From National PTA: A PTA Secretary's Role

You will serve your PTA by keeping an accurate record of meetings, which become part of the permanent history of the PTA. See the "Taking Minutes" section of **Running PTA Meetings**.

Running an Effective Meeting

- **Schedule meetings at convenient times and places.** Poll members to find times that work best for the majority. Consider meeting outside the school building to attract family members who might not be comfortable in a school setting.
- **Have a clear purpose for each meeting,** then create and follow an agenda. Members want to feel that something significant was accomplished and their time was valued.
- **Facilitate effectively.** As facilitator, your job is to start and end the meeting on time, and keep conversation focused on the meeting's purpose.
- **Engage participants.** Incorporate activities that get people involved and generate discussion, and use visual aids to grab attention. Be sure all members feel welcomed and invited to participate. Use **parliamentary procedure** (Robert's Rules of Order) to make sure everyone gets heard, no one dominates the conversation and ideas are fully explored before the majority rules through voting.
- **Ensure a quorum.** A quorum is a minimum number of members who must be present to conduct business at a meeting. This number should be noted in your PTA's bylaws. If a quorum is not met, then you may hold a meeting but a vote cannot be taken.
- **Take minutes.** According to the IRS, **minutes** become part of the organization's permanent file. Minutes should include a record of attendance and any action that was taken; for example, they serve as proof that funds were expended in accordance with the bylaws and approved budget. Minutes should not include opinion, lengthy descriptions of discussions or detailed quotes from speakers.
- **Plan for social time.** Consider adding social time before or after the meeting so that those with busy schedules feel their time is well-used, and those who want to socialize have time to network.

In some PTAs, the secretary also has the responsibility of maintaining all PTA correspondence, including communications with members and notifications for meetings. Because of this, sometimes this position is split into two roles: Recording Secretary and Corresponding Secretary.

Great secretaries often have prior volunteer and/or meeting experience and are enthusiastic about PTA.

A PTA Secretary's Responsibilities

#1: Gather and Maintain Essential Documentation.

There are several items you'll want to put your hands on right away to be sure important records aren't lost in the transition. Collaborate with your PTA president and past officers to gather these records. If any records are missing, contact your **State PTA** for guidance. Records to gather include:

- **Your PTA Bylaws** (and any accompanying standing rules) to find important information about how finances are to be handled and how funds are to be disbursed.
- **PTA Procedure Book or "Board Book"**. Whether it is an electronic file, a cardboard box full of papers, or a binder thick with documents, get up to speed on what has happened in the past.

#2: Organize and Record Meetings.

Ensure that meetings are efficient by providing written communication with your PTA members and board. These responsibilities include:

- Working with the president to create an agenda
- Sending out meeting announcements, agendas and supporting documents
- Taking attendance and checking for quorum (minimum number of members who must be present to conduct business at a meeting) during voting
- Taking minutes, including counting and recording any votes
- Presenting the **draft minutes** of the previous meeting, making any corrections and ensuring approved minutes are included in your PTA's permanent record

Sample Meeting Minutes

Minutes of

The ABC Middle School PTA

General Membership Meeting

September 2014

PTA President Richard Roe called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. A quorum was established with more than 60 PTA members in attendance.

PTA Treasurer Betsy Bow reviewed the budget. There was a motion to approve the budget. The budget was approved by the majority.

Membership Chair Lois Lane reviewed the results of the Back-to-School membership drive. She reported that 30 new members joined during the drive, many of whom were parents bringing their children to start their very first day of school.

President Roe called for volunteers to help plan and run the winter holiday fundraiser. He introduced June Jones, the chair of the winter fundraiser. June Jones said the theme for this year's fundraiser would be "Tech the Halls" and would have electronic and futuristic decorations and

activities. Jones named the various tasks that were available for volunteering and explained the process for signing up to volunteer. She mentioned that the fundraising goal was $5,000.Reflections Committee Chair Donna Doe talked about the Reflections contest, explaining the theme and how to get involved.

Health and Wellness Chair, Jim Halloway, moved on behalf of the Health and Wellness Committee to contract with “Mr. Body” to provide an assembly this Spring. Jim said the assembly focused on healthy eating and lots of physical activity, it met the parameters in the Committee’s work plan, and it falls within the budget approved by the board for the committee. Motion did not need a second as it came from committee. Motion carried.

Principal Sandi Silo thanked everyone for coming and invited people to join her for her monthly coffees.

President Roe thanked all for coming and invited everyone to the upcoming Family Swim Night. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Prepared by Jane Johnson
Recording Secretary