



## RECORDING SECRETARY: WORDS THAT COUNT

Thank you for reviewing the online training module for local chapter recording secretaries. This printable copy of the script is for your review and notes. You will have continuous accessibility to this training session at any time, as it will remain online in the [Resource Library/Local Chapter Officers/Local Officer Training](#) section of the [P.E.O. International member website \(https://members.peointernational.org\)](https://members.peointernational.org).

Congratulations on being elected as recording secretary and thank you for saying YES. During your term as recording secretary, you have the privilege of recording the official history of your chapter. The minutes should record what was **done** at the meeting – not what was **said** by the members. Record JUST the FACTS, neutrally, without reflecting your personal opinion on any chapter decisions. By keeping the current minutes in the Recording Secretary's Record Book, they are easily accessible for reference. We'll explain later in this module how to preserve your chapter's minutes. You'll also learn the additional duties and responsibilities of the recording secretary.

This training module covers resources available, as well as duties of the recording secretary as outlined in the [P.E.O. Constitution \(Resource Library/Local Chapter Members/Manuals & Handbooks\)](#), President's Book and [Instructions to Officers of Local Chapters \(IOLC\) Modified for COVID-19 \(Resource Library/COVID-19 Resources/Manuals Modified for COVID-19\)](#).

Useful resources in preparing for this office include the:

- [P.E.O. Constitution](#)
- State, provincial or district chapter bylaws in the proceedings kept by the president or online at the s/p/d website
- President's Book
  - Chapter Meeting
  - Appendix #3 Procedure for Election of Chairman Pro Tem
  - Instructions for Recording Secretary's Record Book & Minutes
- [Instructions for Minutes \(Resource Library/Local Chapter Officers/Recording Secretary/Local Chapter Recording Secretary Forms\)](#) – copy to be kept in Recording Secretary's Record Book
- Templates for [Minutes of Regular Business Meeting](#), [Minutes of Regular Social Meeting](#), [Modified In-Person Chapter Meeting Draft Minutes](#), [Virtual Chapter Meeting Draft Minutes](#) and [Hybrid Chapter Meeting Draft Minutes](#), together with instructions on how to use them, available at the P.E.O. member website under [Resource Library/Local Chapter Officers/Recording Secretary](#)
- [Instructions to Officers of Local Chapters \(IOLC\) Modified for COVID-19](#) Recording Secretary section
- [P.E.O. Style Guide \(Resource Library/Local Chapter Members/Brand Resource Center/P.E.O. Style Guide\)](#)

When you refer to the [P.E.O. Constitution](#), Part III (for the local chapter), ARTICLE V, Sec. 4, you'll find the following duties listed for recording secretary:

1. to keep a record of the proceedings of all meetings of the chapter and to authenticate these records

- with her signature;
2. to read all papers not considered correspondence;
  3. to record answers “pro” and “con” when a vote is taken by roll call;
  4. to sign official forms as required by the president;
  5. and to send in March a copy of local chapter bylaws and standing rules (if amended during the fiscal year March 1–Feb. 28/29) to the designated officer of your state/province/district (or International chapter if in subordinate territory).

Ask your president to review with you those items in the President’s Book relating to your duties. Being familiar with the order of business is helpful for doing your job efficiently and easily. At a modified in-person or hybrid chapter meeting try to sit near the president so you can hear, see and work together as a team.

Instructions for minutes are provided and should be kept in the front of the Recording Secretary’s Record Book. Remember, we don’t send local chapter minutes to members by postal service, email or post on chapter websites. An exception is that the president and recording secretary, or their pro tem officers, may receive a copy to determine accuracy of minutes and prepare the agenda for the next business meeting. Highlights of the meeting may be summarized into a newsletter format and sent to members but must not include any membership-sensitive agenda items.

Let’s go through the Order of Business for a regular business meeting and look at the recording secretary’s duties.

#### 1. Call to Order

Your responsibilities could begin right at the start of the meeting, for in the absence of the president and vice president, the recording secretary taps the gavel to bring the meeting to order and takes nominations for chairman pro tem as outlined in Appendix #3 of the President’s Book.

If a pro tem officer serves for a meeting, it is written in the minutes, *“By general consent, Marie Stewart served as guard for the meeting.”*

#### 2. Opening Ode, Objects and Aims, Devotions and Formal Opening of the Meeting can be recorded together as, *“The meeting was opened in due form by the president.”*

#### 3. Minutes

Immediately after formal opening of the meeting the president will say, **“The secretary will read the minutes of the last meeting.”** At a modified in-person or hybrid meeting, although the president may be seated at this time, you should stand, if able, while reading the minutes. Minutes of an interim special meeting or regular social meeting are read at this time, if applicable, but minutes for each meeting are approved separately.

