

VFW Auxiliary Secretary

How to be Effective & Efficient



VFW Auxiliary Department of Maryland

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Department Secretary
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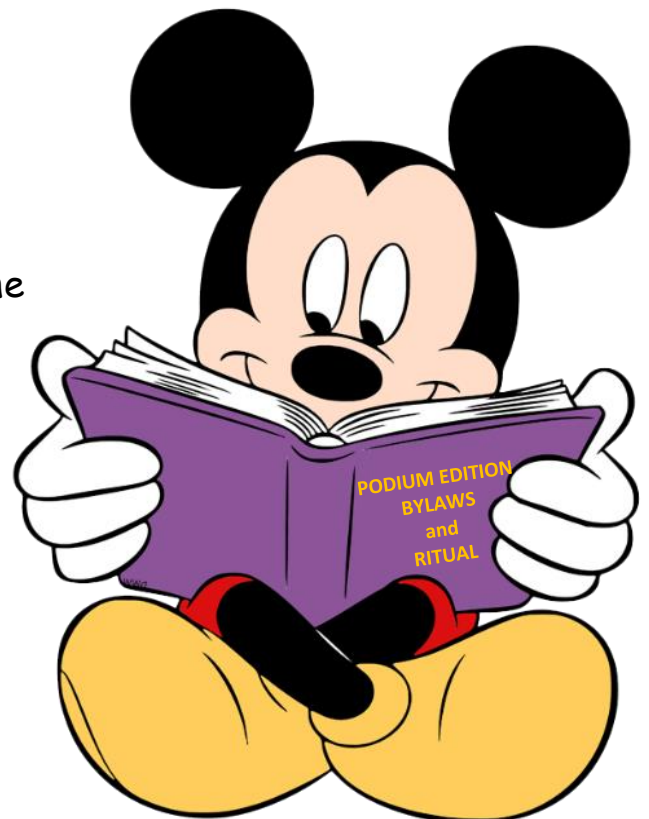


VFW AUXILIARY SECRETARY

Congratulations! It is an honor to be appointed by your President to serve as Secretary for your VFW Auxiliary. You may be searching for information/guidance on the duties of this particular office as well as looking for any tools that would make the performance of your duties easier to accomplish—I am here to assist!

The primary function of a secretary is to keep records of the meetings (minutes) and to write or answer letters on its behalf. Additionally, a secretary assists not only the organization's leader (VFW Auxiliary President) but also the VFW Auxiliary's officers, program chairmen, and members. You are the right-hand man/woman to your entire VFW Auxiliary.

In the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Auxiliary, the duties of the Auxiliary Secretary are outlined in Sections 812 and 812A of the National Bylaws. Also, in the Booklet of Instructions, a section on Secretary Minutes outlines what should be included in the minutes and gives suggestions of how a secretary might read a sentence to cover a particular part of a meeting.



Let's begin with the Duties of the Secretary -



Secretary, Duties of (All Levels)

- The Secretary shall keep in books or files:
 - The current "Podium Edition Bylaws and Ritual"
 - A record of all the minutes of each meeting of the Auxiliary
 - The manner in which the minutes of the Auxiliary meetings are read, printed and/or distributed shall be at the discretion of the Auxiliary by vote of the membership. Consideration should be given to the cost of printing when voting.
 - It is permissible to secure typed or computer-generated minutes in the permanent book.
 - Or insert in a three-ring binder or clip folder
 - Each minute page shall be numbered consecutively and provide a space for the Trustees to initial at audit.
 - The Treasurer's reports and the audit reports must be incorporated in the minutes.
 - Corrections shall be made in the margins.
 - Shall attend to all matters of correspondence under the direction of the President.
 - A General or Special Order file for the current year in which shall be preserved all orders and circulars issued by the National and Department Headquarters.
 - In the order in which they are received
 - A letter file in which shall be kept all correspondence of the Auxiliary.
 - General correspondence to be retained for one (1) year.
 - Policy and rulings are to be maintained in a permanent file.
 - All communications from National or Department Officers are official and shall be read at a meeting before being filed for reference.
 - All communications of any nature whatsoever intended for the consideration of the National Body shall be signed by the President and forwarded by the Secretary of the Auxiliary to the Department President.
 - All official communications to National Officers from the Auxiliary must also be forwarded through channels.
 - Shall notify orally or in writing all newly elected members.
 - Shall under the direction of the President, prepare all reports required of them.
 - Shall transfer to their successor, without delay, all papers, books and other property of the Auxiliary in their possession.

