



**RECORDING SECRETARY  
AND  
CORRESPONDING SECRETARY  
GUIDE**

2011-2013

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## **RECORDING/CORRESPONDING SECRETARY'S GUIDE**

The information in this guide has been prepared to assist you in accomplishing the responsibilities of your position. We hope it will be of assistance to you.

You will be the keeper of all of the permanent records of your PTA. Maintenance and upkeep of these records are of utmost importance to your PTA. Minutes may be subpoenaed by any court of law. Efficiency and accuracy must be practiced when recording minutes.

If needed, contact your County Council President for assistance.

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## **GENERAL JOB DESCRIPTION**

### **Recording Secretary**

#### **RECORDING SECRETARY**

The recording secretary should be well informed on all aspects of PTA. He/she should:

- Attend leadership training when offered.
- Review the PTA's bylaws.
- Review the past secretaries' records (procedure book).
- Be knowledgeable of other PTA publications that promote and educate members about PTA

#### **Responsibilities of the Recording Secretary**

- Attend all meetings of the association to record the minutes.
- Maintain the official records of the association.
- Prepare report of the executive board for general membership meetings.
- Work with the membership chairman in maintaining the membership list.
- File official reports of the association with the New Jersey PTA (NJPTA) and other required agencies.
- Maintain a procedure book.

#### **Summarize your Term in Office**

- Ensure that all records are in order.
- Be sure to file year-end reports that are due (annual meeting).
- Have minutes affixed in a binder, stipulating the beginning and ending dates, with numbered pages.
- Finalize the procedure book for the year, and make recommendations for the upcoming year. If leaving the position, ensure that the new secretary receives your information.

## **PERTINENT FACTS FOR THE RECORDING SECRETARY**

1. The duties of the recording secretary are outlined in your local PTA bylaws. Please read and adhere to Article VII, Section 3.
2. Attend all meetings of the association: executive committee, board, and general membership meetings. If unable to attend, notify the president so he/she may appoint another representative to record the minutes of the meeting. A tape or electronic recorder may be used but it must be announced that it is being used.
3. Call a meeting to order in absence of the president and vice-president, unless your bylaws stipulate otherwise, and preside over the meeting until the chairman pro tem is elected or the designated officer arrives.
4. Record all business transacted at each meeting of the association and of the executive committee/board, and present the minutes for approval at the next meeting.
  - a. Executive committee/board minutes are read at executive committee/board meetings.
  - b. General membership minutes are read at general membership meetings.
5. Have the following on hand for reference at each meeting: a copy of the local PTA bylaws (the official copy), minutes of previous meetings, a list of all standing and special committee members (including names, addresses, and telephone numbers), an up-to-date list of the membership, a copy of the year's budget, a copy of the year's calendar of events, and a copy of the president's agenda.
6. Keep a current list of the elected officers and the complete executive committee/board, and record their attendance at the committee meetings.
7. Receive written reports from all officers and committees. Record the date received and any action taken. The report can be attached to the official minutes.
8. At general membership meetings, give the report of all action taken by the executive committee/board. This is your executive board report.
9. Minutes are to be forwarded to the President within 10 days of the meeting. On the president's copy, highlight any unfinished business. This will assist the president in preparing his/her agenda for the next meeting. By forwarding a copy of the minutes, the president will have a copy on hand if you are unable to attend the next meeting of the association. No meeting should go without minutes being read and approved. All members of the executive committee/board should receive written copies of the minutes for their procedure books.
10. Maintain a file for all of the important records of the association: charter, incorporation papers, insurance papers, etc. The principal may be approached for permission to keep this file within the school building. It's preferable that the PTA has its own file cabinet.
11. Keep all original copies of motion slips. It is recommended that duplicate motion slips be used. A copy can be given to the person who made the motion.
12. File annual reports due from the association to the NJPTA and Secretary of State if incorporated. (Reports due to NJPTA include the list of new or returning officers, membership report, and copy of auditor's report.)

13. Remember, all information received regarding PTA is the property of the PTA. You are to maintain and update records and pass them on to your successor (including a procedure book).
14. If the recording secretary tape records any meeting, the tapes are used only to assist him/her in transcribing the action taken and should be destroyed after the minutes are approved. No one other than the secretary may have access to these recordings as they are only to be used as an aide and are not the official minutes. Tapes cannot be used as a substitute for the official minutes.

# **UNDERSTANDING PTA MINUTES**

## **WHAT ARE MINUTES**

Minutes are the permanent, legal, official records of the proceedings of a PTA. They should be recorded in the order in which the business was presented at a meeting.

Minutes should be brief and to the point and always written in the third person.

Accuracy is of utmost importance. If in doubt of the spelling of a name, a date, or anything else that is part of the action of the PTA, request information for clarification at the time of the action.

## **WHAT IS INCLUDED IN MINUTES?**

- Name of association;
- Date, time, and place of meeting;
- Type of meeting (special, general, executive committee or board);
- Quorum established;
- Disposition of minutes of previous meeting;
- Treasurer's report;
- Correspondence;
- Committee reports;
- All motions (except those withdrawn), recommendations, points of order, and appeals are recorded;
- Action taken on motions or recommendations;
- Report of officers and chairmen;
- Announcements;
- Time of adjournment.

