

TAKING MINUTES & RECORD KEEPING

1. USER NOTE FOR THIS GUIDE

PLEASE NOTE: This document and the commentary provided throughout the document are only intended to provide a general overview of matters of interest. They are not intended to be comprehensive and do not in any way constitute legal advice by Racing Queensland.

This document is intended as a general guide to taking minutes of Committee meetings. Highlighted in yellow are notes for reference.

Users should carefully review this document, consider the information and then adapt to suit your own Committee requirements, taking your own Club constitution into account. See also AGM Guidelines for information specific to Annual General Meetings.

2. The benefits of effective minute taking

Minutes should be an accurate and impartial record of the business covered in a meeting, including the key points, decisions and actions going forward. They should be factual and non-emotive and clearly and concisely capture the core of the discussion and how decisions were arrived at.

Recording accurate minutes:

- Provides a record of decisions and the process by which decisions were made;
- Helps in tracking actions arising from meetings;
- Helps to retain the history of an organisation and its strategic direction; and
- Enables an organisation to meet its legal obligations.

3. What to record in the minutes

Minutes should be an accurate record of the meeting and therefore should follow the order of the agenda, and would typically include the following:

- Meeting title - including organisation / Committee name;
- Place, date and starting time;
- List of attendees and their roles, including the Chair;
- Any invited guests;
- Apologies received;
- Declarations of any conflicts of interest;
- Confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting;
- Actions arising from the previous meeting/s - including a review and discussion of progress against the actions;
- Items for discussion and / or decision - including key discussion points, and any resulting resolutions and action items;
- May include regular reports and items for noting;
- General business;
- Date, time and location of next meeting;
- When attendees leave and re-enter the room (if applicable); and
- When the meeting closed.

[Note: Your club's constitution may include specific requirements around what needs to be recorded in minutes. Any such requirements should be reflected in your processes.]

It is advisable to set up a minutes template prior to the meeting, based on the agenda.

The Chair may elect to discuss the items out of order, but this should be noted in the minutes.

Minutes are not intended as a transcript of every statement by every participant, but rather should include the significant issues raised and the broad reasons for decisions taken.

Use concise, impartial language. If there are differing opinions on an issue, it can be useful to record that there was a robust discussion and the main points for and against a particular course of action, along with the final decision. It is not a requirement (or desirable) to state who disagreed and why unless that person specifically asks for their opposition to a decision to be recorded. **[Note: Under your club's constitution, there may be requirements around recording dissenting opinions. Any such requirements should be reflected in your processes.]**

Generally, the Committee acts as a collective, therefore it is the Committee's resolutions as a whole that should be documented, rather than individual opinions and statements.

It is important to record any actions arising from the discussion and any decisions /resolutions and highlight these clearly in the minutes, e.g. by using Action and/ or Resolution headings and / or text boxes. If there is an expectation that an action is completed within a certain timeframe, this should also be noted.

It can be helpful for the minute taker to repeat the action items and resolutions before moving on to the next item, to ensure that they have been captured accurately.

Jargon should be avoided where possible. If using acronyms, include the full title along with the acronym in brackets in the first instance in the document, and just the acronym subsequently, e.g. Gold Coast Turf Club (GCTC) first and then GCTC.

Proofreading is important to ensure the accuracy of the document.

[Note: Under your club's constitution, club members may have the right to access minutes of Committee meetings. Accordingly, when preparing minutes they should be prepared as if they may need to be disclosed in the future (e.g. potentially to members or other authorities).]

4. Circulating the draft minutes

Draft minutes should be prepared for review by the Chair as soon as possible after the meeting. Once the draft is approved by the Chair it should be circulated to the rest of the Committee. The minutes are then considered at the next meeting, where the Committee can provide feedback if there are any concerns about their accuracy.

5. Ratifying minutes

At each Committee meeting, the previous meeting minutes should be reviewed by the Committee, confirmed as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair. If any corrections are required, the Chair should record the correction on the actual minutes, initial the correction and confirm that correction by reading it aloud. The correction should also be recorded in the current meeting minutes.

6. Preserving minutes as a permanent record

Minutes are a legal document and should be the sole permanent record of the meeting. Minutes of all Committee meetings should be signed by the Chair and stored securely (in electronic and / or paper copy), with limited and controlled access. If stored electronically, the Chair should sign a physical copy of the minutes which is then scanned and saved.



Final minutes should be **prepared and saved** within one month of the meeting, but depending on the frequency of meetings, may not be **signed** by the Chair within one month, if signed at the next meeting.

Minutes should not be altered once ratified and signed. Your organisation's document retention policy should address the document retention requirements for minutes.

7. Circular resolutions / flying minutes

Circular resolutions are a process allowing the Committee to pass a resolution without calling a meeting and they are generally used for non-contentious matters that need to be dealt with between meetings.

The use of circular resolutions should be limited to matters that are routine/ administrative, or matters that have had prior discussion in meetings, and should not be used for urgent or controversial matters that require further discussion unless this is unavoidable.

Committee members are asked to sign a document signifying that they are in favour of the resolution. Email approvals are also acceptable, and the resolution is considered passed when the last approval is received.

It is good practice to advise the Committee if/ when a resolution is passed and include the circular resolution for noting at the next meeting.