- Shall enter the information required from the installation report in MALTA or submit the installation report to the Department Secretary for entry into MALTA within seven (7) calendar days.
- To perform such other duties as are usually incident to such office.
- Shall notify all required offices the names and addresses of elected and appointed Officers.

Duties specific to the Auxiliary Secretary

- The Auxiliary Secretary shall
 - Maintain a roll of deceased members with the date of death.
 - Input or transmit the names of the Delegates and Alternates to Secretaries required to receive them within thirty (30) calendar days of the election.
 - Immediately following installation, enter the required information into MALTA or submit the installation report to the Department Secretary within seven (7) calendar days.



Additional responsibilities of the Secretary

- Notify the Department Secretary of changes in officers or the officers' contact information, changes in meeting day, time or location. Notify Department Secretary if the auxiliary votes to change the dues amount.
- The Auxiliary Secretary shall notify newly elected members to appear at a stated time to receive the ceremonial obligation.
 - In the event the newly accepted member has subscribed to the printed obligation on the membership application, they shall be considered a member in good standing as soon as accepted. The newly accepted member shall not be required to take the ceremonial oral obligation. However, it would be courteous to reach out with a welcome letter and the invitation to the next meeting. See sample on page 6.



Date

Name
Address
Town

Dear Michaela,

Welcome to the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States Auxiliary, *Name of Auxiliary, No. 12345!* You have joined the most prestigious veteran's service organization auxiliary in the country. Our mission is to honor and assist veterans, promote patriotism, and support our active-duty service members and their families.

We have accepted your membership application and have processed your payment for your membership dues. You will receive your membership card from VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters. In the meantime, we invite you to visit the national VFW Auxiliary website, www.vfwauxiliary.org, to access valuable membership and program resources. If you have provided an email address, you will begin to receive the national e-newsletter as well as alerts and updates.

Please join us at our next VFW Auxiliary 12345 meeting on *day, date and time*. It will be held at *the Post home at the post address*.

On behalf of all VFW Auxiliary 12345 members, thank you for your commitment to our great organization. Your membership is genuinely appreciated, and we are thrilled that you have chosen to be one of us.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out – and again, welcome!

Sincerely,

Libby DallaTezza
Secretary
VFW Auxiliary No. 12345
Department of Maryland

WHY HAVE MINUTES?

In accordance with the National Bylaws, a VFW Auxiliary Secretary shall keep in books or files:

- 1) The current Bylaws of the VFW Auxiliary
- 2) A copy of the annually approved Standing Rules for the Auxiliary should the Auxiliary choose to adopt Standing Rules—See Section 211
- 3) A record of all minutes of each meeting of the VFW Auxiliary, which become the history of that Auxiliary, and thus considered permanent documents.
 - It is the purpose of minutes to record who made and seconded motions and whether each motion passed or failed at each specific meeting.
 - **Minutes record what was done—not what was said.**
 - Therefore, the minutes do not reflect any of the discussions that may take place during a meeting.
 - The business of the Auxiliary is not driven by discussion; the business is driven by motions made and passed
 - to undertake specific projects,
 - to participate in certain fundraisers, and
 - to support Auxiliary programs, i.e.
 - to list what was approved by the majority of the members present at that meeting will be preserved

- for reporting purposes should a question ever arise
- 4) The vote of the membership determines the manner in which the minutes of VFW Auxiliary meetings are read, printed and/or distributed. Consideration should be given to the cost of printing when voting.
- 5) To make sure the documentation of the organization's meetings are kept in an orderly manner--
- The minutes whether typed or computer generated
 - with pages numbered consecutively with
 - room for Trustees to initial at audit and date and
 - for the Auxiliary Secretary to sign his/her name and office
 - may be entered in a standard bound record book purchased through the VFW Store or
 - inserted in a three-ring binder or
 - clip folder



MINUTES MADE EASY

The Secretary is not required to include in the minutes all that takes place at meetings. Generally, speaking, only decisions should be embodied. A record is made of what is done, not what is said. Lengthy or detailed minutes are not necessary.

