

Board Meeting Minutes: Tips for Secretaries

Congratulations on being elected Secretary of the Board of Directors. As Secretary, one of your primary responsibilities is to record board meeting minutes. Below are a few tips, followed by a sample template. There is no one-way to make minutes. Make it work for your organization.

Background Information

- Minutes are an official record of the organization. It is essential that they are accurate, as they are the legal record of the proceedings and actions of the organization.

Legal Requirements

* *Requirement may vary by state.*

- **Heading:** Legal name of organization; "Board Meeting Minutes"; date, time and location of meeting.
- **Attendance:** Number of board members present and acknowledgement that a quorum was reached.
- **Board Minute Approval:** Board minutes from the previous meeting must be approved at each meeting.
- **Motions:** Exact wording of all motions made, whether or not the motion passes, and the name of the person who made the motion. (It is advisable to read the motion to the board before a vote is called to ensure that you have recorded the motion accurately.)
- **Votes:** All votes should be recorded as the number in favor, number against and the number and reason for any abstentions.

Recommended (Not Required)

- **Attendance:** It is advisable to record the names of board members present, board members absent, staff and guests present. (Reminder: It is usually the Secretary's responsibility to keep track of attendance and alert the Board President of concerns. Be sure to consult your bylaws and board member agreements for meeting attendance requirements.)
- **Other decisions:** Many nonprofits, especially smaller organizations, make non-binding decisions during meetings that do not require votes. These decisions should also be recorded.
- **Action Items:** All items that require action outside of the meeting and the responsible party should be recorded. It can be helpful to bold or otherwise clearly identify the responsible party.

Don't Include

- Your own opinion or interpretation.
- Judgmental phrases, such as "heated debate" or "valuable comment."
- **Detailed Discussion:** Minutes are records of what was done at the meeting, not what was said. It can be helpful to record major points that were raised, but do not include a transcript of conversation.
- Motions that were withdrawn.

Attachments

Additional information, such as written motions or reports from board committees/staff, may be included with minutes as an attachment.

LOGO
LEGAL NAME OF ORGANIZATION
Board Meeting Minutes
Date, Time, Location

Attendance

Board Members Present:

Board Members on Phone:

Board Members Absent:

Staff and Visitors:

A quorum was/was not achieved.

Board Minute Approval: RECORD BASED ON THE PROCESS USED BY YOUR ORGANIZATION

Motions

Motion 1: RECORD EXACT WORDING OF MOTION AND WHO MADE THE MOTION. RECORD VOTES IN FAVOR, VOTES OPPOSED AND THE NUMBER AND REASONS FOR ANY ABSTENTIONS.

- RECORD KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

Motion 2: see above

Additional Decisions Made (THOSE NOT REQUIRING AN OFFICIAL MOTION)

- Decision 1:
- Decision 2:
- Etc.

Items Requiring Action

- Action 1: RECORD ACTION, RESPONSIBLE PARTY AND TIMELINE

Next Meeting: DATE

- AGENDA ITEM 1
- AGENDA ITEM 2
- Etc.