## **RECORDING PROCESS**

- Minutes should be as brief as possible and properly recorded.
- Only action taken, not discussed, by PTA should be recorded.
- Record actions taken on previous meeting minutes. "Approved as presented" or "approved as corrected."
- When recording a motion, include the name of the person presenting the motion. You do not need to record the name of the person seconding, just note that the motion was seconded and action taken (whether carried or lost).
- Present the minutes of the previous meeting at the following meeting. If all members have been provided with a copy, a recommendation can be made that they be accepted as mailed or distributed. (Usually just executive committee or board meetings.)
- Prepare the minutes in the proper order form as soon as possible following the meeting. Forward a copy to the president.
- After the minutes have been approved, record such at the bottom of the minutes, along with the date and your signature.

## **PRESERVING THE MINUTES**

- Enter the minutes in an official, bound book or notebook. Number the pages in proper order for future reference.
- All minutes of the PTA should be permanently maintained for legal and historical reasons.

## OUTLINE GENERALLY USED FOR RECORDING MINUTES

1. Kind of meeting – executive committee, executive board, general membership, and special.
2. Name of group.
3. Date, time, and place of the meeting (if not always the same).
4. Name of the officer who calls the meeting to order.
5. Members in attendance (at executive committee, board meetings, or general membership meetings).
6. Whether minutes of previous meeting were approved as read or mailed, or as corrected, or whether reading them was dispensed with and why (only if members have copies). Corrections and approval of minutes are usually handled by general (unanimous) consent.
7. Minutes of a special meeting are approved at the next general meeting. A special meeting does not approve minutes.
8. Treasurer’s report.
9. Correspondence.
10. Reports of officers, the executive committee, standing, and special committees.
11. A separate paragraph for each subject matter.
12. Minutes should contain mainly a record of what was done, not what was said, and should never reflect the secretary’s opinion.
13. Exact wording of all motions or recommendations made and seconded should be put on motion slips. See example below.
  - Record the name of the member who made the motion but not the one who seconded the motion.
  - The results of the vote – whether carried or lost.
  - Motions that have been withdrawn do not appear in minutes.
14. All points of order and appeals, whether sustained or not, together with reasons given by the chair for his or her ruling.
15. When a count is taken or a vote is by ballot, the number of votes on each side is recorded.
16. Program topic, type of presentation, names of participants, important points covered.
17. Further business – announcements – good of the order.
18. Time of adjournment.
19. Should be signed by the secretary and dated. Do not use “Respectfully submitted”. This is an outdated practice.
20. When minutes are approved, the word “approved” with the secretary’s initials and date should be written below them.

<b>OFFICIAL MOTION BLANK</b>	
	<b>Motion Number:</b> _____ <b>Date:</b> _____
<b>I move</b> _____ _____ _____ _____	
<b>Name of PTA</b> _____ - <b>County</b> _____	
	_____ <b>Signed</b>

## SAMPLE OF MINUTE EXCERPTS

**Identification:**

Valley Hill PTA  
General Membership Meeting  
Valley Hill School  
December 7, 2010

**Call to Order:**

President Mary Smith called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Establishing a Quorum:**

Excused from tonight's meeting: Alice Lane, Jane Conover, and Beth Jones.

Present: List members or attach a sign-in sheet.

**Officer's Reports:**

Secretary's Report: Minutes of previous meeting were read and approved as presented – or approved as corrected.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Mark Adams reported a balance of \$2,330. As of November 7 – income from dues \$100 and expenses of \$75, which gives us a balance of \$2,355 as of December 7, 2010. (See copy of report attached.) Report was filed for audit.

Corresponding Secretary Report: Corresponding secretary reported receiving a "Thank You" from the school staff for our teacher appreciation program. Letter from County PTA regarding upcoming leadership program and a request that the Community Alliance and the PTAs participate jointly in a community salute to volunteer organizations on May 5.

President's Report: The president reported that she had attended the county council meeting on November 27. Upcoming events include their Founder's Day Dinner on February 17 and New Jersey PTA Legislative Day on March 17. Anyone interested in attending either function, please contact the president after the meeting.

**Committee Reports:**

Ways & Means Chairman: May Jones reported that the committee had met on November 21 to finalize plans for our May Flower Sale, which will be held on May 9 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in school parking lot. Anyone wishing to volunteer to work please see chairman after meeting. (See attached report.)

Membership Chairman: There has been an enrollment of 300 members as of December 6. Dues were turned over to the treasurer.

### ***Motions and Recommendations:***

*Mary Zane made a motion that we invite our Superintendent of Schools to speak on the upcoming school budget at our next general membership meeting. Seconded – Discussion was held – Motion carried (or lost).*

If committee report contains recommendation for action, after report is given, should say:

*Ways & Means – Last sentence of report would read: Committee recommends that all proceeds from the Flower Sale be used to purchase an assembly program for our students. (No second needed – as it comes from committee). Discussion held. Motion carried (or lost).*

*Mark Adams moved that we take part in the community’s “Volunteer Salute” and that we appoint a committee to organize our part in the participation. Seconded. Motion carried. Sally Adams volunteered to serve as chairman. Mark Adams, Nancy Toughton, and Pat Downs will serve on the committee.*

### ***Program:***

*Program Chairman Edna Chase introduced our guest speaker for the evening. Sergeant Jim Denver, from our local police department, spoke on “Safe Homes”.*

### ***Good of the Order or Announcements:***

(May be presented from any member.)

