**Assignment: Write a sample… for your board**

* **Agenda**
* **minutes**
* **list of activities to build the ministry**

**Improve Your Meetings With an Effective Agenda**

1. Create your agenda early. ...
2. Clearly define your meeting objective. ...
3. Prioritize agenda items. ...
4. Break down agenda topics into key points. ...
5. Allow adequate time for each agenda item. ...
6. Indicate whether agenda items require a decision. ...
7. Inform members on how to prepare for the meeting.

**Sample Agenda**

Grace Presbyterian Church

2604 Banister Road Baltimore, MD 21215

410-466-4000 <http://gracepresbymd.weebly.com>

Organization/Ministry Name Agenda

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_\_

Names of people in attendance (members and guest)

6:oo pm Call to Order

6:01 pm Prayer/Devotion

6:15 pm Minutes of Previous Meeting

6:30 pm Agenda Item I

 a.

 b.

 c. Action Taken

6:45 pm Agenda Item II

 a.

 b.

 Action Taken….

(meeting should not exceed 1 ½ to 2 hours)

**Minutes of your Meeting are Important**

**Why meeting minutes are important**

You shouldn’t be intimidated by the term “minutes” since it’s actually a little misleading. After all, your committee or Board doesn’t want or need a record of its meeting proceedings minute by minute!  But it is important to capture the essence of the meeting, including details such as:

* decisions made (motions made, votes, etc.)
* next steps planned
* identification and tracking of action items

Minutes are a tangible record of the meeting for its participants and a source of information for members who were unable to attend. In some cases, meeting minutes can act as a reference point, for example:

* when a meeting’s outcomes impact other collaborative activities or projects within the organization
* minutes can serve to notify (or remind) individuals of tasks assigned to them and/or timelines

[Download our Meeting Minute Checklist for Associations and Nonprofits with examples and learn how to take better minutes.](https://goo.gl/m9iQdN)

**What’s involved with meeting minutes?**

There are essentially five steps involved with meeting minutes:

1. [Pre-Planning](http://www.wildapricot.com/articles/how-to-write-effective-meeting-minutes#pre-planning)
2. [Record taking - at the meeting](http://www.wildapricot.com/articles/how-to-write-effective-meeting-minutes#record-taking)
3. [Minutes writing or transcribing](http://www.wildapricot.com/articles/how-to-write-effective-meeting-minutes#writing-process)
4. [Distributing or sharing of meeting minutes](http://www.wildapricot.com/articles/how-to-write-effective-meeting-minutes#distributing)
5. [Filing or storage of minutes for future reference](http://www.wildapricot.com/articles/how-to-write-effective-meeting-minutes#filing) (include handout with minutes)

Check for additional information: [“Introduction to Robert’s Rules”.](http://www.robertsrules.org/rulesintro.htm)

**2. Record taking - what should be included?**

Before you start taking notes, it’s important to understand the type of information you need to record at the meeting. As noted earlier, your organization may have required content and a specific format that you’ll need to follow, but generally, meeting minutes usually include the following:

* Date and time of the meeting
* Names of the meeting participants and those unable to attend (e.g., “regrets”)
* Acceptance or corrections/amendments to previous meeting minutes
* Decisions made about each agenda item, for example:
	+ Actions taken or agreed to be taken
	+ Next steps
	+ Voting outcomes – e.g., (if necessary, details regarding who made motions; who seconded and approved or via show of hands, etc.)
	+ Motions taken or rejected
	+ Items to be held over
	+ New business
	+ Next meeting date and time

**Tips that might help your note taking:**

* **Create an outline** – as discussed earlier, having an outline (or template) based on the agenda makes it easy for you to simply jot down notes, decisions, etc. under each item as you go along. If you are taking notes by hand, consider including space below each item on your outline for your hand-written notes, then print these out and use this to capture minutes.
* **Check-off attendees as they enter the room** -
* **Record decisions or notes on action items** in your outline as soon as they occur to be sure they are recorded accurately
* **Ask for clarification if necessary** – for example, if the group moves on without making a decision or an obvious conclusion, ask for clarification of the decision and/or next steps involved.
* **Don’t try to capture it all** – you can’t keep up if you try to write down the conversation verbatim, so be sure to simply (and clearly) write (or type) just the decisions, assignments, action steps, etc.
* **Record it** – literally, if you are concerned about being able to keep up with note taking, consider recording the meeting (e.g., on your smart phone, iPad, recording device, etc.) but be sure to let participants know they are being recording. While you don’t want to use the recording to create a word-for-word transcript of the meeting, the recording can come in handy if you need clarification.

[Download our Meeting Minute Checklist for Associations and Nonprofits with sample minutes taken at a meeting and learn how to take better minutes.](https://goo.gl/m9iQdN)

**3. The Minutes Writing Process**

Once the meeting is over, it’s time to pull together your notes and write the minutes. Here are some tips that might help:

* Try to write the minutes as soon after the meeting as possible while everything is fresh in your mind.
* Review your outline and if necessary, add additional notes or clarify points raised. Also check to ensure all decisions, actions and motions are clearly noted.
* Check for sufficient detail: For Board of Director’s minutes, [an Association Trends article](http://www.associationtrends.com/news/trends/headlines/don%E2%80%99t-get-too-wordy-with-board-meeting-minutes) (by lawyers Jefferson C. Glassie and Dorothy Deng) suggests the following for Board minutes:
	+ *include a short statement of each action taken by the board and a brief explanation of the rationale for the decision*
	+ *when there is extensive deliberation before passing a motion, summarize the major arguments*
* Edit to ensure brevity and clarity, so the minutes are easy to read
* What *NOT TO INCLUDE*: [EffectiveMeetings.com](http://www.effectivemeetings.com/meetingbasics/minutes.asp) offers some these tips from the International Association of Administrative Professionals (IAAP):
	+ *Be objective.*
	+ *Write in the same tense throughout*
	+ *Avoid using people’s names except for motions or seconds. This is a business document, not about who said what.*
	+ *Avoid inflammatory or personal observations. The fewer adjectives or adverbs you use, the better.*
	+ *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.*

Every member needs to prepare for the meeting ready to serve, to build the ministry, and to support one another.