****Minutes may be written in complete sentences or presented as a bulleted list.****

The following information **MUST** be included:

- ✓ Name and number of the Auxiliary
- ✓ Date and place of meeting -note if a regular or special meeting
- ✓ Time called to order
- ✓ Name of the presiding officer
- ✓ Number of persons present; list any pro tem officers
 - (Must have a quorum of 5 members in good standing present at the meeting location in order that business may be transacted)
- ✓ Names of visitors, if any are present; note specific titles if appropriate
- ✓ Names of candidates for membership, the eligibility of the veteran listed;
 - the outcome of their acceptance or rejection
- ✓ Action taken on the minutes of the previous meeting
 - Only the motions
 - note who made and seconded and
 - whether the motion passed or failed
- ✓ A copy of the Treasurer's report and each quarterly audit report to incorporate into the minutes
- ✓ List both the correspondence read and bills presented



The A,B,C's of Secretary Minutes and Meeting Procedures

A. The minutes should contain in the first paragraph:

1. Name and number of the Auxiliary.
2. Date and place of meeting.
3. Time called to order.
4. Name of Presiding Officer.
5. Whether regular or special meeting. (If a special meeting, the purpose for which it was called.)
6. Number of members present.
7. Names of visitors, if there are any present.

B. When the roll is called, the Conductor/Conductress responds "present" or "absent." Check your list of Officers, and in the minutes record those absent, as well as the names of those members appointed pro tem. If an Officer is absent, the President appoints a member to fill his/her station before the meeting starts.

C. Then the Secretary should write "Opening ceremonies were held, after which the minutes of the last regular meeting were read and approved as read," or "corrected and approved with the corrections ordered."

D. Auxiliary Order of Business

The order of business would be recorded in the minutes as follows:

1. Opening Ceremonies.
2. Introduction of National and/or Department Officers.
3. Reading and Referring of Applications for Membership.

*The only part of the card necessary to be read is as follows:

"Jane Doe, 123 Elm Street, eligible through service member John Doe. Recommended by Mary Doe."

4. Report of Investigating Committee.

*The Secretary shall be responsible for seeing that all information is given and the Investigating Committee shall be held responsible for the accuracy of the information and the eligibility of the candidate.

5. Voting on Candidates. The result of the vote and the names of those initiated should be recorded.
6. Initiation. (optional)

7. Presentation of Minutes of Previous Meeting. After you have read the minutes and they have been approved, write the word "Approved" and the date under your signature. If there are corrections note them in the minute book along the margin adjacent to the paragraph corrected.

8. Reading of Official and Other Communications. All communications are grouped under one heading but National letters are read first, Department General Orders and letters second, followed by District communications, Post or other Auxiliary communications, and finally thank-you notes, cards and communications from outside organizations. All General Orders from the Department President are official and must be read at the first meeting following receipt before being filed for reference. All other communications from National or Department Officers are also official and should be read at once.

If the communications require action, such action taken is recorded in the minutes.

It might be written thus: "General Orders No. 5 from the Department President were read. There were also letters from National _____ (title), Brother/Sister _____ notifying us that _____" (herein should be given the information contained in the letter). And from Department _____ (title), Brother/Sister _____, asking that we _____ (herein should be given a summary of the information contained in the letters).

9. Treasurer's Report. A copy of the Treasurer's report shall be incorporated in the minutes.

10. Presentation of Bills. Read the actual bills separately and give the total. The minutes should read something like this: "Bills for \$25.00 were read as follows: _____" (List the bills). No action is taken on the bills at this time. They are simply handed to the Trustees for approval.

11. Introduction of Guests, who are not escorted. At this point in the meeting, any guest(s) may be admitted.

12. Report of Committees, Standing and Special.

-The Veterans and Family Support Chairman should be called upon first, citing all inquiries of veterans or families of veterans in distress. All members would report any distress or cases of illness unknown to the Veterans and Family Support Chairman.

- Each committee chairman is called on for his/her report. Note should be made in the minutes of who made the report, and what action is taken.

- With the exception of the Trustees' report on the audit of the books and on

the bills, reports are accepted without motion, unless there is objection from the floor.

- The Trustees' report on the audit must be accepted by a motion passed by the Auxiliary and the Audit Report shall be incorporated in the minutes.

13. Unfinished Business. All business held over from a previous meeting now has the floor. Action by motion on items brought up under this heading should be recorded in the minutes.

14. New Business. (When there has been a death of a member since the last meeting, the first order of new business is the draping of the Charter.) Elections are also included under new business as well as other business that may be brought up. If an election is held, nomination(s) for each office and the results of the election shall be recorded. Any other action taken under new business should be recorded according to the motions passed on the floor.

15. Report of Trustees on Bills and Action Thereon. The Senior Trustee makes the report if he/she is present. With reference to the bills presented earlier in the meeting, he/she will probably say, "The Trustees have examined the bills and recommend that they be paid." A member moves the report be accepted and the bills paid. Another member seconds the motion. The Trustee reporting can also move that the report be accepted and the bills paid.

