



Recording History

An Altrusa Secretary's Guide

Pat Jackowski, Secretary (2019-2021)

Altrusa International District One

updated 2024-07

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A Secretary is defined as a person, usually an official, who is in charge of the records, correspondence, minutes of meetings, and related affairs of an organization.



Within the structure of Altrusa International there are some distinctions between a District Secretary and Club Secretary:

1. The District Secretary is an appointed position by the Biennium Governor and although a member of the Executive Board, is a non-voting member.
2. The Club Secretary is part of the Executive Board having been elected to the position and is a voting Board Member.
3. On the Club level, clubs sometimes separate the secretary position into two positions - *Recording Secretary* and *Corresponding Secretary*, where the responsibilities regarding correspondence would be allocated to the Corresponding Secretary.

For the purpose of this presentation, the focus will be on the Recording Secretary on the Club level.

General Responsibilities

1. Take minutes of all Board and Club meetings
2. Keep a record of attendance at all Club meetings
3. Send the names of International Convention delegates and alternates to the International Office immediately following elections
4. Maintain the Club's permanent records, including all minutes and any papers the club orders to be placed on file. These records are kept separate from the records kept by other Club officers and chairs.

General Responsibilities (continued)

5. Issue notices of Club meetings
6. Handle the general correspondence of the Club and President as requested, excluding correspondence which relates specifically to the responsibilities of other officers and committee chairs-may be delegated to the Corresponding Secretary
7. Send invitations to prospective members immediately following the Board's acceptance; may be delegated to the Corresponding Secretary
8. Complete Application for Affiliate Membership form for members seeking affiliate status
9. Complete Member Referral forms for active and active retired members moving to a community having an Altrusa Club

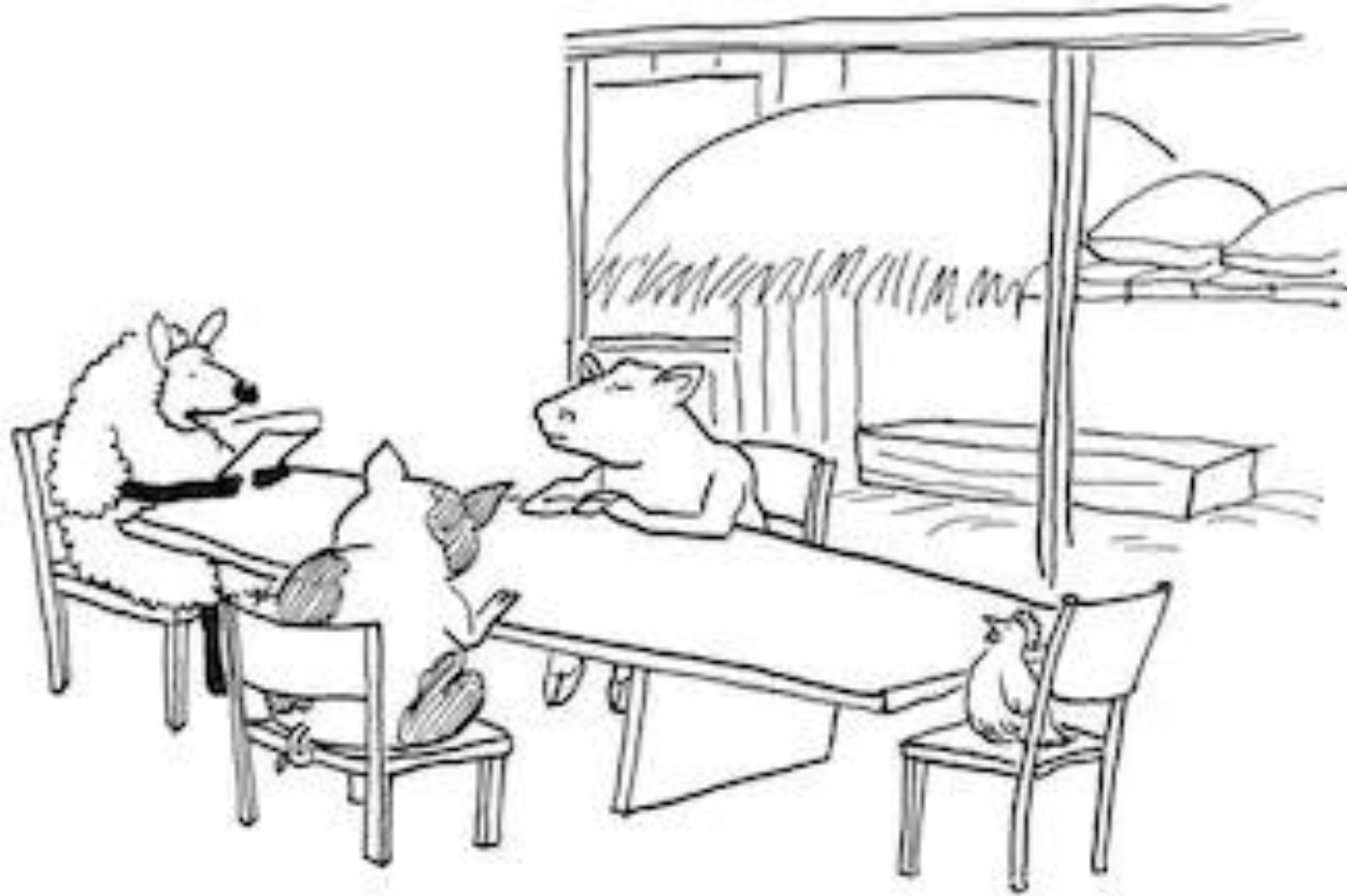
General Responsibilities (continued)

