

TIPS FOR THE VFW AUXILIARY SECRETARY



VFW AUXILIARY

October, 2019

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VFW AUXILIARY

TIPS FOR THE AUXILIARY SECRETARY

As the VFW Auxiliary member who has accepted the appointment as Secretary for your local VFW Auxiliary, you may be searching for information/guidance on the duties of this particular office as well as looking for any tools that would make the performance of your duties easier to accomplish—thus, the creation of “**Tips for the Auxiliary Secretary**” booklet.

The primary function of a secretary of any organization, whether elected or appointed, is to keep the records of the meetings (minutes) and to write or answer letters on its behalf. Additionally, a secretary assists not only the organization’s leader (VFW Auxiliary President) but also that VFW Auxiliary’s officers, program chairmen, and members.

In the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Auxiliary, the duties of the Auxiliary Secretary are outlined in Sections 812 and 812A of the National Bylaws, and in the Booklet of Instructions, a section on Secretary Minutes that outlines the what should be included in the minutes and gives suggestions of how a secretary might read a sentence to cover a particular part of a meeting.

Also included in this booklet, you will find sections devoted to using agendas/meeting planners and the absolute “must –haves” in the minutes of a meeting,

Using Agendas/Meeting Planners

Included in this section you will find a copy of the VFW Auxiliary Meeting Agenda which is also a part of the “Healthy Auxiliary Toolkit” and another Agenda format which allows plenty of room to make notes for later use.

- ✓ A VFW Auxiliary Meeting Agenda
(Includes a page for notes on motions, program reports, etc.)

- ✓ A multiple-page combination of an Auxiliary Agenda/Minute Form-note
the additional space allowed

The different agenda formats have been included to assist the Auxiliary Secretary (and hence his/her President) by providing these organizational formats for the actual meeting and in the case of the Secretary, ample space for notes of the motions, made by whom, seconded by whom, and whether the motion passed or failed, for example.

What you, an Auxiliary Secretary, may choose to do is to develop your very own format—designing it to fit your needs. Expect this to be a trial and error process; be ready to make changes/adapt as you become more experienced at being a Secretary—your template may always be a work in progress.

Once completed whether you are going to use the sentence style or bullet style of minutes, you would have a template on your computer and following the meeting, you would sit down and input the actions taken at the meeting just completed, add in the Treasurer’s report (and audit report), save the document as “minutes of the dd/mm/yyyy meeting” for example and need only print out those minutes and attached documents to be prepared for the November meeting. Once the dd/mm/yyyy minutes are approved as read, then you secure them--as the Auxiliary has decided--in a permanent record book, a 3-ring binder or a clip folder.

VFW Auxiliary Meeting Agenda

VFW Auxiliary Name

Agenda for Date

* Please silence your cell phones

1 rap

It has been moved and seconded that...

Next step is discussion

Those in favor – “Aye”

Opposed – “No”

1 – Opening according to Ritual (p. _____)

2 – Roll Call (by Secretary)

3 – Introduction of National and/or Department Officers

4 – Reading and Referring of Petitions for Membership (read by Secretary)

5 – Report of Investigating Committee

6 – Voting on Candidates

7 – Initiation

8 – Presentation of Minutes and Official and other Communications

(Approved-“Will stand approved as read” or “Will stand approved as corrected)

9 – Treasurer’s Report

(“Any discussion?” “Treasurer’s report will be filed subject to audit”)

10 – Presentation of Bills (read by Secretary)

11 – Introduction of Guests—especially those non-Auxiliary member guests—shall not be allowed to enter until the Treasurer’s Report and Presentation of Bills has concluded.

a.

b.

12 – Report of Committees, Standing and Special

[Promotion of Programs/School of Instruction (p.____)]

a.

b. (The Audit Report is called for after each quarterly audit and is the ONLY REPORT accepted by a motion.)

13. – Unfinished Business (The Auxiliary Secretary should have prepared those items that were not completed at the last meeting for the President's use during this meeting.)

a.

b.

14 – New Business

a.

b.

c. Reminders

15 – Report of the Trustees (Motion to pay the bills is needed)

16 – Suggestions for the Good of the Order

a. Instruction from the Patriotic Instructor

b. New Member(s) speak

c. Guest(s) speak

17 – Closing Ceremonies (p. ____)

MEETING NOTES

Motions made at this meeting	Made by	Second by	Carried/Lost

Donations	To	For	Amount

Reports from Program Chairmen – Information To Be Added To Year End Report	

_____ **Auxiliary Agenda/Minute Form***

*This form may be copied and amended as needed for the purpose of (1) taking notes during a meeting and (2) as the format for the actual minutes to be approved by the members in attendance and signed by the Trustees as a part of the auditing of the books of the Secretary and Treasurer.

