

Minutes 101

Created by the Parliamentary Procedure Leadership

Development Event Committee

Why the heck do we have minutes?

- It is important to have a record of what was decided to guide your work.
- It clarifies exactly what was decided and gives members a chance to correct anything incorrectly recorded.
- It creates a historical record of your organization and decisions made.
- It gives the secretary something to do (joke).

A red speech bubble graphic with a white question inside. The bubble has a rectangular body and a small triangular tail pointing downwards.

What goes in
the minutes?

- It records what was **DONE** at the meeting, not what was **SAID** by the members.
(Robert)

Content – What goes in the minutes?

- The kind of meeting
- The name of the society or assembly
- The date and time of the meeting.
- The fact that the chairman and secretary were present.
- Whether the minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved and the date of that meeting if it was not a regular meeting.
- All main motions
 - The wording (only important facts parenthetically).
 - The disposition of the motion.
- Secondary motions when necessary for clarity.
- The complete substance of oral committee reports.
- All notices of motions.
- All points of order and appeals.
- The hour of adjournment.

And some other things...

- The name of the maker should be included (but not the seconder – boom secretary, take a break!).
- When a count has been ordered or by ballot, enter those vote numbers.
- Don't need committee of the whole report, but need to know they met.
- Informal consideration (no shady business).
- Important committee reports.
- Name and subject of any guest speaker, but not what they said.
- Any declaration of the chair in “naming” an offending member (dang Gina!).
- A recording device is pretty handy!

A red speech bubble graphic with a white outline, pointing downwards. It contains the text "The signature...".

The signature...

- Secretary must sign these puppies. The president can, but I'm sure they are too busy being important (if the assembly requires).
- No fancy "respectfully submitted" jargon – no need to butter us up.

Reading and Approval

- When the next regular business session will be held within a quarterly time interval (Par. Pro. is really into this quarterly stuff!), and the session doesn't extend past a day, and no membership changes...this should happen:
 - Read and approve at the beginning of the next meeting after the call to order and any opening ceremonies.
 - Corrections are normally done by unanimous consent.
 - You can “dispense with the reading of the minutes” by a majority vote – GO ON GET!
 - Sending a draft to members is good prior to vote so they can review them.
 - Some societies publish them – all societies should have a system to keep track of them!