memo

Denali Borough

To: Planning Commissioners

From: Amber Renshaw

CC:

Date: 2/9/2016

Re: Change in Meeting Minutes Format

Comments: As you will notice, the minutes produced for the January planning commission meeting do not specify the name of the commissioner that seconded a motion. I have included the documentation from Robert's Rules stating that minutes should not include the name of the officer seconding a motion. Borough Clerk Gail Pieknik has changed the way she will write assembly minutes by omitting the name of the officer seconding the motion and I intend to follow her lead in this change unless you, as a commission, request otherwise.

fore disposition being mentioned only parenthetically); and

b) the disposition of the motion, including—if it was *temporarily* disposed of (pp. 88, 329–30)—any primary and secondary amendments and all adhering secondary motions that were then pending;

7) secondary motions that were not lost or withdrawn, in cases where it is necessary to record them for completeness or clarity—for example, motions to *Recess* or to *Fix the Time to Which to Adjourn* (among the privileged motions), or motions to *Suspend the Rules* or grant a *Request to Be Excused from a Duty* (among the incidental motions), generally only alluding to the adoption of such motions, however, as ". . . the matter having been advanced in the agenda on motion of . . ." or ". . . a ballot vote having been ordered, the tellers . . . ";

8) all notices of motions (pp. 116–18); and

9) all points of order and appeals, whether sustained or lost, together with the reasons given by the chair for his or her ruling.

The *last paragraph* should state:

10) the hour of adjournment.

Additional rules and practices relating to the content of the minutes are the following:

- The name of the seconder of a motion should not be entered in the minutes unless ordered by the assembly.
- When a count has been ordered or the vote is by ballot, the number of votes on each side should be entered; and when the voting is by roll call, the names of those voting on each side and those answering "Present" should be entered. If members fail to respond on a roll-

Robert's Rules

What to Put in the Minutes (and What to Leave Out)

Robert's recommends that minutes contain the following items:

- Kind of meeting (regular, special, and so on).
- Name of the organization.
- Date, time, and place of the meeting.
- Names of the presiding officer and secretary, or in their absence, the names of their substitutes.
- The approximate number of members present (optional).
- The establishment of a quorum (optional).
- Record of the action taken on the minutes of the previous meeting.
- The exact wording of each main motion as it was voted on, and whether it passed or failed, along with the name of the maker. In addition, if the vote was counted, the count should be included, as well as the tellers' reports, if any; in roll call votes, the record of each person's vote is include
- Any notice given at the meeting. Previous notice is sometimes required, such as with amendments to the bylaws; if any such notice was given at the meeting, it should be included in the minutes.

Robert's Says

Minutes are the written record of the proceedings of a deliberative assembly. They are a record of what was done at the meeting, not what was said at the meeting.

Parliamentary Pearls

Although it's not necessary to include the full report of the treasurer in the text of the minutes, many groups find it helpful to include the previous balance, income totals, disbursement totals, and current balance in the minutes.

- Points of order and appeals.
- For committee reports, the name of the committee, and the reporting member. the committee provides a printed report, attach it to the minutes and note that is attached.
- The hour of adjournment.

Robert's is equally clear about what should *not* be included in the minutes. The follov should not be included:

- The opinion or interpretation of the secretary.
- Judgmental phrases such as "heated debate" or "valuable comment".

- Discussion. Minutes are a record of what was *done* at the meeting, not what was *said* at the meeting.
- Motions that were withdrawn.
- Name of person who seconded a motion.
- Flowery language.
- Reports in detail.
- Transcripts of the meeting. While some groups choose to have a transcript of the meeting, it should never substitute as the minutes of the meeting.

Getting the Minutes Approved

The minutes are made official only after they are approved, which usually takes place at the next meeting.

If your organization frequently makes changes to the minutes, you might want to send out the initial, unapproved set with the word "draft" clearly printed on them. Then, when the minutes have been changed and approved, the official minutes can be sent out.

If your organization seldom has changes to the minutes, two sets, one draft and one approved, will probably be unnecessary.

Gavel Gaffs

Although including the words "Respectfully submitted" right before the secretary's signature used to be common practice, it is considered outdated to do so today. Instead, simply sign your name.

Sign 'em

After the minutes have been corrected and approved by the membership, they should be signed by the secretary (the president's signature isn't required). The word "approved" and the date of the approval should also be included.

Book 'em

The official copy of the minutes are the property of the organization. They should be entered in the *minutes book* and kept by the secretary if the organization doesn't have a headquarters office. If there is an office, the official copy of the minutes should be kept there.

Robert's Says

The **minutes book** is usually a three ring binder, that contains a complete copy of all of the minutes.