The recording secretary reads the minutes, her name, title and footnote before the president asks for corrections. Then the president says, **“Are there corrections to the minutes?”** If there are no corrections, you are “home free.” Great job! **“There being none, the minutes stand approved as read.”** If there are corrections (or we like to call them ‘improvements’) the president will say, **“The minutes stand approved as corrected.”** The recording secretary makes corrections (if any) and writes *“approved”* or *“approved as corrected”* with the date beside her signature.

#### 4. The Initiation by Affirmation Ceremony takes place following the minutes. Prior to the ceremony, the president will say, **“Do the records of our secretary show that we may admit this (these) candidate(s)?”** The recording secretary, reading from previous minutes says, “Madam President, the name of (name), proposed (date), sponsored by (name), (name) and (name), was balloted upon

favorably (date).” The name of the initiate is written into the minutes.

#### 5. **Report of Treasurer**

The report of the treasurer includes roll call, the financial report and presentation of the bills. With **Roll Call** you will note the number of members responding by recording, “26 members responded to roll call.” If members arrive late, “26 members responded to roll call and two members came in after roll call was called.” If a member is accepted by transfer, at the meeting when her letter of acceptance is read, record, “26 members responded to roll call and one member was later accepted by transfer.” If you have a question about roll call numbers check with the treasurer to verify. If a P.E.O. visitor is introduced at this time, you may list her name and chapter in the minutes.

The **Treasurer’s Monthly Report to Chapter** will be given to the recording secretary following the report at the first meeting of the month. For the minutes you will copy the **summary only** of the monthly report of the treasurer, including total receipts, total disbursements and total chapter assets. These reports will be kept by the recording secretary until the end of the fiscal year and then are given to the auditing committee. The audit report and chapter vote to accept it is recorded in the minutes. When those specific minutes are approved, the monthly financial reports may be destroyed.

The treasurer will present the bills to the chapter. Record the name of the member making the motion to allow the bills, which should be the treasurer, and list the bills that are approved. If no bills are presented, then make no record in the minutes.

#### 6. **Report of Corresponding Secretary**

The **Corresponding Secretary’s Monthly Report to Chapter** will also be recorded in the minutes.

**Record the recipient(s) and subject(s) of correspondence sent** (e.g., Invitation to Membership sent for Jane Smith, Change in Membership form submitted for Jill Doe’s transfer in). All that needs to be recorded in the minutes for **correspondence received** is the name of the sender with a brief statement of subject matter (e.g., Mary Marguerite – thank-you note, Donna Daisy – invitation to Founders’ Day). **If no correspondence was sent and/or received, the appropriate comment is, “No correspondence was sent” and/or “No correspondence was received.”**

Unless an item would be kept for historical purposes and given to the chapter historian, **social correspondence** is destroyed after it is recorded and the minutes are approved.

Refer to [Instructions for Minutes](#) to know how to record a transfer in or out of the chapter.

7. **Chapter Business** is next and it is important to record each item of business and actions taken, including committee reports, unfinished business and new business. If a committee does not have a report, then record nothing in the minutes – it is not necessary to list each committee and say “no report.” Always record the name of the maker of a motion but **not** the name of the person seconding the motion.
8. **Presentation of Names for Membership:** If a name presented does not receive the signature from three sponsors, record, “*A name was presented for membership.*” If that name does not receive three sponsor signatures at the next regular business meeting, no further record is made. It is important that you do not list the name of the woman presented for membership until after a favorable ballot has been taken.

9. **Proposals for Membership:** When a name does receive the required three sponsor signatures, record, *“A name was proposed for membership.”* Again, do not list the name proposed in the minutes until after balloting is favorable.

10. **Balloting:** Prior to balloting for membership the president says, **“The secretary will read the name(s) of the woman (women) proposed and the three who have sponsored her (them).”**

At a modified in-person or hybrid meeting, it is your responsibility to provide the vice president with ballots, pencils and a suitable container (may be borrowed from the hostess) to collect the ballots. During balloting, the president and recording secretary determine the outcome of the ballot and the recording secretary places the ballots in an envelope and is responsible to destroy them after the meeting to ensure the ballot remains confidential.

A name balloted upon favorably shall be included in the minutes of the meeting at which the vote is taken, together with names of sponsors and the date the name was proposed for membership. *“The name of Sue Smith, proposed March 1, 2021, sponsored by (list three names) was balloted upon favorably.”*

The number of unfavorable votes on a membership ballot is never disclosed.

