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**TAKING MINUTES**

Meeting minutes are more than just a collection of notes for internal reference--they serve as an official and legal record of the meeting of the Board of Directors, and can be used as legal evidence of the proceedings at a meeting. Your association should have an established template and procedure for how meeting minutes are taken, filed and shared. Whoever is responsible for taking meeting minutes should take detailed notes while the meeting is occurring, and then immediately afterwards formulate those notes into a final, official record of the meeting. The final draft of the minutes must then be signed by the Board Secretary (and in some cases the President as well, depending on your organization’s rules) to make them official.

**WHAT INFORMATION SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN MEETING MINUTES?**

* Date and time that the meeting was called to order
* List of meeting participants and absentees
* Amendments/corrections to minutes from previous meeting
* Additions to the current meeting agenda
* Whether a quorum is present at the meeting
* Motions set forth during the meeting
  + Who made the motion?
  + Who was the second?
  + What was the outcome of the vote?
* Actions that were taken/agreed to be taken
* Next steps after a motion is taken
* Items to be held over
* New business
* Public participation/open discussion
* Date and time of next meeting
* Time that meeting was adjourned

In addition to the information above, it is important to properly detail the board’s discussion. For every item on the agenda, include a brief description of the actions taken by the board and the rationale for each decision. For an extensive argument, write a brief description of the arguments presented. All arguments should be presented objectively—avoid stating personal opinions. A good rule of thumb is to avoid using adjectives or adverbs unless absolutely necessary.