

# **YOUR ROLE AS SECRETARY: THE BASICS**

## **What Are You Responsible For? Some Common Secretary Tasks:**

- Read Your Job Description (or help create it!)
- At most schools, the secretary retrieves the mail. This serves as an extra financial safeguard so that the bank statements are being received by someone other than the person issuing the checks. if you are not responsible for opening the mail, make sure that whoever is opening the bank statements is not also listed as a check signer.
- Do you check the bank account to verify financial activity ie, withdrawals & deposits?
- Maintain a digital folder or notebooks with all board and committee records.

## **What Are You Responsible For? Some Common Secretary Tasks:**

- Update orientation materials.
- Review and revise bylaws, policies, procedures with Board discussion and VOTES before revisions.
- Is your school using Google Drive or online platform to house school forms? Maintain membership forms and immunization records
- Church liaison.
- Maintain & distribute school calendar, board rosters, membership and alumni lists.
- Distribute meeting agendas.
- Prepare, post, copy, and record minutes for all executive board, board and general meetings.

## **Holding Effective Meetings**

- Work with President on this process over the summer
- Establish effective ways of conducting meetings
- Discuss your meeting format and style regularly
- The very act of discussing how the Board will conduct its meetings tends to re-energize Boards
- Most people are more committed to processes they feel they helped to design

# Minutes

**Minutes are the record of your meetings.**

**Need to include date, time, place, attendees, whether quorum was established, proposals submitted for a vote, result of vote.**

**Clear record of decisions made.**

# Meeting Checklist

- Vote to approve minutes from last meeting
- Use agenda as your outline
- Request all motions be in writing for your record
- If possible, get pre-meeting notes or Board Reports from committee chairs
- Capture enough of the idea so it will be useful later
- Listen for key words
- Remain neutral
- Write quickly; correct grammar/spelling later
- Transcribe notes as soon after the meeting as possible
- If you can't attend a meeting, find a substitute

# Meeting Checklist

- Ask clarifying questions during the meeting. It doesn't become any clearer when you try to type the minutes after the meeting.
- Minutes should be brief and include decisions, who will be doing the job, and when it should be done.
- Put the word "Action" beside the item that needs action and then put the person who is responsible under "Action".
- When potentially serious subjects are discussed, include a note that the discussion was extensive and the board examined many points of view.
- Any info. introduced should be attached to the original copy and kept on file. Examples are financial statements, project outlines, letters, etc.
- Ask the President to check your minutes for accuracy before distributing to the entire board.
- Once minutes have been approved, they should be signed by the presiding officer and the recording secretary. They should never be changed or rewritten after they've been signed. You may also send email and asking for approval from all voting board members

- The Secretary is generally the keeper of the "Archives" or history of the school.
- All minutes should be kept in a notebook or stored electronically and given to the new secretary each year. Do not throw away old minutes; they are part of the legal record of your school.
- Bring minutes from the past two years to each meeting. Older archives of minutes can be left at home, but should be retained as a permanent record of the school. Ideally records will be maintained both in electronic format and hard copy.
- Each year's book of minutes should contain a copy of the Articles of Incorporation, bylaws, policies and procedures.
- Establish a "Policy" section or notebook in which to keep a record through the years of all standing policies, including the reference to the minutes date when it was adopted.

## **MINUTES HANDBOOK**



# Liability- What to Know

Secretaries and Treasurers, by documenting the following proper business practices, can help insure that their board members will have the full protection of the law.

1. Accurate and complete minutes taken at board meetings. This must include documenting that:
  - payroll taxes are paid
  - workers' compensation insurance is paid and audit reports filed
  - quarterly payroll reports filed
  - annual state and federal reports filed
  - liability and other insurance is paid
  - corporation commission's fee paid

*The Treasurer's oral report may be brief as long as it is supplemented by a written report for the minutes.*

2. Minutes need to be kept in a notebook or electronically and passed *on* to the next secretary as the history of the corporation.
3. Keep accurate accounting records.
4. Provide complete financial reports to the Board regularly. Board Members are presumed by law to know the financial condition of the corporation.

## **Why are these details so important?**

- IRS and the state may assess the Board of Directors personally for penalties equal to the unpaid taxes if your corporation cannot pay the taxes.
- If there's no workers' compensation insurance for employees and there is an injury, directors may be personally liable for the amount of the worker's claim, for his/her costs (such as attorney's fees), and for any penalties.

**Professionalism Matters**

# RECORD RETENTION BASICS

## **Sealing up sensitive information**

Rarely, your school may encounter a situation that merits a careful written record of what happened. Any written information about other people needs to be handled with the utmost care and sensitivity. There is a fine balance between explaining your own actions and perspective and slandering someone else's character or actions. One suggestion for the storage of confidential or sensitive material would be to seal that information in an envelope, including a complete explanation of the situation at the time of sealing, with instructions on the outside to open only if the situation arises in the future.

Most records must be kept 6-10 years. See Secretaries Handbook for specifics

# COMMUNICATION

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## **What is a Motion?**

A motion is a proposal that the group take certain action. It is the basis of all discussion, and states the bounds of the discussion. All remarks must pertain directly to the contents of the motion on the floor.

## **How To Make A Motion**

For a member to make a motion, he or she must be recognized by the Chairperson. Once you have "obtained the floor", you should state your motion. "I move that. . . ." (The motion should state what action is being proposed. It should be as short and concise as possible.)

It will sometimes be necessary to re-word a motion made by a member for the sake of clarity. The Chairperson can do this. Also, at times it may be advisable for the Chairperson to ask that the motion be made into two or more separate motions if it is too long and unwieldy.

NOTE: There is no such thing as a negative motion. (e.g. "I move that we do not hold a bake sale next month".)

## **Seconding The Motion**

A member other than the mover must second the motion stating, "I second the motion". This indicates that than one person present at the meeting is interested having the subject discussed.

## **The Question is then Stated By the Chairperson**

The Chairperson says, "It is moved and seconded that we . . . (re-state the motion here). Is there any discussion?"

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# Voting on a motion

When the Chairperson feels discussion has been sufficient and has encouraged all those who wish to speak to do so, he or she repeats the question, "It is moved that. . . ." and asks for a vote – "Those in favor?" "Those opposed?" "Abstentions?" Be sure that you tell members the method for voting - a verbal "aye", "nay", or by a show of hands.

The Chairperson announces the result of the vote. Secretary records it.

**VOTING**

# Consensus Decision Making

- Aim for Consensus
- Votes should be required on new policy & changes, Bylaws, things requiring money, new processes, contracts, new hires, staff rates/salaries and hours
- Disagree & Commit