



## AUXILIARY/DISTRICT SECRETARY

*Congratulations to all! Welcome new Secretaries!* It is an honor to be appointed by your President to serve as Secretary for your Auxiliary or District. 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 (President) but also the Officers, Program Chairmen, and Members. You are the right-hand man/woman to your entire VFW Auxiliary or District.

Your Role as Secretary may include many duties or little duties depending on your President. No two Presidents are the same. If you follow my lead, you will be there for him/her every step of the way should they need your assistance. There's a reason that the President picked you as his or her Secretary - they trust your judgment.

*Libby DallaTezza*  
Department Secretary 2020-2025  
VFW Auxiliary - Maryland  
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[www.vfwauxmd.org](http://www.vfwauxmd.org)

## 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 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.

#### **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 4)



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](http://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

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# WHY HAVE MINUTES?

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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
      - 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.

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 1234

# Planning ahead...

- Hold Elections at the April Auxiliary business meeting under New Business!
- Install 2025-2026 Officers immediately following elections or no later than the May business meeting or at a special meeting.
- The Installation Report **must be** completed and emailed/mailed to the Department Secretary immediately upon completion of installation.
- **Delegates** will be elected for DISTRICT, DEPARTMENT and NATIONAL CONVENTIONS no later than the April Auxiliary meeting.
- District delegates are to be sent to the District Secretary. There are no District Delegate fees.
- Delegates to the Department Convention will be sent to the Department Treasurer with the proper Delegate fee. Auxiliaries must pay the delegate fee for the Auxiliary President and ALL delegates to the Department Convention. If not, there are no voting privileges at the Department Convention. Your Auxiliary will be in arrears!
- Delegates and Alternates to the National Convention are entered online at [www.vfwauxiliary.org](http://www.vfwauxiliary.org) or sent to the Department Secretary to enter. PLEASE DO NOT SEND TO NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS!!!
- For National Convention... There is only a registration fee that needs to be paid for packet pick-up at the National Convention. **Registration for packet pick-up is separate from Delegates registration.**
- **ALL Auxiliaries are to be installed prior to the convening of the Department Convention.**