

## Recording Effective Chapter Minutes

Minutes of a chapter meeting are legal documents. They must be clear, concise, and accurate because they are a permanent record of the meeting and serve as a legal history of the chapter.

The Secretary is responsible for taking, disseminating, and keeping copies of the minutes. The Secretary files the minutes and agendas together. The Historian keeps copies of the minutes and other supporting documents. Both the Secretary and the Historian need to maintain records in either a binder or on a computer disk for easy accessibility.

These are the four **Must Haves** to include in all chapter minutes:

1. The type of meeting (Orientation, Initiation, Professional Development, Network/Social, Service Project planning/implementation, etc.)
2. When and where the meeting was held
3. Who was the Chair and who/how many members were present
4. The decisions that were made

Keep these items in mind when taking minutes:

- Minutes are a factual and objective account of the affairs and activities dealt with by the chapter. Keep expressions of opinion and emotion out of the chapter records.
- Be concise, but provide enough information for someone who was not at the meeting to understand what was discussed and the final outcome.
- Record the names of the speakers and the main points they made.
- All updates and reports at meetings must be accompanied by a written document that can be attached to the minutes. Ensure that the author's name and meeting date are on the attachment.
- Include the text of all motions (ask the chairperson to state the motions in full and read back the motion to the committee before moving on).
- For chapter activities, include the following information: the specific action, who is responsible, time frame for action, follow-up to chapter members, and cost.
- Write the Minutes from the notes as soon as possible. It is much easier to transpose the notes while discussions are fresh in the mind.
- Allow the chapter President or another officer who was at the meeting to review minutes before placing them in the Minutes Binder or on computer disk.