Date: _____

Time: _____

Presiding Officer: _____

Place: _____

Members Present: _____

Guests Present: _____

Roll Call of Officers: _____

Present/Absent

Pro Tem

President _____

Sr. Vice President _____

Jr. Vice President _____

Secretary _____

Treasurer _____

Chaplain _____

Conductress/Conductor _____

Guard _____

Patriotic Instructor _____

Trustee 1 Yr. _____

Trustee 2 Yr. _____

Trustee 3 Yr. _____

Introduction of Guests—VFW Auxiliary/VFW Members (titles as necessary)

Reading and Referring of Petitions for Membership

Name _____ Relationship to Veteran _____
Veteran's Eligibility _____

Name _____ Relationship to Veteran _____
Veteran's Eligibility _____

Name _____ Relationship to Veteran _____
Veteran's Eligibility _____

Report of the Investigating Committee

Voting on Candidates

All Accepted _____ **OR**

Accepted Names _____

Rejected Names _____

Initiation Held?

Yes Names of Members Initiated _____

No

Presentation of Minutes and Official and other Communications

-Minutes of the Previous Meeting—

Approved as Read/Presented _____

Approved as Corrected _____

-Presentation of Official and other Communications

Department General Orders # _____

Other Communications:

From _____

Regarding _____

From _____

Regarding _____

From _____

Regarding _____

From _____

Regarding _____

Presentation of Treasurer’s Report (Attach Treasurer’s detailed report to Minutes)

Balance last report=\$ _____

Receipts = \$ _____

Disbursements = \$ _____

Balance on hand = \$ _____

Discussion on Treasurer’s Report:

Presentation of Bills

\$ _____ to _____ for _____

\$ _____ to _____ for _____

\$ _____ to _____ for _____

\$ _____ to _____ for _____

Introduction of Guests—any non-Auxiliary member guest shall not be allowed to enter the room until the Treasurer’s Report and Presentation of Bills has concluded.

Name _____

Name _____

Name _____

Name _____

Reports of Committees – Standing and Special

Program Chairmen

Veterans & Family Support Report

Chm.

Americanism Report

Chm.

Buddy Poppy/VFW National Home for Children Report Chm.

Historian/Media Relations Report

Chm.

Hospital Report

Chm.

Legislative Report

Chm.

Membership Report

Chm.

Mentoring for Leadership Report

Chm.

Scholarships

Chm.

Youth Activities

Chm.

Chaplain Report

Chaplain _____

Unfinished Business

New Business

1. Motion by _____

Second by _____

Motion Carried _____

Motion Defeated _____

2. Motion by _____

Second by _____

Motion Carried _____

Motion Defeated _____

3. Motion by _____

Second by _____

Motion Carried _____

Motion Defeated _____

4. Motion by _____

Second by _____

Motion Carried _____

Motion Defeated _____

Additional Notes:

Report of Trustees and Action Thereon (Motion to Pay Bills Presented)

Motion by _____ Second by _____

Motion _____

Motion Carried _____ Motion Defeated _____

Suggestions for the Good of the Order

Announcements/Calendar Reminders

Meeting Closing Time: _____ Next Meeting Date: _____

Respectfully submitted,
_____, Secretary

*Audited by: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

WHY HAVE MINUTES?

In accordance with the National Bylaws, a VFW Auxiliary Secretary shall keep in books or files:

- 1) The current Bylaws of the VFW Auxiliary
- 2) A copy of the annually approved Standing Rules for the Auxiliary should the Auxiliary chose to adopt Standing Rules—See Section 211
- 3) A record of all minutes of each meeting of the VFW Auxiliary, which become the history of that Auxiliary, and thus considered permanent documents.
 - It is the purpose of minutes to record who made and seconded motions and whether each motion passed or failed at each specific meeting.
 - ***Minutes record what was done—not what was said.***
 - Therefore, the minutes do not reflect any of the discussions that may take place during a meeting.
 - The business of the Auxiliary is not driven by discussion; the business is driven by motions made and passed
 - to undertake specific projects,
 - to participate in certain fundraisers, and
 - to support Auxiliary programs, i.e.
 - to list what was approved by the majority of the members present at that meeting will be preserved
 - for reporting purposes and should a question ever arise
- 4) The vote of the membership determines the manner in which the minutes of VFW Auxiliary meetings are read, printed and/or distributed.
- 5) To make sure the documentation of the organization's meetings are kept in an orderly manner--
 - The minutes whether typed or computer generated
 - with pages numbered consecutively with
 - room for Trustees to initial at audit and date and
 - for the Auxiliary Secretary to sign his/her name and office
 - may be entered in a standard bound record book purchased through the VFW Store or
 - inserted in a three ring binder or
 - clip folder

The Secretary is not required to include in the minutes all that takes place at meetings. Generally, speaking, only decisions should be embodied. A record is made of what is done, not what is said. Lengthy or detailed minutes are not necessary.

