

Speedy Board Meetings & Minutes

What's the plan for today...?

- Remind ourselves what good meetings are about
- Explore simple tools, tips and ideas to speed up your meetings
- Discuss a few basic principles for effective minutes

Presenter Context

- Professional Registered Parliamentarian - National Association of Parliamentarians
- Todd Brand Consulting
 - training and coaching for Boards of any kind
 - bylaw revisions and special rules of order
 - professional presiding of meetings
 - serve as parliamentarian - advise chair during meetings, typically AGMs

Board meetings are about making good decisions

- Order - good plan in place, clear agenda to follow
- Focus - one item at a time, clear to everyone what is being discussed
- Efficiency - moving the meeting forward in a timely manner
- Fairness - rights of all members are protected
- Decorum - debate that is robust, healthy, and respectful
- Involved - every member participating and offering expertise

Speedy not hasty!!

- While speeding up your board meetings may be an important step this cannot come at the cost of a healthy process for making decisions!

Make your agenda work for you... not against you

- Use time suggestions
- Contentious or difficult items at end
- Consider consent agenda
 - e.g. minutes, approval of agenda, housekeeping items, ratifying previous decisions, routine or small decisions
 - remember items can be pulled out on request of any member
- End time noted

Special Rules of Order

- E.g. each board member talks once only until everyone else who wants to speak has done so; motions on new business submitted one week in advance; speak after recognition only
- Adopt these by motion (RONR, p.15-17)
- Can be suspended in a meeting with a 2/3 vote
- Cannot conflict with your bylaws

Display these questions on the middle of the table

- Am I making this issue more important than it really is?
- Am I saying anything new?
- Am I sharing the mic?
- Am I listening when I am not talking?
- Can I help us find a new path forward?
- Should I speak up more on this?

Chair sets the pace and tone

- Start and end meetings on time
- Maintain focus; keep members on track
- Control the time
- Deal with problem behaviour, don't ignore it

Info ahead of time... but don't review it!

- Provide background info ahead of meeting
- Expect members to read it and prepare questions
- Don't spend any more time than necessary on review!

Moment on Minutes – What should minutes be?

- Record of what was DONE, not what was SAID (action not words)
- Clear, easy to read and simple
- Objective rather than subjective

Moment on Minutes - Some tips

- Consider your minutes and your newsletter to be two different things
- Less is often better
- What... not who... is important
 - some groups do not name mover or seconder
- Resources at www.elimina.com
 - Mina's Guide to Minute Taking

Moment on Minutes - Avoid these Minutes Monsters

- Recording debate points (at most aim for essence of debate)
- Grandstanding
- Omission of decisions

Moving forward

- Select 2-3 ways to improve your next meeting or minutes
- Small changes can bring big results!