

# LMSC Secretaries Peer-to-Peer Teleconference

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**November 8, 2015**

*The items posted in this section are notes from conversations that are not reviewed or approved by the attendees. The information in these notes is not intended to override guidelines, policies and procedures listed elsewhere in the LMSC Guide to Operations or elsewhere on [usms.org](http://usms.org) or in the USMS rule book.*

Facilitators: Hugh Moore (PN) and Paige Buehler (IW), both LMSC Development Committee

Attendees: Jeanne Ensign (MT), Jenny Perrottet (NC), Robin Smith (SP), Michael Moore (PC), Doug Holmes (SO), Mike Fanelli (MD), Jerry Clark (NC), Christine Schroeder (DV), Donn Livoni (MT), Debbie Moore (PV), CJ Rushman (KY), Jon Blank (NC), Richard Garza (FG), Skip Thompson (MI), Jay Definis (LE), Dave Kough (MN), Leianne Crittenden (PC)

LMSC Secretaries Volunteer Role Description

Check out the template of what many LMSC secretaries do and the time requirements and skills needed. It is a template so feel free to tailor it to your LMSC's secretary job as it can be useful to recruit or ramp up volunteers.

Mike Fanelli says the template includes more than what he does as secretary. Robin Smith does own a lot of the documents. Most LMSCs communicate to members through the registrar.

Hugh says that even if you as secretary don't "own" all the tasks or responsibilities, hopefully someone does i.e. Maybe the chair owns the bylaws and the webmaster is responsible for posting them.

Minutes – taking, approving, publishing

PC, MD, SO, NC, PV, SP, KY try to turn the minutes within a day and get them sent as a draft for any corrections. Then approved by email and posted to LMSC web pages.

Hugh suggests waiting till next LMSC meeting to approve, but very glad that they are getting posted to LMSC websites. Michael Moore suggests putting DRAFT on minutes when distributed and then APPROVED once they are approved.

Action Outside of a Board Meeting

If meeting minutes are getting approved via email or online survey, then make sure that the decision is brought up in the next meeting so that it gets recorded in the minutes.

How often do LMSC boards meet?

) Monthly: PC, SP

- ) 3-4 months: PV
- ) Semi-annual: FG

What should be in minutes?

Richard Garza had to do a bylaws and policies “treasure hunt” in the minutes to get the FG governing documents up to date with all decisions made over the previous 8 years.

Hugh suggests taking the USMS national level best practice of using a minutes template that includes all the Approved Actions at the top of the minutes document.

#### Reports

If committees, task forces, officers present a report in advance of the meeting, then PV includes a 2 sentence summary and also a summary of recommended actions from that entity. PC posts reports and agenda

Recording names of people making and seconding motions? Some do, some don't. Hugh suggests it is good practice. USMS minutes template doesn't require it.

Focus on actions being sure to include what, by when and by whom. It can be good to include the feel/sense of discussion vs. quotes from people. And personal notes can include who said what while the minutes can be more objective. Leianne sometimes asks during the course of a meeting “do we want this in the minutes?” to make sure the level of detail is appropriate. Written reports included In the minutes are useful. SP posts those reports to website and Robin simply includes links to the reports. Hugh had concern that if the links break then minutes might not be complete down the road.

Financials – include the report in the minutes or at least the balance amount as of a date.

Exact wording of a motion - read back to the group before voting.

Each LMSC must hold an annual meeting and approved minutes must be submitted to the National Office. (Rule 502.3)

Best Practice: To increase board meeting attendance – combine an in-person meeting with workouts on a Saturday and/or a guest speaker if possible.



# Secretaries – Peer to Peer

Review USMS Volunteer Role Description  
[http://www.usms.org/admin/lmschb/gto\\_role\\_secretary.pdf](http://www.usms.org/admin/lmschb/gto_role_secretary.pdf)

*How do your activities compare with those listed in the USMS volunteer role template for Secretaries?*

*How are Secretaries linked to "Governing Documents/Bylaws" practices... how much do you do beyond just being the "keeper of the documents"?*

**How are your minutes distributed?  
Email to board members  
Email to LMSC swimmers  
Posted on website?**



# Secretaries – Peer to Peer

## Minutes

- Have you ever reviewed past LMSC meeting minutes to find an action that occurred at a meeting?
  - If so, was it an easy task? Were you able to quickly find what you were looking for?
- What should go into minutes and what should not?
  - No two people will write the same minutes for a given meeting.
  - Deciding what to include can take considerable time.
- Use good grammar – but don't expect perfection.
- Take notes during the meeting.
  - Some secretaries find it useful to add notes to the original agenda, either in a Word file or on paper.
  - Try different methods and see what works for you





# Secretaries – Peer to Peer

## Minutes

Consider the following reference:

<http://www.effectivemeetings.com/meetingbasics/minutes.asp>

- Minutes capture the essential information of a meeting – decisions and assigned actions. They keep attendees on track by reminding them of their role in a project and clearly define what happened in a group session.
- They keep members of the board and swimmers in the LMSC informed about what is going on.
- They can be invaluable when you need to review actions.
- Focus on action items, not discussion. The purpose of minutes is to define decisions made and to record what actions are to be taken, by whom and when.
- Be objective. Write in the same tense throughout and avoid using people's names except for motions or seconds. This is a business document, not about who said what.



# Secretaries – Peer to Peer

## Minutes

- Avoid inflammatory or personal observations. The fewer adjectives or adverbs you use, the better. Dull writing is the key to appropriate minutes.
- If you need to refer to other documents, attach them in an appendix or indicate where they may be found. Don't rewrite their intent or try to summarize them.
- Consider templates such as what USMS uses for convention. I especially like having the MSA highlighted at the top,. If you ever need to back to look for official board action, a quick review of the top MSA of meeting minutes should tell you whether anything was passed at the meeting.





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## **Minutes - Tips**

- Write minutes as soon as practical following the meeting (unless you have a perfect memory). The longer you wait the more you are likely to forget
- Plan enough time to write minutes. Expect that it will typically take longer to write meeting minutes than the meeting lasted
- Make sure that wording for any motion is read back to the board before it is voted on. Stating that “we’ll let [the secretary] write the motion when he writes the minutes- he knows what we meant” is likely to cause problems when the minutes are approved.
- Any tips/suggestions from participants



## Secretaries – Peer to Peer

### **Reminders**

- Rule 502.3 states, "Each LMSC shall hold an annual meeting open to all individual members of the LMSC."
- Meeting minutes from the Annual Meeting must be submitted to the National Office. Please submit your 2014 Annual Meeting Minutes to Anna Lea Matysek as soon as they are approved.