Minutes may be written in complete sentences or presented as a bulleted list so long as the following items are included:

- ✓ **Name and number of the Auxiliary**
- ✓ **Date and place of meeting –note if regular or special meeting**
- ✓ **Time called to order**
- ✓ **Name of presiding officer**
- ✓ **Number of persons present; list any pro tem officers**
 - (Must have a quorum of 5 members in good standing present at the meeting location in order that business may be transacted)**
- ✓ **Names of visitors, if any are present; note specific titles if appropriate**
- ✓ **Names of candidates for membership, the eligibility of the veteran listed;**
 - **the outcome of their acceptance or rejection**
- ✓ **Action taken on the minutes of the previous meeting**
 - **Only the motions**
 - **note who made and seconded and**
 - **whether the motion passed or failed**
- ✓ **A copy of the Treasurer's report and each quarterly audit report to incorporate into the minutes**
- ✓ **List both the correspondence read and bills presented**

SAMPLES OF MINUTES

Both the sentence format for minutes and the bulleted format for minutes provide the requirements needed for a record of a particular meeting and provided the members have “accepted them as read” or “accepted them as corrected.” Additionally, the Trustees would have signed and dated as proof that the books of the Auxiliary Secretary have been audited for a specific quarter.

Whether the more formal sentence format or the less formal bulleted format is used, it is the quality and integrity of the information recorded by the Secretary that counts. For example, leaving out a critical dollar amount allowed or not stating who was to attend a convention means that the minutes are not as accurate and thorough as they need to be; thus creating problems if it becomes necessary to turn to the minutes to find proof of what was to be spent or who were delegates or alternates.

Review the following acceptable and unacceptable statements to develop a sense of how a well- developed motion differs from a lazy note jotted down and considered appropriate:

Example A:

Acceptable-Sue Smith reported on our Bake Sale at Bottom Junction. There was a \$20.00 cash donation plus sales of \$125.00 for a total of \$145. It had been previously been moved, seconded, and passed that \$100 from the bake sale would be added to our Relief Fund. Sue Smith moved, seconded by Bill Field that the remaining \$45 be donated to the VFW for use of the building. Motion carried.

Unacceptable-Sue gave the Treasurer \$145.00 from our fundraiser at Bottom Junction.

Example B:

Acceptable –Audit Report (see attached) was read by Trustee Cheryl Rhodes who moved on behalf of the committee that the audit be approved. Motion carried.

Unacceptable -A motion was made to accept the Audit Report.

Example C:

Acceptable- Cheryl Rhodes moved that the following slate of 3 Delegates-Polly Jones, Sue Smith, and Betty Rider and 3 Alternates-Bill Field, May Jordan, and Jane Wilson be elected for the National Convention. Seconded by Mabel Bluestem. Motion carried.

Unacceptable-Delegates to the National Convention were elected.

Example D:

Acceptable-George Allen moved and May Jordan seconded that the Auxiliary sponsor the local women’s softball team. After discussion, a vote was taken and the motion passed.

Unacceptable- Sue said that this was a dumb idea. Betty said she just mad because of what happened last time and now she is against everything. Vote was taken and Sue lost.

Time for Practice:

- ✓ Using the check list from page 15, review minutes of several meetings and find out if there are necessary items that always seem to be left out.
- ✓ Are the minutes you are reviewing capturing the organization’s business accurately?
- ✓ Are those minutes concise and cite only what is done, not what is said?
 - From this point forward, strive to include the necessary elements by reviewing your notes (see the next section) and proofreading the minutes once you have them written.
- ✓ Look at some minutes and the motions made and determine if they are acceptable based on the examples above.
- ✓ Choose two (2) or more unacceptable motions and rewrite each one making it more acceptable by adding the missing elements as illustrated the examples cited:

Sample Sentence Format of Minutes:

President Nadine Wildroot called the regular meeting of the X-Factor VFW Auxiliary No. 10000, Smith Place, Nowhere to order at 7:05 p.m. at the Post Home on April 14, 2015. Following the opening ceremonies, with a quorum being present, the minutes of the last meeting were read and approved as corrected. There were no petitions for membership.

