

SECRETARY GUIDEBOOK



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
MEETING MINUTES	3
P&P's, BYLAWS, PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES	3
ATTENDANCE RECORDS	3
BOARD MEMBER ROSTERS.....	4
REPORTS TO THE MEMBERSHIP.....	4
PASSING ON OF RECORDS	4
OTHER DUTIES AS ASSIGNED BY THE PRESIDENT	4
CONCLUSION.....	4

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INTRODUCTION

Holding the position of Secretary of your association is a great responsibility. Much of the success of an association depends upon the manner in which the Secretary does the job and the accuracy of the records that are turned over to the following year's officers. Accurate records allow for continuity in leadership and extensive historical knowledge even with the positions changing annually. The secretary works closely with the president and the entire board in understanding the goals and direction of the chapter. Usually, the secretary position is the training ground for a future leadership position.

The standard duties of the Secretary are:

- Record and keep minutes of all association meetings along with attendance.
- Distribute the minutes to the board soon after a meeting.
- Maintain and archive Policies & Procedures and board changes.
- Communicate board information, reports and other information as requested by the state chapter, Regional Vice President and national office.
- Report to the association at the annual meeting and at other times as required.

MEETING MINUTES

Keeping detailed minutes is critical to maintaining institutional knowledge of the chapter and how it dealt with different situations and planned and managed events. It is also an unquestionable tool for awards documentation. Minutes are the accounting of the chapter's board activity for the year and should include records of committee reports, verbatim motions brought to the board or to the membership at large as well as assigned responsibilities and deadlines for these responsibilities. The minutes need to be approved by the board, should be easily accessible during and after the meeting.

It can be confusing what to keep track of and the style of minutes. Some excellent resources for this information are:

<http://www.meetingwizard.org/> - click on "Taking Minutes" in the left-hand column.
<http://www.uhc-collective.org.uk/toolbox/> - Click on "Organisation", then "Taking Meeting Minutes"

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The secretary also maintains the written policies and procedures for the chapter. P&P's are created by the board and updated as necessary for the regular ongoing operations of the association. They provide the details that are not appropriate in the chapter's bylaws. The secretary should review the P&Ps making sure they are current and do not conflict with the chapter's bylaws.

ATTENDANCE RECORDS

The secretary maintains attendance records of the board for all association meetings and activities. You may also be asked to record member and nonmember attendance at meetings and chapter events. Having accurate records of members and guests is very beneficial to the association's membership recruiting and retention efforts.

BOARD MEMBER ROSTERS

As the secretary you are also responsible for communicating the chapter's board or any changes to the board to your state or local chapters, the RVP and to the national office. This information is critical; it makes sure that the appropriate chapter officers are notified of upcoming events, reports or general information.

REPORTS TO THE MEMBERSHIP

Occasionally, you may be asked to present a report to the membership of the status of the chapter. Typically this report is given at the chapter's annual convention, elections or installation of officers.

PASSING ON OF RECORDS

Next to taking and keeping accurate minutes, passing on your records and the records of previous years' activities is most critical. These records are the chapter's archives and will inform future officers and members why decisions were made as well as past issues. You can keep it in a binder or folder, what ever is easier for you to keep, update and pass on in its entirety to your successor.

OTHER DUTIES AS ASSIGNED BY THE PRESIDENT

Like everyone on the board you may receive additional duties as assigned by the President. In the absence of an actual parliamentarian, you may be asked to do this job. Read your bylaws this will determine if the chapter follows "The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure" by Alice Sturgis or "Robert's Rules of Order". Make sure to have copy of the procedure book with you at the meetings. This information will help the meetings move along smoothly.

CONCLUSION

The position of secretary is not incredibly demanding or time-consuming position, but it does require organization and attention to detail. The minutes, bylaws, policies and procedures all have to be consistent. This position is critical in collecting and keeping the chapter's historical information as well as communicating with the state, RVP and national associations. This job will give you a good idea about how a chapter runs and the foundation for becoming a strong well-informed chapter leader.