

## **INTRODUCTION**

The lodge secretary is in charge of keeping the important day to day operations of the lodge running smoothly. The secretary is responsible for helping to organize lodge meetings, order supplies and keep accurate, organized and accessible lodge records.

This position is the primary communicator between the lodge, its officers and members, Sons of Norway Headquarters and outside organizations.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The lodge secretary is responsible for the following:

The secretary assists with the administration of lodge meetings, serving as the “right hand” to the president and sharing the responsibility for ensuring that meetings move quickly and smoothly.

Prior to the meeting, the lodge secretary:

- Helps the president choose the order of business.
- Informs the president of any unfinished business that needs to be addressed prior to the meeting.
- Discusses with the president which recently received communications should be shared with the membership.

At each meeting, the secretary should bring reference documents in case they are needed. These documents include the local lodge bylaws, the standing rules, the accepted order of business, the minutes of previous meetings, and a list of all standing committees and any special committees.

## **Taking Minutes**

The task traditionally associated with the office of secretary is the recording of meeting minutes. The minutes should be unbiased and brief. Personal opinions and discussions should not be included. The minutes should include:

- A general statement detailing the kind of meeting (regular or special), lodge name and number, and the date, place and time of the meeting.
- Roll call, taken verbally or silently, of those in attendance.
- Presentation of the minutes from the previous meeting for approval, along with a notation of their approval or any correction(s). (Once approved, the

minutes should be distributed to the membership as a handout, in the lodge newsletter, in an email or in the members-only section of the lodge website.)

- Report of received communications to the membership, if any.
- Notation of any special lodge events or awards.
- Report of action taken on any unfinished business.
- Record all new business undertaken by the membership.
- Report of action taken on expenses presented for approval by the treasurer and/or a summary of treasurer's report of expenses paid. This includes a statement covering the financial reports of the financial secretary and treasurers.
- Record of pertinent information presented during "Remarks for the good of the order," including those made by visiting dignitaries (such as district or international officers) and a summary of any entertainment.
- A statement indicating the time of adjournment and the date, place and time of the next meeting.

### **Handling Lodge Correspondence**

An important task of the lodge secretary is conducting the official correspondence of the lodge, both incoming and outgoing. The secretary is responsible for disseminating to the membership any significant information received by the lodge and promptly facilitating any required responses. The lodge secretary is also in charge of mailing any official correspondence from the lodge to members, other lodges, dignitaries or outside organizations.

### **Ordering Supplies**

The secretary orders the majority of the supplies for the lodge, both through Headquarters (Sons of Norway specific materials) and other sources\* (usually office supplies).

\*When ordering promotional/logoed items from a vendor, please be aware that the Sons of Norway emblem and name have been registered and trademarked in the United States, Canada and Norway. No lodge or person has the right to use the name or emblem without first obtaining the consent of the International Board.

### **Submitting Lodge Officer Update (D63) Information**

Every November, local lodges hold their elections for new officers for the upcoming year. To ensure the correct posting on the Sons of Norway's website and listing in the district directory, it is vital that election results are relayed promptly by the lodge secretary.

Elections results, along with any changes in meeting information, can be reported via the secretary's Member Profile page on [www.sonsofnorway.com](http://www.sonsofnorway.com). Otherwise, a D63/Lodge Officer Update form can be downloaded from the site as a PDF, or a personalized paper D63 form can be requested from Membership Services at Sons of Norway Headquarters. PDF or paper forms should be completed and returned by postal mail, by email, or by fax to Membership Services.

Updated information will not appear on the Sons of Norway website until mid-January. Officer mailings before this time will go to the prior year's officers.

### **Tracking Fraternal and Community Events for the AFA**

As a member of the American Fraternal Alliance (AFA), Sons of Norway is asked to provide information about the overall number of events, hours and monies our lodges dedicate to community and fraternal services each year. Reporting this information is vital because it helps Sons of Norway retain its tax-exempt status.

The lodge secretary is charged with regularly tracking fraternal and community events sponsored by the lodge, along with the associated volunteer hours. They can use the AFA worksheets or record the events and hours using the [FraternalGive.org](http://FraternalGive.org) website. At the end of the year, event and hours totals are submitted on the AFA Year End Report as part of the Lodge Achievement Program. Or, if tracked on [FraternalGive.org](http://FraternalGive.org), they are computed by Membership Services and no paper form is necessary.

The secretary is not responsible for reporting fraternal and community monies to Headquarters, as that is noted on the D17 Financial Statement.

### **Lodge Achievement (LA) Program**

In the fall, the updated versions of the forms for the LA Program are available to download from [www.sonsofnorway.com](http://www.sonsofnorway.com). These forms are the:

- Lodge Achievement (LA) form
- Family Lodge of the Year (FLOY) form,
- AFA Year End Report.

The LA and FLOY forms can also be filled out and submitted online. The AFA Year End Report only needs to be submitted if the lodge has not been recording events and volunteer hours using [FraternalGive.org](http://FraternalGive.org). The secretary is responsible for completing and submitting these forms, with assistance from the lodge board.

Scores on the LA form are used to determine Gold, Silver and Bronze Merit awards, and consideration for District and/or International Small or Large Lodge of the Year plaques. The yearly winners are announced at the biennial conventions.

Lodges that score highly on the FLOY form are considered for District Family Lodge of the Year plaques. These are awarded at the district biennial conventions. There is no international version of this award.

### **Keeping and preserving secretarial records**

The lodge secretary is the custodian of all secretarial records, including meeting minutes, correspondence and other important documents in either paper or electronic formats. At the end of one's tenure, all documents should be transferred to the new lodge secretary.

### **CONCLUSION**

The lodge secretary is an active contributor to Sons of Norway at all levels. The secretary serves in a crucial role by helping the lodge president organize lodge meetings, recording lodge business, supervising all lodge communications, completing important administrative forms for Sons of Norway headquarters, and serving as the guardian of secretarial documents.