

# SECRETARY GUIDEBOOK



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## **INTRODUCTION**

Holding the position of secretary is a great responsibility. Much of the success of an association depends upon the way the secretary does the job and the accuracy of the records that are turned over to the following year's officers. Accurate records allow for continuity in leadership and extensive historical knowledge even with the positions changing annually. The secretary works closely with the president and the entire board in understanding the goals and direction of the chapter. Usually, the secretary position is the training ground for a future leadership position.

The standard duties of the secretary are:

- Record and keep minutes of all association meetings along with attendance.
- Distribute the minutes to the board soon after a meeting.
- Maintain and archive Policies & Procedures and board changes.
- Communicate board information, reports, and other information as requested by the state chapter, Regional Vice President and national office.
- Report to the association at the annual meeting and at other times as required.

## **MEETING MINUTES**

Keeping minutes is critical to maintaining institutional knowledge of the chapter and how it dealt with different situations and planned and managed events. It is also an unquestionable tool for awards documentation. Minutes are the accounting of the chapter's board activity for the year and should include records of committee reports, verbatim motions brought to the board or to the membership at large as well as assigned responsibilities and deadlines for these responsibilities. The minutes need to be approved by the board, should be easily accessible during and after the meeting.

It can be confusing what to keep track of and the style of minutes.

NABIP has a short video with more details about taking minutes. It is titled "Secretary – Taking Minutes" and is in NABIPvision.

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The secretary also maintains the written policies and procedures (P&Ps) for the chapter. P&Ps are created by the board and updated as necessary for the regular ongoing operations of the association. They provide the details that are not appropriate in the chapter's bylaws. The secretary should review the P&Ps making sure they are current and do not conflict with the chapter's bylaws.

## **ATTENDANCE RECORDS**

The secretary maintains attendance records of the board for all association meetings and activities. You may also be asked to record member and nonmember attendance at meetings and chapter events. Having accurate records of members and guests is very beneficial to the association's membership recruiting and retention efforts.

## **CHAPTER LEADERSHIP ROSTERS**

As the secretary you are also responsible for communicating the chapter's leadership roster and any changes to the board roster to your state or local chapters, RVP and the national office. This information makes sure that the appropriate chapter officers are notified of upcoming events, reports or general information and receive appropriate information.

## **PASSING ON OF RECORDS**

Next to taking and keeping accurate minutes, passing on your records and the previous years' records is essential. These records are the chapter's archives and will inform future officers and members why decisions were made as well as past issues. You can keep it in a binder or online, whichever is easier for you to keep, update and pass on in its entirety to your successor.

## **OTHER DUTIES AS ASSIGNED BY THE PRESIDENT**

Like everyone on the board you may receive additional duties as assigned by the President. In the absence of an actual parliamentarian, you may be asked to do this job. Read your bylaws to determine if the chapter follows "The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure" by Alice Sturgis or "Robert's Rules of Order". Have a copy of the procedure book with you at the meetings. Parliamentary procedure helps the meetings move along smoothly.

## **CONCLUSION**

The office of secretary can be demanding or time-consuming position, but with organization and attention to detail the job is easier. The minutes, bylaws, policies and procedures all must be maintained. You are critical in collecting and keeping the chapter's historical information as well as communicating with the state, RVP and national associations. This job will give you a good idea about how a chapter runs and the foundation for becoming a strong well-informed chapter leader.