16. Suggestions for the Good of the Order. New members and guests should be invited to speak at this time.

17. Closing Ceremonies. The Secretary should finish the minutes by writing something like this: "Closing ceremonies were conducted in accordance with the Ritual, after which the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be _____ (date) at _____ (time)."

E. Body of Minutes.

1. The minutes of each meeting should be signed by the Secretary when recorded and after "approved", the "date of approval" should be written under the signature.
2. The minutes of each meeting will thus contain a record of all business transacted; all main motions, whether carried or lost; all other motions that were carried, by whom motions were made and seconded.
3. The Secretary should always bring to the meeting all necessary records and minute books and papers that the President is likely to need and any necessary equipment for his/her own duties.

4. If the Secretary is unable to be present at a meeting, the Auxiliary President shall appoint a Secretary pro tem who shall record the minutes of the meeting at which he/she acted. The Secretary pro tem also records same in the Secretary's book, duly signed by him/her as Secretary pro tem. These minutes will be read at the following meeting for approval by the Auxiliary.

F. It is permissible for a Secretary to record the minutes of the meeting to supplement his/her notes.

1. The recordings may not be distributed to those who did not attend the meeting and may not be used for any other purpose than to ensure the accuracy of the minutes. Once the minutes have been approved, the recording should be deleted.
2. The recording equipment should be in full view of the members and should not be used if any member objects. Individual members may not be allowed to record the meetings for their own personal use, unless the body approves per Bylaw Section 210.
3. Members may review the minutes as recorded by the Secretary in his/her official Record Book.

G. Correspondence.

1. All correspondence written for the Auxiliary should bear the Auxiliary name, number and location in the heading. Each letter should bear the date it is written.
2. If the letter is written in accordance with action taken at an Auxiliary meeting, then reference should be made to the date of the meeting. Thus: "In accordance with action taken at a regular (or special) meeting of _____ VFW Auxiliary to Post No. _____ on _____ (date), I am writing _____," and so forth.
3. Each letter should bear the full name and address of the Auxiliary Secretary, or whoever writes the letter.
4. Official correspondence shall be signed by the Secretary. For clarity, the name and title should be typed and then signed in ink, thus: _____

(Signature)

Mary Doe, Secretary

VFW Auxiliary # _____

1313 E. 13th St.

Podunk Center, MO 64112

Sample Sentence Format of Minutes

President Nadine Wildroot called the regular meeting of the X-Factor VFW Auxiliary No. 10000, Smith Place, Nowhere to order at 7:05 p.m. at the Post Home on April 14, 2015. Following the opening ceremonies, with a quorum being present, the minutes of the last meeting were read and approved as corrected. There were no petitions for membership.

The Treasurer reported the balance last report of \$500.00 with receipts of \$145.00 and disbursements of \$9.50 leaving a balance of \$635.50. (see Treasurer's report attached)

The Secretary read the following bills: \$25.00-Walmart for paper plates, napkins, etc.; \$75.00- Walmart for balls for the men's and women's softball teams; and \$35.50 to VFW Store for membership pins. Next, the Secretary read the communications--President's Message and thank you's from Mabel Jones and Bill Field for flowers, calls, and visits.

The Program Chairmen summarized the information they had received from their National Ambassador and Department Chairman. The Audit Report (see attached) was read by Trustee Cheryl Rhodes who moved on behalf of the committee that the audit be approved. Motion carried.

There was no Unfinished Business.

New Business-Our charter was draped due to the death of Past National President Lucile Suchina of Texas. Next, election of officers for 2023-24 was held and the following will be installed at our May meeting: President-Bill Field; Sr. Vice President-Mabel Jones; Jr. Vice President-Cheryl Rhodes; Chaplain- Nadine Wildroot; Conductor-James Smith; Guard-Twila Garcia; Three Year Trustee-Nadine Wildroot.

Trustee Cheryl Rhodes moved on behalf of the committee that the bills be paid. Motion carried. There was nothing given for the Good of the Order.

Closing ceremonies were conducted. The next meeting will be May 13 at 7:00 at the Post Home when Post Commander John George will be present to install the VFW Auxiliary officers for 2016-17.

Respectfully submitted,

Pauline Plant

Secretary

[Date approved]

Audited on _____ by _____

Sample Bulleted Minutes

Date: 4/14/2015 Regular/Special Meeting

Called to order by Madam President Nadine Wildroot @ 7:05 p.m.

