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Tips For Taking Minutes

1. Start Writing the Minutes Before the Meeting Starts

The details of the first paragraph are likely to be the same from meeting to meeting, except for the time and date. Get this information out of the way.

2. Know What Goes In the Minutes and What Doesn't

Trying to take notes on everything is nerve-racking. Knowing what goes into the minutes allows more comfort in minute taking. Don't summarize reports. Take note of motions; ignore debate.

3. Be Vocal about What You Need

Communicate with the chair openly and often. Don't be bashful about your duty.

4. Insist that Reports be in Written Form

It's the secretary's duty to maintain the records of the organization, including written reports presented to the assembly. It is NOT appropriate for the secretary to include in the minutes a summary of what someone says.

5. Be Clear on the EXACT Language of Each Motion

If you're unclear on the exact language, speak up right away to get the language clarified. As the secretary, if you're not clear on the language, chances are that no one else is either.

6. Be Sure the Chair Announces the Result of Each Vote

The chair's announcement of the result is the official determination of the voting result.

7. Finish the Minutes Before Leaving the Meeting Site

At the close of the meeting is the best time to finish the minutes. Keeping the minutes in the proper form as the meeting goes along and expecting to complete them at the close of the meeting will make you more efficient.