



## **HELPFUL HINTS FOR MINUTE TAKING**

Many of the following comments are based on the book “*Mina’s Guide to Minute Taking*

– *Principles, Standards & Practical Tools*” by Eli Mina. For ordering information visit

<http://www.elimina.com>

- ❖ Minutes are important because it helps the association meet its obligation to conduct business in a transparent and accountable manner. They keep the membership informed on the decisions that affect them. Minutes also constitute the history of the association’s decision-making processes.
- ❖ Minutes are required at all meetings.
- ❖ The Secretary is responsible for the taking of minutes.
- ❖ Minutes should be accurate and a complete record of what took place at the meeting.
- ❖ Focus on the key points and decisions that are made. DO NOT record exact word-for-word minutes. It provides little value and may cause tension within the group.
- ❖ Exclude gossip and simply follow the agenda and record the process.
- ❖ You may or may not include names of movers and seconders of motions. If it is the wish of the Association however you may continue to record their movers and seconders of motions. In making your decision remember, that the two individuals do not own the motion once debate on it begins. In addition, recording these names may give a potentially false impression that the individuals supported the motion throughout the decision-making process, when this may not be the case.
- ❖ Minutes should be free of offensive or inappropriate language even if used at the meeting. The document should be clean and objective and not include phrases like “There was a heated discussion”.
- ❖ Minutes should be consistent within the association following a standard look and style/format that the association endorses. A sample of standard minutes should be provided to all new Secretaries.
- ❖ Minutes should be reviewed thoroughly and be free of typographical, grammatical or other errors.
- ❖ Minutes should be clearly laid out, be visually appealing and easy to read. Replace long paragraphs with concise point-form summaries.
- ❖ Minutes should be organized by agenda item number.
- ❖ Minutes should be typed.
- ❖ Minutes should be easy to archive and to retrieve.
- ❖ Make it acceptable for the Secretary to speak up and request clarity.
- ❖ The President must conduct clear, well-focused meetings and take the time to articulate the motions clearly and the results of the vote.



- ❖ Use past tense when recording minutes “The chair opened the meeting and reviewed the agenda”.

#### **WHO APPROVES MINUTES:**

- ❖ The group that held the meeting should approve its own minutes. The exception is the Annual General Meeting where it makes no sense to approve the minutes a year later, since members not recall what took place at the meeting. In such cases the minutes should be delegated to the general membership, which would likely meet shortly after the annual meeting.
- ❖ The President should always repeat motions for clarification, before finalizing any decisions or taking any vote. It is better to ensure the intent is clearly articulated at the meeting. Editing should only be done for the purpose of technical clarification and accuracy.
- ❖ It is up to the group to decide whether the minutes are accurate. If the group believes the minutes do not accurately reflect what took place, then it should not hesitate to make motion to amend them.
- ❖ Draft minutes should be sent to the executive shortly after the meeting.
- ❖ Minutes will be available for approval at the next meeting.
- ❖ When the motion is made to approve the minutes at the next meeting, ask if there are any corrections to the minutes. Do not ask if there is any discussion. Opening the minutes up to discussion may lead to debate that was already concluded at the last meeting.
- ❖ Only post **approved** minutes to the school website.
- ❖ If a person did not attend the previous meeting they still have the right to move the adoption of the minutes, second the motion, propose corrections to the minutes, and vote on the motion.



**SAMPLE AGENDA:**

ABC Home & School Association

General Meeting

(insert date)

ABC School

1. Call to Order/Opening Remarks (2 minutes)                      President
  
2. Additions/Approval of Agenda    (2 minutes)                      President
  - *Any additions to the agenda will be listed under New Business*
  
3. Approval of Minutes                      (5 minutes)                      Secretary
  
4. Business Arising from Minutes (5-10 minutes)                      Secretary
  
5. President's Report (10 minutes)                      President
  - a. Correspondence
  
6. Principal's Report (5 minutes)                      Principal or delegate
  
7. Treasurer's Report (10 minutes)                      Treasurer
  
8. *Committee Reports (10 minutes)*                      *Committee Chair*
  - a. *Membership*
  - b. *Social*



- c. *Fundraising*
- d. *Publicity*
- e. *Special Events*

9. New Business (20 minutes)

President

10. Date and time of next meeting (1 minute)

11. Adjournment (1 minute)

*If you invite a guest speaker it is always a good idea to plan to have them speak at the beginning or end of your meeting.*



**SAMPLE MINUTES:**

**The ABC Home & School Association  
General Meeting Minutes  
September 21, 20..  
ABC, Nova Scotia**

**Present**

Record the names of people present

**Regrets**

Record names of people who sent regrets

**1. Call to Order**

President, Joan Maple called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting. It was noted by the President that a quorum was present.

**2. Addition/Approval of Agenda**

**Motion:** Moved and seconded to approve the agenda.

**Motion Carried**

**3. Approval of the Minutes**

**Motion:** Moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the last meeting June 20, 20..

**Motion carried**

**4. Business Arising from minutes**

*To review any outstanding action items from previous meeting.*

**5. President Report**

*To report on activities since previous meeting and general correspondence.*

**6. Treasurer's Report**

*Present bank statement and report on revenue and expenses.*

**7. Principal's Report**



*Recap of principal's report.*

**8. Committee Reports**

*Capturing overview of committee reports include activities that have taken place.*

**9. New Business**

*Capture in bullet form all items that were brought forward and discussed.*

**10. Date of Next Meeting**

*To note the date of next meeting.*

**11. Adjournment**

**Motion:** Moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting at ... p.m.

**Motion Carried**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**President**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Secretary**