

# Daughters of Penelope Effective Ways To Take Meeting Minutes



Agendas &  
Meeting Minutes

## ***How to Take Minutes at a Meeting***

Taking good minutes at a meeting is an important and fulfilling role. Meeting minutes are more than a general accounting of membership discussions; *they serve as an official and legal record of the meeting of the membership*. Minutes are used in a variety of ways including tracking progress, detailing future plans, and serving as a reference point. Among other things, your meeting minutes should reflect a record of motions, votes, and abstentions.

### ***Taking Meeting Minutes – Step by Step***

In your role as secretary, you'll essentially have *four steps* involved with recording effective meeting minutes. You'll need to spend a little time planning ***before the meeting***, take notes ***during the meeting***, and writing a formal report ***after the meeting***. You'll also be responsible for filing and sharing the minutes of each meeting.

#### ***Step 1: Preparation for the Meeting***

Every organization records their minutes a little bit differently. Have a discussion with your president about the format. Review past meeting minutes to use as a template. Ask the president for a copy of the meeting agenda, any correspondence, and any guests or speakers that may be attending.

#### ***Step 2: Taking a Record of the Meeting***

You can either type them out or write them longhand. The two most important things to know when taking the record of the meeting is what information to record and how to present it.

*Meeting minutes **should** include:*

- Date of the meeting
- Time the meeting was called to order
- Names of the meeting participants and absentees
- Corrections and amendments to previous meeting minutes
- Additions to the current agenda
- Whether a quorum is present
- Motions taken or rejected
- Voting—that there was a motion and second, and the outcome of the vote
- Actions taken or agreed to be taken
- New business
- Time of adjournment

How you detail the discussions during a meeting is as important as making sure to include all the information in the bullets shown above.

Record discussions objectively, avoiding inflammatory remarks and personal observations.

- A good way to do this is by avoiding adjectives and adverbs whenever possible.
- Check your language to be sure that it is clear, unambiguous, and complete.
- As noted earlier, minutes are an official and legal record of the meeting.
- Keep information basic and language simple to avoid any complications.

### ***Use names only when recording motions and seconds.***

After the meeting, you will want to write the formal record when everything is still fresh in your mind, so prepare the record as soon after the meeting as you possibly can.

### ***Step 3: Writing the Official Record of the Meeting Minutes***

Review the agenda to gain the full scope of the meeting. Add notes for clarification. Review actions, motions, votes, and decisions for clarity. Edit the record so that the minutes are succinct, clear, and easy to read.

It's better to attach meeting handouts and documents that were referred to during the meeting to the final copy, rather than summarizing the contents in the minutes.

### ***Step 4: Signing, Filing, and Sharing Minutes***

Once your meeting minutes are fully written, you are responsible for making them official by signing the minutes.

The President's signature should also be added after the minutes have been approved by drawing a line at the end or bottom of the minutes and signing.

Follow your organization's by-laws and protocols. It's a good idea to have back-up copies either in print, a hard drive, or "In the Cloud" or on "Google Drive"

The secretary also has the responsibility for sharing minutes.

**Make sure the President has approved the minutes before sharing in print or online.**

### ***Common Mistakes in Taking Meeting Minutes***

- Failure to document a quorum
- Ambiguous description of member actions
- Including information that could harm a member or the chapter
- Lengthy delays in providing minutes after a meeting
- Delays in approving minutes from past meetings-missing mistakes
- Failing to file and manage documents
- Failing to get documents signed so they serve as an official record

Always be mindful that the purpose of taking meeting minutes is to reflect the true intentions of the membership and that they are official and of history record. Given the detail and complexity of proper documentation of meeting minutes, we find using a template as a tool, helps make this work easier and more efficient, and can ultimately elevate organizational performance. As serious as the job is, the task of taking and preparing minutes is a rewarding and edifying experience.

**Daughters of Penelope  
Chapter Name and No.  
AGENDA  
Date of Meeting**

**Opening Procedures:** *(includes Opening Prayer, Escort of Visitors, Drape of Charter, etc.)*

**Roll Call of Officers:**

**Initiations:**

**Reading and approving minutes of the previous meeting**

**Treasurer's Report:**

**Correspondence:**

1. Supreme Headquarters:
2. Grand Lodge:
3. District Lodge:
4. Local Sources:

\*\*ALL LETTERS ARE ACTED UPON IMMEDIATELY AFTER THEY ARE READ\*\*

**Committee Reports:**

1. Chapter Standing Committees
  - a. Sunshine
  - b. Relief
  - c. Naturalization
  - d. Education
  - e. Entertainment
  - f. Membership
  - g. Chapter Maids of Athena Advisory Board
  - h. AHEPA Family Committee
  - i. Social Media

2. Chapter Special Committees

**Unfinished Business:**

**New Business:**

1. **Bills**
2. **Elections**
3. **Special Announcements**
4. **Good of the Order**
5. **Installation**

**Closing Procedure and Adjournment**

**Daughters of Penelope  
Chapter Name and No.  
Meeting Minutes, Date of Meeting**

**Meeting Called to Order at:**

**Roll Call of Officers:** *Present or Absent*

- President
- Vice President
- Recording Secretary
- Treasurer
- Corresponding Secretary

**Chapter members in attendance:** *(Add new members name)*

**Quorum:** Yes or No

**Initiations:** *(Add new members name)*

**Meeting Minutes:** The minutes of the (Date) previous meeting was Approved as

**Treasurer's Report:**

Bank Name: \_\_\_\_\_

- Checking: \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Savings: \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Total: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Correspondence:**

5. Supreme Headquarters:
6. Grand Lodge:
7. District Lodge:
8. Local Sources:

**Committee Reports:**

1. Chapter Standing Committees
  - a. Sunshine
  - b. Education:
  - c. Entertainment:
  - d. Membership
  - e. AHEPA Family:
  - f. Social Media:
2. Chapter Special Committees

**Unfinished Business:**

**New Business:**

**Special Announcements:**

**Good of the Order:**

**Meeting adjourned at:**

Submitted by,

Name, Recording Secretary

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_(Date) Chapter President