

## HOW TO RECORD GOOD MINUTES

To save you time and unnecessary work, [Robert's Rules](#) spells out exactly what needs to go into your minutes. Minutes are important because they are the only surviving record of what was said and done at the meeting. Most importantly, they need to be informative and easy to navigate for whatever the reader needs to know six months from now. You want your minutes to be readable, but you must be precise in the information you give. Your minutes provide the record of the action taken at the meeting, so they need to clearly state the facts.

The first paragraph needs to include this information:

- The kind of meeting (regular, special, annual, special, and so forth)
- The name of the organization
- The date, time, and location of the meeting
  - Example: The regular meeting of the \_\_\_\_\_ SAL Squadron XXX was called to order by Commander John Smith on Monday, January 13, 2020, at 7:00 PM in the Post hall. Opening ceremonies followed in proper order and without interruption.

The next paragraph includes this information:

- Adjutant taking roll call of officers and a count of members present.
- The commander announcing that a quorum has been established.
- A mention of whether the previous meeting's minutes were read (or a draft provided in print) and approved as presented.
  - Corrections to minutes are noted in the minutes being corrected; they're not detailed in the minutes of the meeting at which the corrections were adopted.
  - The minutes of the meeting at which corrections were made should merely state that minutes of the previous meeting were approved as corrected.
- A summary of the finance report that was read (or a printed copy distributed).

Remainder of minutes include:

- All main motions, along with the name of the member making the motion, but not the name of the person who seconded the motion.
- The final wording of the motions, either as adopted or as disposed of.
  - If it's appropriate to include mention of debate or amendment, you can note these items parenthetically.
- The disposition of the motion — including any adhering amendments.
  - Information about the vote.
- All points of order and appeals and their subsequent dispositions, with reasons given by the chair for the ruling.
  - Rulings often establish precedent, so a careful record here is important.

The last paragraph of your minutes needs to include the hour of adjournment.

Notes:

- The proceedings of a committee of the whole aren't included in the minutes, but the committee report is attached to the minutes.
- Record the name of any guest speaker and the subject of presentation but make no summary of the speaker's remarks.
- Minutes are to be signed by the secretary. Avoid the phrase "Respectfully Submitted" as is now considered passé. Minutes are your group's legal record of its proceedings, and the secretary's signature establishes evidence of the original document's authenticity.