
1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. To set out criteria for (i) consistent formatting of minutes; (ii) guidance in recording an accurate record of the Board's decision-making processes; (iii) filing and retention of minutes; and (iv) orienting new staff.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Minutes provide an accurate and permanent historical record of proceedings of an officially convened meeting of an organized decision-making body, and constitute the history of that organization's decision-making processes. Minutes may also be used to explain, challenge or defend a decision after the fact.

- 2.2. Minutes show meetings are carried out in a transparent and accountable manner.

3. FORMAT

- 3.1. A template, containing the following relevant information, shall be used for all minutes, to ensure consistency of format and content:

- The name of the group meeting
- The purpose of the meeting
- The date, time and location of the meeting
- List of meeting attendees, including titles/roles of those attending, identifying the meeting chair and any invited guests
- List of apologies received
- A notation of who is recording the minutes
- What time the meeting is formally called to order and confirmation of quorum
- What time the meeting adjourns
- Date and place of the next meeting
- Numbered pages

4. CONTENT**4.1. Anecdotal Minutes**

- Anecdotal minutes are the recommended standard in most cases, versus decision-only or verbatim minutes. Anecdotal minutes contain objective and concise point-form summaries of discussions, without attributing comments to individuals.
- As minutes reflect an organization's history, they are written in the past tense.
- Minutes are drafted with the assumption that they will be made available to the public, as they can be accessed through a *Right to Information* request.

4.2. What to leave in:

Minutes are an accurate and complete record of what took place at the meeting. Providing some information surrounding the decision making process is valuable when looking back at past meetings, so it is clear why decisions are made.

- Focus shall be on key points, decisions and action items, not discussion
- Concise point-form summaries shall be used instead of long paragraphs
- Decisions/recommendations shall be recorded together with a summary of the thought process that led to that decision/recommendation
- Action items shall be recorded, noting ownership of each item with an agreed timeline
- Focus shall be on collective, not personal, actions
- Minutes shall be drafted using easy to read plain language, and be clearly laid out and professional

4.3. What to leave out:

- Records of conversation, comments or discussions which are off topic
- Detailed chronicles of lengthy discussion that reach no conclusion
- Focus shall be placed on capturing key points rather than recording every word
- Personal comments/observations and direct quotes
- Minutes shall be free of offensive or inappropriate language

4.4. Acronyms

- Spell out then insert an acronym in brackets the first instance it occurs in the minutes, then the acronym can continue to be used in the remainder of the document.

4.5. Quorum

- After the meeting has been formally called to order, it shall be recorded whether quorum requirements are met.
- Quorum is required to ratify decisions made at the meeting.
- Quorum of a meeting is defined as a majority of voting members of the group.
- It is not necessary to record every time someone enters or leaves the meeting, unless it affects quorum.

4.6. Conflict of Interest

- If anyone present at the meeting has a conflict of interest with an item on the agenda, that person must absent themselves from the discussion and decision making process around that agenda item. A conflict of interest declaration is recorded as well as a notation of what time that person leaves and returns to the meeting.

4.7. Motions/Resolutions

- Names of movers and seconders of a resolution will not be recorded. Naming movers and seconders can personalize the decision-making process and can give a false impression that the motion belongs to the mover and seconder in perpetuity.
- If a main motion is amended, it is not necessary to record housekeeping (often called *friendly* amendments) separately. All that matters is the final wording of the motion. Only record an amendment that is significant or divisive.
- If vote on a motion is clear and conclusive, and has not been challenged, it is not necessary to count or record the number of votes. The only record needed is the outcome, (i.e. if the motion was adopted or defeated).

5. IN CAMERA

- 5.1. Minutes are not to be recorded for in camera meetings.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 6.1. Minutes shall be reviewed and approved at the following meeting.
- 6.2. Draft minutes shall be included in the pre-meeting package .
- 6.3. Formal approval of the minutes shall be recorded, the draft line removed and the word “FINAL” inserted in both the footer and the name of the document.
- 6.4. Board meeting minutes, once approved, are signed by the Board Chair.
- 6.5. Approved minutes are not to be revised to reflect post-meeting actions/decisions.
- 6.6. Once approved, all previous drafts are deleted (other than copies included in a meeting package).
- 6.7. Approved minutes are the official record of the Board and shall be stored in accordance with Board approved retention schedules.

7. REMINDERS:

- 7.1. Minute takers are there to record a meeting, not to participate in it.
- 7.2. If a meeting participant speaks quietly or is unclear, the minute taker will ask for clarity.