Spotlight: You the Secretary

Be an organizer and be organized!
Have a working knowledge of parliamentary procedure.
Duties only 2nd in importance to the president - you are your unit’s “right hand.”
Be involved with your group - you may make motions, participate in debate and vote.

General Expectations

Keep an accurate record of all proceedings.
Send president a copy of minutes as soon as possible (no longer then ten days).
Share minutes with your members (post them on your website).
Be at meetings early (always be prepared!).
Have on hand at every meeting (minutes book, bylaws/standing rules).
Help your President stick to your agenda and be a time keeper (if needed).
Keep an updated email address of current board.
Keep an updated official roll of members (work with your membership team member).
Keep all correspondence for your unit.

Minutes

Reflect all decisions made at meetings.
Should contain what was done not what was said; they do not need to be word for word.
Each motion should be in a separate paragraph.
Once presented and approved, minutes become the legal record of meetings.
Corrections should be made immediately following the presentation:
  • Are noted in the minutes of the current meeting
  • Are suggested without a vote
  • Are made in the minutes book in red pen
  • All corrections should be initialed and dated

Tips

President Agenda - your best friend!
Motions may be made in writing (have index cards on hand).
Only the name of the maker of a motion is noted, not the second.
When a vote is taken the number of votes in each side should be recorded.
Minutes should be kept forever (PTA filing cabinet or other space at your school).
Minutes can be corrected after approval, even years later.
TIPS FOR RECORDING THE MINUTES

✎ Use a bound book for permanent storage. NEVER USE A LOOSE LEAF BINDER as pages can be lost.
✎ Write minutes directly into the bound book or paste typewritten or computer-generated minutes into the book.
✎ Number pages in consecutive order.
✎ Keep minutes from all meetings of the executive board, executive committee, and association in the same minute book.
✎ Record minutes that are brief, yet contain all important information needed to check past proceedings.
✎ Record what is done, not what is said.
✎ Do not reflect the secretary’s personal opinion about anything that is said or done.
✎ Record the business in the order it happened.
✎ Record minutes in paragraph form or by department/subject headings.
✎ Write minutes immediately following the meeting.
✎ Leave a wide margin in the book to allow space for corrections.
✎ Send an advance copy of the minutes to the president as soon as they are completed.
✎ Use motion forms to ensure accurate wording of all motions. Motion forms may be numbered to keep track of actions. While taking notes, simply write motion # 5, carried or failed. Amendments can be lettered, e.g. # 5a. Refer to the motion form for specific wording when completing the minutes.
✎ Record all motions except those withdrawn, all points of order, and appeals.
✎ Record the name of the member who introduced the motion and the results of the vote (carried or lost).
✎ Do not record the name of a person who offered the second.
✎ Record a ballot vote as follows: number of eligible votes, number of affirmative votes (ayes), and number of negative votes (nos). For an election, include the name of the nominees and the number of votes each nominee received. A motion to destroy the ballots is in order.