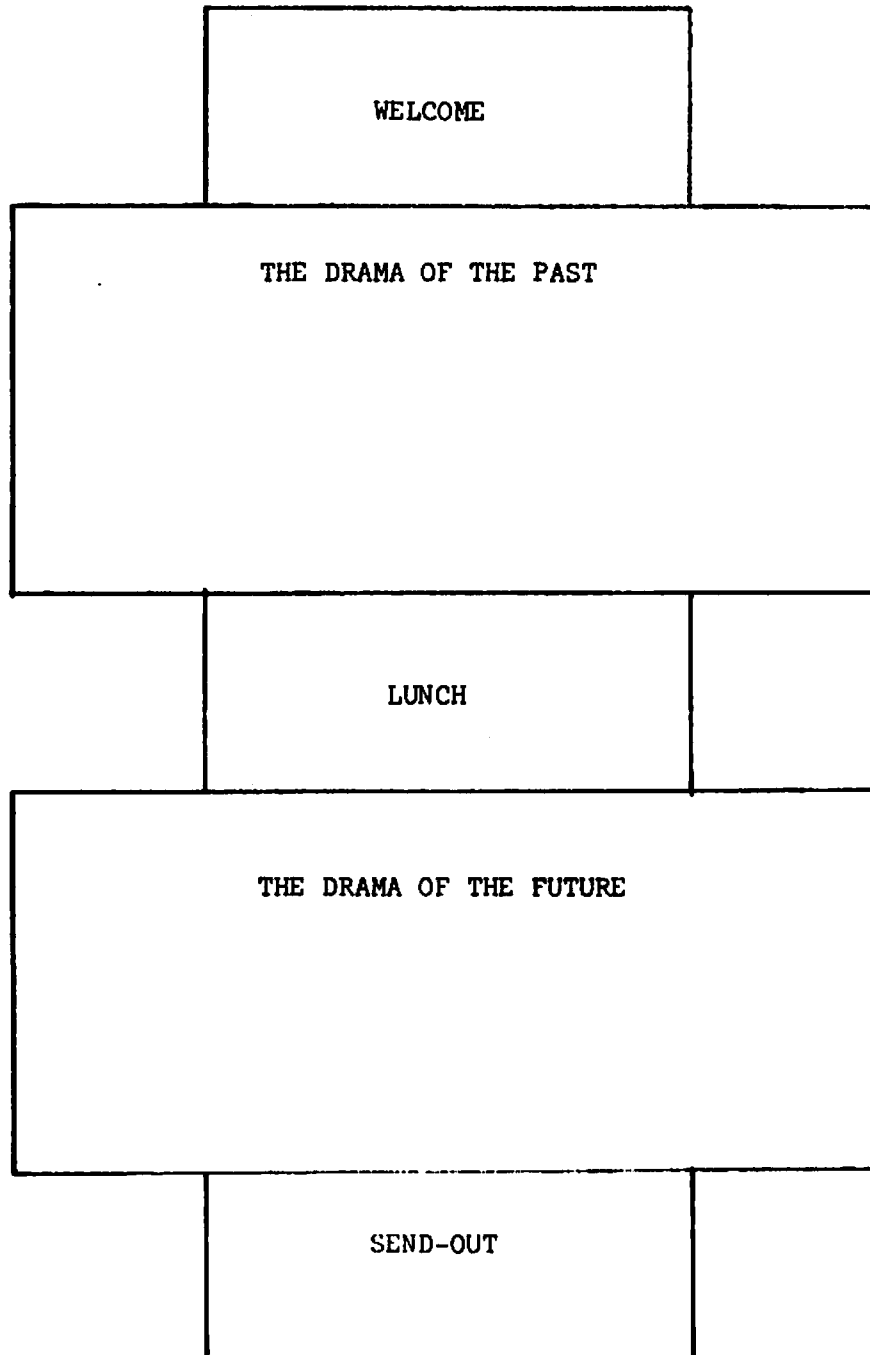
Food service at the Town Meeting is crucial. The food needs to be supportive of the informal nature of the day. This means that lunch needs to consist of foods like coldcuts, sandwiches, or casseroles. Possibilities which allow good quality at minimal price might be soliciting donated food (from commercial firms) and/or potluck participation. Coffee and donuts need to be available for registration. A supply of coffee is helpful also during the workshops. Food needs to accentuate the celebrative nature of the day but at the same time be almost invisible.

FOOD SERVICES PRACTICAL CHECKLIST

BEFORE	DURING	AFTER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> prepare menu</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> acquire needed supplies</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> make all but final preparations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> check food preparation facilities for adequacy</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> before finalizing menu, check with Sponsorship for possible donations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> plan a special snack for the closing plenary as a celebration of the day and of the nation's 200th birthday</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> make final preparations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> set out rolls and coffee for registration</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> replenish as needed</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> maintain a supply of hot coffee and tea at all times</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> prepare and serve lunch on time--watch the crowd for appropriate number of servings</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> be attentive to possible special needs of Town Meeting participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> clean up the kitchen</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> return or otherwise dispose of unused food</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> return any donated equipment</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> turn in to coordinator any bills for food</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> thank the facility superintendent for use of the kitchen</li> </ul>

## CHILD CARE

Child Care Coordination involves coordinating a program for the children of the adults coming to the Town Meeting. The curriculum for the day will focus on the children's celebration of America's past and future. Staff will need to be enlisted and planning done with them. Food and supplies will need to be procured. The luncheon meal will need to be prepared and served.



CHILD CARE PRACTICAL CHECKLIST

BEFORE	DURING	AFTER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> procure facility</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> enlist teachers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> gather materials</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> set up space</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> create decor</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> hang decor</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> assemble First Aid kit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> serve lunch</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> teach curriculum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> clean up space</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> gather materials</li> </ul>