10. Send the slate of candidates for Club Officer and Director positions to the Club membership immediately following receipt from the Nominating Committee
11. Within ten days following elections, send the names and addresses of newly elected officers and directors to the International Office and District Governor
12. Send the names of delegates and alternates to the District Treasurer immediately following elections

Meeting Minutes

Minutes are the official, legal record of a club and provide the following:

1. Keep absent members informed of the club's business,
2. Help club leaders follow up on assignments and actions,
3. Help formulate the agenda for future meetings, give continuity to the procedures and traditional activities of the club,
4. Provide a valuable review of the activities of the past, and
5. Are valuable resources in assessing member participation when considering committee appointments and officer nominations.



“The cow mooed, the pig oinked, the chicken clucked, I baaed and then we adjourned.”

Guidelines for Preparing Minutes

Include the following information when preparing minutes of business and program meetings:

1. Club name, type of meeting (Board, Business, Program or Special), place, date, and time convened
2. Names of those present (guest names optional)
3. Call to order and name of the presiding officer
4. Correction and approval of the minutes as read, as printed in the newsletter, or distributed
5. Treasurer's report, copy attached, is filed for record
6. The exact wording of motions, the name of the maker, the individual who seconds the motion and the motion's outcome
7. The exact wording of any amendments made to motions, the name of the maker, and its seconder and the amendment's outcome
8. The exact wording of a Committee assignment, including any power to act, the due date, and the names of committee chairs and members
9. Time of adjournment

ROBERTS RULES OF ORDER

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, commonly referred to as Robert's Rules of Order, or simply Robert's Rules, is the most widely used manual of parliamentary procedure in the United States. It governs the meetings of a diverse range of organizations who have adopted it as their parliamentary authority.

Robert's Rules provide common rules and procedures for deliberation and debate bringing order placing the whole membership on the same footing and speaking the same language providing for constructive and Democratic meetings.



Under Robert's Rules

A secretary's job description includes the following duties: Take minutes at all meetings and submit them for approval to the membership at the following meeting. The key attributes of a successful secretary are dependability, organization, and the ability to refrain from editorializing.

Secretary tips....

No other office is more important to the smooth functioning of your group. The work of the secretary is absolutely essential, and it takes a special person to do it correctly and do it well — not because the work is difficult, but because it's so important.

Don't wear yourself out trying to write into the minutes everything everybody says in meetings. In fact, it's actually improper to do that. It boils down to this: Minutes are the record of what is done in the meeting, not what is said.

The secretary's duty includes the duty to make available to members the records of the organization. Whether you're the secretary or the member a sincere respect for each other's time and effort benefits all concerned.



Timeliness of Minutes

As stated previously, meeting minutes are the historical record of the organization and provide members documentation of events, assignments and deadlines for projects. Altrusa Guidelines and Robert's Rules do not give a timeline regarding distribution of meeting minutes, however, the minutes of a meeting should be generated and distributed as soon as possible.

From the article *Seven Ways a Board Secretary Serves a Nonprofit* from the [Funding for Good](#) website,

The board secretary's responsibility does not end when the meeting adjourns. The secretary should review the minutes and distribute them to the full board of directors ideally within 48-hours of the meetings, but no later than 7 days after the meeting. This will ensure that board members can review minutes while the meeting conversations are still “fresh” in their minds.



Continued...



The minutes do not become official organization “records” until the board approves the minutes. After minutes are approved, the secretary and board chair should sign the minutes before entering them into the records unless there is policy stating digital files are method of retaining permanent records.

The Board Secretary should maintain and preserve all organization records in a secure location that is approved by the board. Board members should have access to minutes that the secretary utilizes to store and distribute digital records.

It’s a good idea to create a mail group for email ease in sending minutes to your club. Make sure you update when membership changes.

Please note, the information presented is from the official policies of Altrusa International, Roberts Rules and the article *Seven Ways a Board Secretary Serves a Nonprofit* by Funding For Good. Clubs, by virtue of policy or history may alter the secretary duties.

Questions??



*Thank you
for
Attending*





Resources

Website: Altrusa.org

Leadership – Parliamentary Procedure and Leadership Toolkit

Governance - Bylaws and Policies

Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised

Funding For Good

Seven Ways a Board Secretary Serves a Nonprofit, October 20, 2019