

Clerk's Conference – Dec 2022

Minutes – the Record of the Meeting

A. Purpose of Minutes

1. Minutes are an official, approved record to the actions of Presbytery. Minutes are not a transcript of the meeting.
2. Minutes provide a contemporaneous historical journal of the actions of Presbytery. They may be referred to for many purposes, such as record of ordination, record of particularization of a church, record of discipline, record of dissolution of a church and so on.
3. Minutes must be maintained in a substantial format. That is, a binder or permanent composition.
 - a. Three ring binder?
 - i. Paper quality
 - ii. Ability to remove and/or lose pages
 - iii. Subject to loss of historical accuracy
 - iv. Cheap
 - b. Digital files?
 - i. What format to adopt
 - ii. What media to use
 - iii. Frequent changes to media, equipment, and formats
 - c. Commercial Minutes Binder?
 - i. Acid-free paper
 - ii. May be locked and protected from tampering
 - iii. Expensive
 - d. Sent to the Archives?
 - i. Send copies or originals
4. Some paragraphs may be “boiler-plate”
 - a. Opening paragraph (Name, place, time, type, etc.)
 - b. Roll details
 - c. Adjournment paragraph
5. Identify Topics
 - a. Number Paragraphs or each line?
 - b. Use a Table of Contents (MS Word or Wordperfect)

B. What is recorded?

1. Name of the Presbytery
2. Kind of meeting (Called, Stated, Adjourned, etc.)
 - a. If a called meeting, the statement of the Call should always be recorded indicating the purpose for which the call was made. A copy of the call issued should be included.

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3. Date, place, and time (both opening and closing) of the meeting.
4. The fact that the entire meeting, and each committee report, was opened and closed with prayer.
5. The name of the Moderator and Stated Clerk.
6. A roll of those present, absent (excused or unexcused) to include all Teaching Elders, Churches by Session delegates, Candidates, Licentiates, those Under Care and all visitors.
7. A record that a quorum was present (i.e. 25 TE's and 16 RE's from 10 churches).
8. The approval of previous minutes
9. Motions passed
 - a. Include the exact motion, (maker is optional), and result of the vote.
 - b. Robert's Rules indicate that all MAIN motions should be shown in the minutes. However, the secretary will have to record nearly all motions and what was done including details that will not necessarily be part of the final draft. These notes should be edited and condensed so that the secondary motions (amendments) are not recorded. The final motion will be the exact wording used by the chair and put to a vote. The final draft need not show the evolution of the wording.
10. Reports presented
 - a. If presented in writing, include the report either in the body of the minutes or in an addendum.
 - b. Name of the person presenting the report.
 - c. Record of motions approved, or actions taken.
 - d. An oral report may be summarized.
11. Other actions taken and approved.
12. When a counted vote is called for, the number of votes on each side shall be recorded. Otherwise the record may simply show that the motion was carried.
13. Adjournment time and prayer.
14. Signature of the Stated Clerk (and Recording Clerk, as appropriate).
15. Notations regarding the signing of the Ministerial Obligation form.
 - a. You may choose to include a copy of the form either in the minutes or as an addendum.
16. An examinee's stated differences to the confessional Standards. to record judgment on each stated difference using the wording of one of the four categories explicitly spelled out in RAO 16-3.e.5.a through d. Presbytery minutes shall record ministers' and ministerial candidates' stated differences with our standards in their own words" at the time of the ordination exam. These must be included in the record of the ordination exam, not simply referenced if included in the minutes of the licensure exam.
17. The full record of each commission's proceedings must be included in subsequent presbytery minutes, either in the body of the minutes or as an addendum thereto (BCO 15-1).
18. When GA takes exception to a presbytery's minutes for failure to record or take a required action, and Presbytery agrees with the exception, a satisfactory response should indicate that they have taken the required action, if possible, and properly

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recorded the same in their minutes, amending and resubmitting relevant portions of past minutes if necessary. Furthermore, remind Presbyteries to follow the guidelines for responding to GA in RAO 16-10.

19. Responses to GA's exceptions must be approved by the presbytery, and such approval and the responses must be recorded in their minutes.
20. In the examination of candidates for ordination (BCO 21-4.c) the record of the examination must distinguish between examinations in church history and in PCA history.
22. When an examination for ordination refers to acceptance of an earlier licensure examination, provide a citation of the prior minutes where that exam is recorded.
23. With respect to BCO 13-6; BCO 19-2; BCO 19-5 and BCO 21-4, each part of an exam of any kind be recorded.
24. Minutes of executive session meetings are not exempt from review by the higher court. Record must be kept of any action taken during the executive session. The presbytery is still required to submit a copy of these minutes even if it is a confidential matter. If no confidential action was taken, record the lack of confidential action in the regular minutes.
25. BCO 19-12, BCO 18-6, and BCO 8-7 - Some actions must be taken annually, including review of session records, receiving reports from TEs without call, receiving reports from TEs laboring out of bounds, receiving reports from candidates under care, and that record of such reports should be included in their minutes. Reports from interns must be received at each stated meeting
26. BCO 40-1,2,3 - Presbyteries are required to review the Sessional records of each member congregation at least once a year and to record the findings.
27. BCO 1B-2 - Presbyteries must record that all candidates are members of a local church for 6 months prior to being taken under care and have the endorsement of that church's session.
28. Documents referenced in minutes should be attached; calls and records of commission are required to be included.

C. What is Not recorded?

1. Opinions or discussions
2. Debate on motions or matters before the court.
3. Motions which contain intemperate language (this should a ruling by the Moderator).