Other Attendees/Guests:

Total Number of members present for meeting: 7

No Guests/No other members present

President-Nadine Wildroot list officers P

Sr. Vice-Bill Field "

Jr. Vice -James Smith "

Treasurer-Alice Wood "

Secretary-Pauline Plant "

Chaplain-Mabel Jones "

Conductress-Cheryl Rhodes "

Guard-Amber Garcia A

Historian-Twila Garcia A

Patriotic Instructor-Shirley White house P

1 Year Trustee-Shirley Whitehouse "

2 Year Trustee-Mabel Jones "

3 Year Trustee-Cheryl Rhodes "

Opening Ceremonies: were conducted _____

Reading of minutes of previous meeting:

 Approved as read X Approved as corrected

Petitions/Voting for new memberships: None _____

Treasurer's Report: Dated: 4/14/2023

Balance last report: \$500.00

Receipts: \$145.00

Disbursements: \$9.50

Balance on hand: \$635.50

[A copy of the Treasurer's detailed report shall be incorporated into the minutes.]

Presentation of Bills:

\$25.00 to Walmart for paper plates, napkins, etc. ;\$75.00 to Walmart for softballs for men's and women's teams; \$35.50 to VFW Store for membership pins

Communications: President's Message and Thank you's from Mabel Jones and Bill Field for flowers, calls, and visits were read.

Committee Reports: Chairmen summarized information from Dept. Chairs and National Ambassadors.

Trustee Cheryl Rhodes read the audit report and moved on behalf of the committee that the audit report be approved. Motion carried. [A copy of the audit report attached to minutes]

Unfinished Business:

____None_____

New Business: -The Charter was draped in memory of Past National President ____ of _____.

-The Charter was draped in memory of Auxiliary Member _____

-Election of Officers was held: President-Bill Field; Sr. Vice-Mabel Jones; Jr.

Vice- Cheryl Rhodes; Chaplain-Nadine Wildroot; Conductor-James Smith;

Guard-Twila Garcia; Three Yr. Trustee-Nadine Wildroot _____

-Installation of Officers at the May meeting _____

No other new business _____

Report of Trustees Bills

and action thereon:

Trustee Cheryl Rhodes moved on behalf of the committee that the bills be paid.

Good of the Order:

Guests speak:

____None_____

Closing Ceremonies: were conducted _____

Next meeting scheduled:

-May 13, 2023 @ 7:00 p.m.

Post Commander John George will install 20__-__ VFW Auxiliary Officers.

Respectfully submitted,

Pauline Plant

Secretary

Date _____

Date Audited _____

By _____

_____ **Auxiliary Agenda/Minute Form***

Date: _____

Time: _____

Presiding Officer: _____

Place: _____

Members Present: _____

Guests Present: _____

Roll Call of Officers: _____	Present/Absent	Pro Tem
President	_____	_____
Sr. Vice President	_____	_____
Jr. Vice President	_____	_____
Secretary	_____	_____
Treasurer	_____	_____
Chaplain	_____	_____
Conductress/Conductor	_____	_____
Guard	_____	_____
Patriotic Instructor	_____	_____
Trustee 1 Yr.	_____	_____
Trustee 2 Yr.	_____	_____
Trustee 3 Yr.	_____	_____

Introduction of Guests—VFW Auxiliary/VFW Members (titles as necessary)

Reading and Referring of Petitions for Membership

Name _____ Relationship to Veteran _____
Veteran's Eligibility _____

Name _____ Relationship to Veteran _____
Veteran's Eligibility _____

Name _____ Relationship to Veteran _____
Veteran's Eligibility _____

Report of the Investigating Committee

Voting on Candidates

All Accepted _____ OR

Accepted Names _____

Rejected Names _____

Initiation Held?

Yes Names of Members Initiated _____

No

Presentation of Minutes and Official and other Communications

-Minutes of the Previous Meeting—

Approved as Read/Presented _____

Approved as Corrected _____

-Presentation of Official and other Communications

Other Communications:

From _____

Regarding _____

From _____

Regarding _____

From _____

Regarding _____

From _____

Regarding _____

Presentation of Treasurer’s Report (Attach Treasurer’s detailed report to Minutes)

Balance last report=\$ _____

Receipts =\$ _____

Disbursements =\$ _____

Balance on hand =\$ _____

Discussion on Treasurer’s Report:

Presentation of Bills

\$ _____ to _____ For _____

\$ _____ to _____ For _____

\$ _____ to _____ For _____

\$ _____ to _____ For _____

Introduction of Guests—any non-Auxiliary member guest shall not be allowed to enter the room until the Treasurer’s Report and Presentation of Bills has concluded.

