

Antigonish Diocesan Council



"Care for Our Common Home"

TO: Parish Council Secretary
FROM: Anne McCormick, Antigonish Diocesan Secretary
DATE: October 19, 2019
MEMO: # 1 (2019-2021)
CC: Parish Council Presidents, Diocesan Officers, Provincial Secretary (for distribution to provincial counterpart), Life Members (upon request)

Sisters in the League,

"One of the cornerstones of good written communication is the clear, concise expression of ideas or information. The Recording Secretary, through good written communication, is an important contributor to the history of her council."

Executive Handbook 2014

One of the responsibilities of the secretary is to maintain and bring a "Motions Book" to all meetings. The Motions Book becomes part of the archived records of the particular council. Reference to a Motions Book is found in the National Manual of Policy and Procedure 2019, page 74 and also in the Handbook for Secretaries 2005, page 5.

A Motions Book is usually a binder or notebook which includes information such as the date of the meeting, the exact wording of the motion, and the full names of members who moved and seconded the motion. Motions may be numbered or categorized by topic or standing committee as per the preference of the secretary.

A motion must be worded and recorded clearly and precisely so that there is no guesswork when action is taken later. For this purpose a "Motion Form" is used at diocesan, provincial and national meetings and is especially useful for unexpected motions. Members moving and seconding the motion record their names, the name of their council and the exact wording of the motion. A written motion form handed to the president assists her in stating the exact wording of a motion prior to voting and provides the secretary with a copy for writing correct minutes. (Parliamentary Procedure, 1992, page 29). Parish councils can each decide whether or not motion forms would be helpful to them. A sample motion form is included below.

I can recall years ago as parish council president taking the time to read through several years of minutes trying to find a motion which had been made years earlier and which was related to an issue raised at one of our meetings. No one could be sure of the details of the initial motion and we needed this information in order to make an informed decision. I spent a lot of time reading through years of minutes to find the motion; it was very time consuming and most certainly not an effective use of my time. It is easy to see how this can be avoided by the use of a “Motions Book” where motions are recorded separately and not buried within minutes.

Accurately recorded and maintained motions, like minutes, record council decisions for present and future reference. Through the use of a Motions form and a Motions Book, the Recording Secretary clearly and concisely contributes to the history of her council.

May Our Lady of Good Counsel guide us as we share our gifts in service for others.

Anne McCormick

Antigonish Diocesan Secretary

Sample Motion Form	
Moved by (full name) _____	from (council) _____ that
.....	
.....	
.....	
.....	
.....	
Seconded by (full name) _____	from (council) _____
Signature _____	
Signature _____	