**Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area**

**Guidelines for Committee Minutes**

**GOAL: The efficient creation of committee records that reflect the committee’s actions and therefore become the institutional memory for future generations.**

Each Committee has its own particular personality, culture, context, and style, and the minutes of your committee meetings should reflect the individuality of your committee and its members. As a result, the notes or minutes of one committee may look different and contain different content from the notes or minutes of another committee. *THAT IS ABSOLUTELY FINE.*

We encourage and support each committee to create records that reflect the needs and desires of the committee, and we have no need or desire to impose requirements on any committee in that regard. We do, however, have some tips for you to consider as your committee creates a record of its work. This Guide is offered to:

* Make your record keeping easier by helping you create a template to use
* Identify what items should be reflected in your committee’s notes/minutes to inform future committee leaders and members about your work, or because they are constitutionally required (*e.g*., open/close with prayer).
* Help the presbytery office staff to provide you with the resources and information you need
* Communicate the tasks or follow-up work that your committee requests the presbytery office staff to accomplish

**THE “SHOULDS”**

The minutes/notes from a committee meeting should include:

1. Date, time, place of the meeting
2. Names of the committee members, noting who is present/absent; declaration of quorum
3. Name of the moderator/chair
4. Meeting is opened & closed with prayer
5. Approval of the meeting agenda/docket
6. Approval of the minutes from the past meeting(s)
7. All motions and amendments (if any), and whether the motions pass or fail.

The minutes should be interesting, with enough detail to inform future committee chairs and members about the committee’s work, decisions and actions. Since committee membership changes from year to year, the minutes or meeting notes become the institutional memory of the committee’s work under your leadership; this information is often irretrievable from other sources.

The minutes/notes from a committee meeting should be transmitted to the presbytery office for file retention and to keep staff informed.

**IT IS HELPFUL IF…**

* It is helpful for the minutes/notes to include information regarding who on the committee will follow up or be responsible for actions/work items. This will assist in the creation of the agenda for the next meeting and will serve as a reminder to the committee members about the tasks and responsibilities they assume after the meeting.
* If resources, information, support or tasks are requested of the presbytery office/staff, it is helpful to expressly note this **(in BOLD type, for example, so that the staff can easily identify what is requested)**.

*Best practice: Include a note about the request in your email when submitting the report to the presbytery office in addition to including the request in the minutes, particularly if the item requires immediate attention.* *Follow up if you do not receive confirmation from the presbytery staff.*

The office/staff wants to be helpful to you and supportive of your committee’s work. By standardizing the way the staff receives your requests for assistance, we hope to better coordinate our efforts to insure that you receive what you need, when you need it.

* It is helpful for the minutes to identify the items your committee will Recommend, Report and Announce to the presbytery in the committee’s report to presbytery. This will make it easier for you to write your reports without inadvertently omitting anything.
* It is helpful for the minutes/notes to identify whether and how each item/action relates to the presbytery’s current priorities (supporting congregations; equipping leaders) and/or to the themes set by the Moderator. This reinforces the bonds of community, our shared values, and the importance of your committee’s work in the life of the presbytery. It also assists the stated clerk in planning the docket for the stated meetings.