
Secretary – Let’s Take a Minute

Jessica Resendiz, LAPTA Secretary
Secretary@LouisianaPTA.org, LouisianaPTA.org/secretary

Where to Start

Register at LouisianaPTA.org/register. Visit LouisianaPTA.org/secretary. Download **LAPTA Toolkit: Secretary**.

The Secretary is a member of the Executive Committee & the Board of Directors. The Secretary’s basic duties are outlined in the PTA’s Bylaws and further explained in the LAPTA Toolkit: Secretary. The duties include attending and recording the minutes for all meetings; distributing meeting minutes to the members that correlate to the meeting type; creating the agenda for all meetings if requested by the President; having records from previous meetings ready for review; organizing and storing all records in either digital or paper format; and maintaining the membership roster.

When taking the minutes, follow the format of the agenda. It can be in outline or narrative format. Take handwritten notes in a bound journal with numbered pages -or- type the minutes during the meeting. If there is a discussion over an issue, only record what the final decision is. Always record in 3rd person. Ask for clarification during the meeting if you miss something. View a recorded LAPTA Board of Directors Meeting at LouisianaPTA.org/secretary to practice.

Terms

- **Bylaws** are the governing rules of the PTA. The Local PTA Unit Bylaws Template is at LouisianaPTA.org/bylaws. They expire every 3 years with the expiration date on page one. Email bylaws@LouisianaPTA.org for a copy.
- **Quorum** is the minimum number of members necessary for a PTA to conduct business. The quorum for the Executive Committee (elected officers) and Board of Directors Meetings is a majority of its members. The quorum for General Membership Meetings is listed in Article X, Section 2 of the Bylaws.
- **Board of Directors** is the main governing body of the PTA. It consists of the elected officers (Executive Committee) & Committee Chairs (or heads) which are listed in the Bylaws and (potential) Standing Rules.
- **Parliamentary Procedure** is a set of rules for conducting orderly and fair meetings. PTAs use the book Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised which details parliamentary procedure, or [robertsrules.com](https://www.robertsrules.com). Look at the [FAQs](#).
- **Minutes** are the official record of all meetings, are kept forever, and become the PTA’s history. They’re available for all PTA members. It is the record of what was done and not everything that was said. Personal opinions & discussions are not recorded. They are written efficiently and concisely and should be typed.
- **Motions** are statements that describe a proposed action or decision that is made by the PTA.

Contents of the Minutes

The minutes generally follow the layout of the agenda. Here is a brief, typical overview.

- **Heading:** Include the meeting type (Executive Comm, Board, or General Membership), PTA name, date, and location.
- **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by [name] at [time].
- **Opening (Optional):** Note what was done and by whom.
- **Attendance:** List attendee names or attach sign-in sheet. State if a quorum was or was not established.
- **Secretary’s Report:** “Minutes from previous meeting were [read/distributed/emailed] and [approved or approved as corrected]” or “The reading of the minutes was waived and approved as distributed.”
- **Treasurer’s Report:** The XYZ Bank Account has \$99,999. CheddarUp.com has \$209. *(You can round to whole dollars.)*
- **President’s Report:** details
- **Principal’s Report:** details
- **Committee Reports:** details for each committee
- **Old Business** (optional): details
- **New Business** (optional): details
- **Announcements:** details
- **Adjournment:** Note the time the meeting ended.

Draft Minutes vs. Approved Minutes

- The minutes should be typed within 5 days of the meeting. Number the pages. Include all reports. Have the President preview the minutes. These are called the “**Draft Minutes**.”
- At the next meeting, the Secretary distributes and/or reads the Draft Minutes. (The reading of the minutes may be waived by a majority vote without debate.) The Secretary asks for any corrections which are made in red ink by drawing a line through the error with the correction written above or in the margin. Minutes may be corrected whenever the error is noticed regardless of the time that has lapsed. To correct minutes after they have been approved requires a 2/3 affirmative vote. The Secretary then states that the minutes are “approved as read” or are “approved as corrected,” and signs the minutes. A motion is not needed to approve the minutes. The secretary signs their name & dates the minutes in both the draft & approved minutes. The minutes then become the official **Approved Minutes**.

Recording a Motion

The process of making motions ensures that all decisions are fairly discussed & voted on. Record the name of the person who made the motion, whether it was seconded, the exact motion verbatim, how the vote was taken (verbal or ballot), and if the motion passed or failed. If a motion is withdrawn, it is as though it never happened and is not included in the minutes. If a motion is not seconded, then it cannot continue to be discussed and it dies. Only record the final version of a motion. There is a Motion Form in the Secretary Toolkit. Use this format including the indentation, bold text, and skipping a line before and after the motion:

A MOTION WAS MADE by Clotile Boudreaux and seconded to waive the reading of the minutes by unanimous decision. There were no objections. **MOTION PASSED.**

A MOTION WAS MADE by Mignon Bergeron and seconded to host a Read-It-Again Library event by the ABC PTA. A verbal vote was taken. **MOTION PASSED.**

A MOTION WAS MADE by Evangeline Hebert and seconded to purchase a vehicle for the principal. The ballot vote was taken with 1 yes and 12 nos. **MOTION FAILED.**

A MOTION WAS MADE by Octavia Dubois and seconded to create the Nominating Committee with Person 1, Person 2, and Person 3. A verbal vote was taken. **MOTION PASSED.**

A MOTION WAS MADE by Chantelle Champagne and seconded to have Massage Envy provide free massages during Teacher Appreciation Week using unanimous consent. There were no objections. **MOTION PASSED.**

A MOTION WAS MADE by Etienne Theriot to accept the proposed annual budget from the Budget Committee. A verbal vote was taken. **MOTION PASSED.** *(A second is not needed if a motion is coming from a committee.)*

A MOTION WAS MADE by Magnolia Chiasson and seconded to adjourn the meeting early before all items on the agenda were covered. A verbal vote was taken. **MOTION FAILED.** *(The only time a motion is needed to adjourn a meeting early is if all items on the agenda are not covered.)*