

Robert's Rules of Order: Minutes

The record of the proceedings of a deliberative assembly is usually called the *Minutes*. In the meetings of ordinary societies, there is no object in reporting the debates. The duty of the secretary, in such cases, is mainly to record what is "done" by the assembly, and not what is said by the members. The minutes should show:

Kind of Meeting:

Whether "regular", "special", "adjourned regular", or "adjourned special"

Name of Organization or Assembly:

Date/Time of Meeting/Place:

The Fact of the Presence of the Regular Chair and Secretary:

Or in their absence, the names of their substitutes

Action on Previous Minutes:

A: Note whether the previous meeting minutes were read and approved, or approved as corrected, and the date of the meeting if other than a regular business meeting.

B: When corrections to the minutes are made by the assembly, the corrections are made in the written text of the minutes being approved, and the minutes of the meeting where they are corrected merely state that the minutes were approved "as corrected" without actually stating the details of those corrections.

C: The secretary should sign the minutes, and in some societies the minutes are also signed by the president. When the minutes are approved, the word "Approved" should be written on the minutes with the secretary's initials and the date.

Main Motions:

A: Record all main motions (except such as were withdrawn) and motions that bring a main question again before the assembly, stating the wording as adopted or disposed of, and the disposition - including temporary disposition (with any primary and secondary amendments) and secondary motions not lost or withdrawn where needed for clarity of the minutes.

B: Generally, the name of the mover is recorded, but not the seconder, unless so ordered by the assembly.

C: Robert's Rules of Order say that all MAIN motions should be shown in the minutes. However, at a meeting the secretary will have a need to record nearly all motions and what was done, recording details that are not intended to show up in the final draft to be submitted for approval at the next regular meeting. These detailed notes will then be edited and condensed so that secondary motions (e.g. amendments) are not listed separately in the minutes, but are incorporated into the final wording that is the exact same wording used by the chair in putting the question to a vote and/or otherwise disposing of the main motion. The final draft will show all MAIN motions, as amended, and will not show the evolution of the wording of a motion during its amendment.

For example, the final draft minutes may be worded as follows:

After amendment, a motion by John Doe was adopted, "that the club purchase a new laptop computer for use by the secretary in preparing minutes and other correspondence, at a cost not to exceed \$2,500."

Note: The fact that the motion was amended is mentioned only parenthetically, without providing details.

Points of Order, Appeals, Reasons for Chair Ruling:

Time of Adjournment:

Other:

Votes - When a count has been ordered or vote is by ballot, the number of votes on each side should be entered. For roll call votes, a list of names voting on each side should be entered, all should reflect a quorum present.

Committees - Reports of committees should be printed exactly as submitted, the minutes showing what action was taken. If the report is of great importance, it can be ordered "to be entered into the minutes" - copied in full.

Speakers - List all speakers on each side of a question with an abstract of all addresses (ask for a written copy).