

The Secretary

A good secretary contributes much toward the efficiency of a chapter. Some chapters have one or more recording and corresponding secretaries while others have only one secretary who performs all the duties belonging to that office. Whether your chapter has one secretary or more than one, you may find the following list of suggested duties helpful.

- Keep a complete and accurate account of proceedings of the chapter's business meetings and the meetings of officers. Minutes of meetings should include: a. name of organization b. kind of meeting c. place, date, and time d. name of presiding officer e. approximate number present f. all business proceedings g. reports of committees, motions stated, and action taken h. signature of secretary
- Keep a membership list and record of attendance at meetings.
- Serve as chairman of the membership committee.
- Call meeting to order in absence of the president and vice president, and entertain a motion for a temporary chairman.
- Read minutes of meetings and call president's attention to any unfinished business.
- Count the vote on either side, when a vote is by raising hands or standing, unless tellers have been appointed.
- Read correspondence directed to the group.
- Answer all correspondence promptly, and file the letters and the replies for future reference.
- Collect and record reports of all committees and all written resolutions.
- Advise the president on matters of business to be taken up or business procedures to be followed.
- Include in the secretary's book the following: a. minutes of meetings b. list of state and local officers c. list of local committees d. local, state, and national programs of work e. local and state constitutions.

The following suggestions may be helpful to the secretary in recording minutes.

- Use a uniform heading for reports. Such headings should include: identification of the meeting, date, place, time (usually), and members present (use number if group is large; use individual list if group is small).
- Use underlined headings and a separate paragraph for each different item of the agenda.
- Start a new page for the report of each meeting.
- Allow margins on each page.
- Use only one side of the paper.
- Number each page.
- Write minutes in third person.
- In a meeting which tackles a problem or issue, state the problem, note the major points of agreement and the conclusion. If you are not certain a conclusion was reached, ask.
- Ask the group to check the accuracy of your record when you are in doubt about their opinion on a point.
- Record items in the order they are discussed. Notes can be cut apart and organized under headings later.
- Collect all committee reports and attach them to the minutes. It is not necessary to take notes on the reports—only on acceptance, rejection, or modification.
- Record the names of persons making motions. It is not necessary to record names of those seconding motions.
- Get the motions in the words of those who made them. If necessary, ask that the motion be written out.
- Tell the disposition of the motion.
- Keep the minutes as brief as possible, but include all essential information.
- State facts, not the opinions of the secretary.
- Read the minutes at the following meeting where necessary changes and corrections are made in order to secure approval.
- Include the minutes in the secretary's book in the approved form, typed (preferably) or written in longhand. Sign. They then become a permanent chapter record.