A name balloted upon unfavorably is not to be recorded in the minutes, but simply say, *“A name was balloted upon unfavorably.”*

11. Following **Election of Officers**, the name and office held should be included in the minutes and also recorded on the backside of the last page of the bylaws and standing rules in the Recording Secretary’s Record Book. It will be your job as recording secretary to call the roll of elected officers prior to the **Ceremony of Installation**. An elected officer not present for installation will be installed at the next meeting she attends prior to May 1 and that will be noted in the minutes for that meeting. (While the Constitution states that an officer serves “...until her successor is duly installed...,” that does not extend indefinitely. If a newly elected officer is not installed by May 1, that office is declared vacant. In the event of a vacancy, the president appoints the new officer, to be ratified by the chapter.)

12. Under **Remarks by Visitors** be sure to record the name of the visitor, her chapter letter(s) and that she brought greetings, but do not include a summary of her remarks.

13. **Suggestions for the Good of the Chapter** can get a little tricky. If they are truly suggestions for the chapter, each item should be recorded in the minutes. These comments might include a change of contact information for a member or items of loving concern where cards would be in order. Sometimes chapters get a little loose with this time during the meeting and it can develop into an announcement time for community events, etc. President’s Book instructions say that news of personal matters should be shared after the meeting is closed and is not to be included in the minutes.

14. Your final statement for the closing benediction and adjournment is an easy one – simply state *“The meeting was closed in due form by the president.”* Sign your name and title “Secretary” or “Secretary Pro Tem” but do not state “Respectfully submitted.” When minutes are approved, remember to write *“Approved”* or *“Approved as corrected”* with the date opposite your signature. The social hour and/or program should be added as a footnote.

## **Instructions to Officers of Local Chapters (IOLC) Modified for COVID-19**

The [IOLC](#) should become the “best friend” to each officer – please take time to read this document carefully, especially the recording secretary section, the policies and the glossary. It’s always accessible on the International member website for your reference and may be downloaded and put into a notebook if you prefer to have a hard copy for reference. All of the duties of your office are outlined and explained in this document and your job will be much easier if you become familiar with these instructions. It includes a Retention Record, explaining the length of time each item must be kept.

One important retention item is minutes – since they are the official record of your chapter’s history. They must be kept for the life of the chapter and in their original form for a minimum of 10 years. Upon a vote of the chapter, minutes older than 10 years may be preserved in any manner in accordance with the archival policy which says they may be archived on digital media. If this method of preservation is chosen, the chapter is responsible to maintain the archived minutes on current technology. You wouldn’t want to lose your chapter history due to outdated technology and loss of data.

Do a favor for yourself and your successor – retain or destroy material in accordance with the Retention Record. Don’t be a pack rat! Remove minutes from the Recording Secretary’s Record Book when the notebook is full and place in numerical or chronological order in large envelopes with date of minutes on each envelope. Please note: It is no longer necessary to keep an index of page numbers for the Record Book unless it is required by state, provincial or district policy for numbering minutes.

Always keep a copy of your local chapter’s current bylaws and standing rules in the Recording Secretary’s Record Book. Just follow the instructions in the front of the book. So, if your chapter changed its bylaws and/or standing rules during the year, don’t forget to insert an updated version before the beginning of the new P.E.O. fiscal year (March 1). At annual report time remember to send a copy of the bylaws, if amended, highlighting any changes to the designated officer of the state/provincial/district chapter (or organizer of International Chapter if in subordinate territory).

### **Let’s recap the important duties and responsibilities of the recording secretary.**

Keep the required supplies on the [List of Supplies for Officers of Local Chapters \(Resource Library/COVID-19 Resources/COVID-19 Resources\)](#) on hand at all times and follow the Retention Record for keeping these supplies current.

In the absence of the president and vice president, you will call the meeting to order and take nominations for chairman pro tem as outlined in Appendix #3 of the President’s Book.

Officer transition is important – at the end of your term of office, you will train your successor and turn over all supplies from the office. Please encourage her to take this online training.

Having taken the time to become familiar with the role of the recording secretary through this training module, your confidence level should be enhanced. You are up to the task!

Thank you for serving in this capacity. By serving as your chapter recording secretary, you are making a significant contribution – you are writing the history of your chapter. Your diligence is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions about your responsibilities, please talk to your chapter president. Happy recording – happy reading – enjoy writing the *Words That Count!*