

Policy for Drafting NMRT Executive Board Minutes

Proposed by NMRT Archives Committee
January 7, 2004

Purpose

NMRT holds 2-3 Executive Board meetings at each Annual and Midwinter Conference of the American Library Association. The proceedings (minutes) of each meeting are written down by the NMRT Secretary, or an alternate, to provide a continuous and consistent record of organizational procedures and resolutions. These official minutes are meant to serve the present and future needs of the entire NMRT membership.

The NMRT Archives Committee proposes the following recommendations in an effort to provide a useful framework that can be followed by all NMRT Secretaries in the drafting of official Executive Board minutes. The following point is important to consider:

“Minutes record not only the decisions (motions) but also the flow of discussion points, so that the rationale for decisions may be clear in the future. The amount of such detail in minutes depends on the nature of the group and its custom. Similarly, the minutes of many groups include comments and humorous remarks; while not technically correct, the “spirit of the group” may be enhanced and nourished by giving a personality to the minutes” (*Parliamentary Procedure: Toward the Good Order of the University*, advice from Dr. John A. Cagle).

Essential information

- Name of group
- Type of meeting
- Date
- Time
- Place
- Name of Chairperson (or substitute) and Recorder
- List of attendees
- Statement about the reading and approval/correction of the minutes from the group’s previous meeting
- Signature of Recorder/Secretary on official copy of minutes
- Hour of adjournment

Highly recommended information

- Use separate paragraphs for each new agenda item
- Clearly state each motion, the decision taken, the wording adopted, the name of the mover, and the number of votes, if counted
- Explain acronyms used

Unnecessary information

- Name of the person seconding a motion
- Personal opinions expressed by any members of the group
- Remarks by guest speakers
- Motions that were withdrawn

Format

- Use simple paragraph format
- Provide headings for each paragraph with the name of the spokesperson
- Avoid tables/boxes
- Use a word processing program that can be saved as a PDF file (PDF is preferred for its accessibility & unalterability)
- Alternatively, save as an HTML text

Sample minutes

NMRT Executive Board Meeting from January 10, 1998
(http://www.lib.lsu.edu/ALA/nmrt/midwinter_98-1.htm)

Works consulted

Parliamentary Procedure: Toward the Good Order of the University, Advice from Dr. John A. Cagle, Parliamentarian of the Academic Senate and Professor of Communication at California State University, Fresno (<http://www.csufresno.edu/comm/cagle-p3.htm#Minutes>)

Minutes by Jim Slaughter, JD, CPP-T, PRP (<http://www.jimslaughter.com/minutes.htm>)