The Treasurer reported the balance last report of \$500.00 with receipts of \$145.00 and disbursements of \$9.50 leaving a balance of \$635.50. (see Treasurer’s report attached)

The Secretary read the following bills: \$25.00-Walmart for paper plates, napkins, etc.; \$75.00-Walmart for balls for the men’s and women’s softball teams; and \$35.50 to VFW Store for membership pins. Next, the Secretary read the communications--President’s Message and thank you’s from Mabel Jones and Bill Field for flowers, calls, and visits.

The Program Chairmen summarized the information they had received from their National Ambassador and Department Chairman. The Audit Report (see attached) was read by Trustee Cheryl Rhodes who moved on behalf of the committee that the audit be approved. Motion carried.

There was no Unfinished Business.

New Business-Our charter was draped due to the death of Past National President Lucile Suchina of Texas. Next, election of officers for 2016-17 was held and the following will be installed at our May meeting: President-Bill Field; Sr. Vice President-Mabel Jones; Jr. Vice President-Cheryl Rhodes; Chaplain-Nadine Wildroot; Conductor-James Smith; Guard-Twila Garcia; Three Year Trustee-Nadine Wildroot.

Trustee Cheryl Rhodes moved on behalf of the committee that the bills be paid. Motion carried.

There was nothing given for the Good of the Order.

Closing ceremonies were conducted. The next meeting will be May 13 at 7:00 at the Post Home when Post Commander John George will be present to install the VFW Auxiliary officers for 2016-17.

Respectfully submitted,

Pauline Plant

Secretary

[Date approved]

Audited on _____ by _____

Sample Bulleted Minutes

Date: 4/14/2015 Regular/Special Meeting
 Called to order by Madam President Nadine Wildroot @ 7:05 p.m. Other Attendees/Guests:
 Total Number of members present for meeting: 7 _____
No Guests/No other members present _____
 President-Nadine Wildroot list officers P _____
 Sr. Vice-Bill Field “ _____
 Jr. Vice -James Smith “ _____
 Treasurer-Alice Wood “ _____
 Secretary-Pauline Plant “ _____
 Chaplain-Mabel Jones “ _____
 Conductress-Cheryl Rhodes “ _____
 Guard-Amber Garcia A _____
 Historian-Twila Garcia A _____
 Patriotic Instructor-Shirley White house P _____
 1 Year Trustee-Shirley Whitehouse “ _____
 2 Year Trustee-Mabel Jones “ _____
 3 Year Trustee-Cheryl Rhodes “ _____

Opening Ceremonies: were conducted _____

Reading of minutes of previous meeting:
 _____ Approved as read X Approved as corrected

Petitions/Voting for new memberships: None _____

Treasurer’s Report: Dated: 4/14/2015
 Balance last report: \$500.00
 Receipts: \$145.00
 Disbursements: \$9.50
 Balance on hand: \$635.50

[A copy of the Treasurer’s detailed report shall be incorporated into the minutes.]

Presentation of Bills:
 \$25.00 to Walmart for paper plates, napkins, etc. ;\$75.00 to Walmart for softballs for men’s and women’s teams; \$35.50 to VFW Store for membership pins

Communications: President’s Message and Thank you’s from Mabel Jones and Bill Field for flowers, calls, and visits were read.

Committee Reports: Chairmen summarized information from Dept. Chairs and National Ambassadors

Trustee Cheryl Rhodes read the audit report and moved on behalf of the committee that the audit report be approved. Motion carried. [A copy of the audit report attached to minutes]

Unfinished Business:

____None_____

New Business: -The Charter was draped in memory of Past National President _____ of _____.

-The Charter was draped in memory of Auxiliary Member_____

-Election of Officers was held: President-Bill Field; Sr. Vice-Mabel Jones; Jr. Vice-Cheryl Rhodes; Chaplain-Nadine Wildroot; Conductor-James Smith; Guard-Twila Garcia; Three Yr. Trustee-Nadine Wildroot _____

-Installation of Officers at the May meeting_____

No other new business_____

Report of Trustees Bills

and action thereon:

Trustee Cheryl Rhodes moved on behalf of the committee that the bills be paid.

Good of the Order:

Guests speak:

____None_____

Closing Ceremonies: were conducted_____

Next meeting scheduled: -May 13, 2015 @ 7:00 p.m.

Post Commander John George will install 20__-__ VFW Auxiliary Officers.

Respectfully submitted,

Pauline Plant

Secretary

Date_____

Date Audited_____

By_____