*Our Principal, Mr. Klein, invited us to attend the school Christmas Concert on December 14. The concert will start at 7:00 p.m.*

*Members were reminded of the Community Christmas Tree Lighting on this coming Saturday.*

*President reminded anyone interested in attending announced PTA activities to see her after the meeting.*

*Date of next meeting will be February 9, 2011.*

### ***Adjournment:***

*President Mary Smith adjourned meeting at 8:30 p.m.*

### **HELPFUL HINTS**

- Recommendations, bylaws, rules, resolutions, and budgets are adopted.
- Reports and resignations are accepted.
- Bills and minutes are approved.
- If corrections were made to the minutes, the minutes are then approved as corrected or amended.
- Treasurer’s statement is neither approved nor adopted; but after questions are answered regarding any item as reported, it is placed on file for audit as stipulated in the bylaws.
- Motions are recorded as “carried” or “lost.”
- Number motion slips (if your PTA uses them), and note on the slips whether the motion was “carried” or “lost”.

## **SUGGESTED CONTENTS OF THE RECORDING SECRETARY'S PROCEDURE BOOK**

Names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the following:

- Elected officers of the local PTA (and term of office);
- Standing and special committee chairmen and members of the committee(s);
- County council officers and chairmen;
- NJPTA President;
- National PTA President;
- Local Board of Education (and terms of office for each member).

Names of teachers in the school and the grades they teach.

Copy of local PTA bylaws (official copy):

- Local PTA's membership list;
- Local PTA's annual budget;
- Local PTA's program for the year;
- Copies of local PTA's bulletin or newsletter;
- Dates of all local, county, and state meetings;
- Report of meetings and conferences attended.

Copies of the following publications:

- New Jersey PTA Handbook;
- New Jersey PTA Recording and Corresponding Secretary's Guide;
- New Jersey Parent-Teacher Bulletin;
- New Jersey PTA Bylaws;
- Annual Resources for PTAs- National PTA;
- Our Children;
- County Bulletin;
- Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

## **GENERAL JOB DESCRIPTION**

### **Corresponding Secretary**

#### **CORRESPONDING SECRETARY**

The corresponding secretary should be well informed on all aspects of PTA. He/she should:

- Attend leadership training when offered.
- Review the PTA's bylaws.
- Review the past corresponding secretary's records.
- Be knowledgeable of PTA publications that can enhance the PTA's position.
- Be knowledgeable of PTA publications that will assist with the promotion of PTA membership.

#### **Responsibilities of the Corresponding Secretary**

- Attend all meetings of the association.
- Receive and review all correspondence received by the association.
- Read all correspondence received at PTA meetings.
- Notify officers, committee members, and delegates of their election or appointment.
- Send out notices of executive committee, board, and other meetings.
- Send out cards, thank you letters, etc.
- Write any other letters as directed by the president or the local PTA.
- Keep a file of all correspondence.

#### **Summarize your Term in Office**

- Ensure that files are in order.
- Prepare year-end report when due (annual meeting).
- Finalize the procedure book for the year, and make recommendations for the upcoming year. If leaving the position, ensure that the new corresponding secretary receives the information.

## **PERTINENT FACTS FOR THE CORRESPONDING SECRETARIES**

1. The corresponding secretary conducts the official correspondence of the PTA, unless assigned to another officer (e.g., Dues to NJPTA).
2. The duties of the corresponding secretary are outlined in the local PTA bylaws. Please read and adhere to Article VII, Section 4.
3. Review correspondence received by the PTA before reading at a meeting. If possible, “highlight” the most important items: who, what, when, where, and why.
4. Prioritize correspondence before presenting.
  - “For information only”, should be first.
  - Items that may require action by the association should be next. You may note that members may want to consider information received as an “action” item under new business.
5. The corresponding secretary should have a supply of PTA letterhead and envelopes on hand.
6. A well-written letter is a reflection of the PTA. Proper letter format and correct spelling is essential. All official correspondence should be typed.
7. Be sure the letter is worded from the person or body authorizing the letter (if from president, executive committee, board, or entire membership).
8. If from executive board, approval must be from the executive board, and the closing should reflect such.
9. If from the general membership, it must carry membership approval, and the closing should reflect that the letter is from the association. (We never speak for the association unless the association is aware of our position and has given us permission to do so.)
10. The corresponding secretary’s file should contain correspondence received, as well as copies of correspondence sent.
11. Record the date of the correspondence received on the correspondence itself.
12. Forward a copy of the outgoing correspondence to the president for approval before mailing.
13. Prepare or update the procedure book. It is a teaching aide for the next person holding the position.
14. Do not delay handing over materials to your successor.