Name _____

Name _____

Name _____

Name _____

Reports of Committees – Standing and Special

Program Chairmen

Veterans & Family Support Report

Chm.

Americanism Report

Chm.

Auxiliary Outreach Report

Chm.

Buddy Poppy/VFW National Home Report

Chm.

Historian/Media Relations Report

Chm.

Hospital Report

Chm.

Legislative Report

Chm.

Membership Report

Chm.

Mentoring for Leadership Report

Chm.

Scholarships

Chm.

Youth Activities

Chm.

Chaplain Report

Chaplain

Unfinished Business

New Business

1. Motion by _____

Second by _____

Motion Carried _____

Motion Defeated _____

2. Motion by _____

Second by _____

Motion Carried _____

Motion Defeated _____

3. Motion by _____

Second by _____

Motion Carried _____

Motion Defeated _____

4. Motion by _____

Second by _____

Motion Carried _____

Motion Defeated _____

Additional Notes:

Report of Trustees and Action Thereon (Motion to Pay Bills Presented)

Motion by _____ Second by _____

Motion _____

Motion Carried _____ Motion Defeated _____

Suggestions for the Good of the Order

Announcements/Calendar Reminders:

Meeting Closing Time: _____ Next Meeting Date: _____

Respectfully submitted,

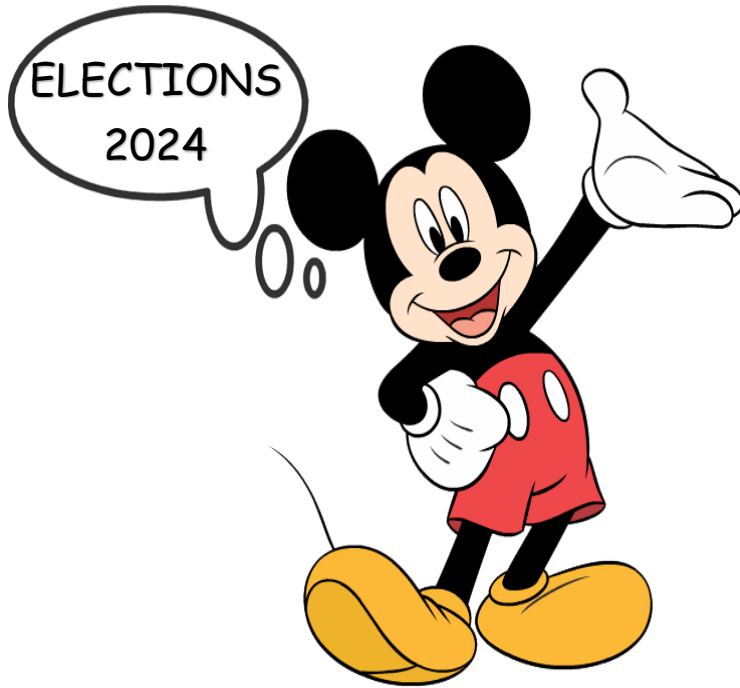
_____, Secretary

Date Approved _____

Date Approved with Corrections _____

*Audited by: _____

Date _____



Planning Ahead for your "MUST DO's"

April is ELECTION OF OFFICERS
under New Business!

Once ALL your offices are filled,
the paper trail begins.

MICKEY LIKES TO PLAN AHEAD!

- Hold Elections at the April Auxiliary business meeting.
- Install 2024-2025 Auxiliary Officers at the May Auxiliary business meeting or a special meeting.
- The Installation Report **must be** completed and emailed/mailed to Department Secretary immediately upon completion of installation.
- Delegates are to be elected for DISTRICT, DEPARTMENT and NATIONAL CONVENTIONS at the April Auxiliary meeting.
- Auxiliary must pay delegate fee for ALL delegates to the Department Convention. If not, no voting privileges at the Department Convention. Your Auxiliary will be in arrears!
- Lists of Delegates and Alternates are to be sent to the District Secretary, Department Secretary and National Secretary or, for National, entered online (www.vfwauxiliary.org - MALTA login).
- There are no District Delegate fees.
- There are Department Delegate fees for the Auxiliary President and for each Delegate.
- There is only a registration fee that needs to be paid to National to register for packet pick-up at the National Convention. Registration for packet pick-up is separate from Delegates registration.
- **ALL** (ALL means ALL) **Auxiliaries** are to be installed prior to the convening of the Department Convention.