

## Secretary Seminar August 10 and 11, 2024

A conversation between two Branch Secretaries.

1. We just had our monthly Executive Meeting and I've got to make sure the minutes of that meeting are ready to be passed by the General Membership. *(Incorrect)*
  - **Officers Manual May 2024 – Section A – The Branch, Branch Meetings, Meetings, Page 20**
    1. The General Meeting is the senior authority of the Branch.
    2. The Executive Committee is the administrative body of the Branch.
    3. The Executive Committee reports to the governing body for approval of its activities.
    4. The method of reporting is through minutes of meetings.
  - Adoption, accepting, receiving of minutes is normally carried out by the body initiating the minutes. However, when reporting to a senior body, minutes (reflecting action taken) are presented to the senior body. It is mandatory that the minutes of a Branch Executive Committee meeting be presented to the next Branch General Meeting for the knowledge and oversight of the senior authority.
  - General Membership does not pass Executive Minutes, the Executive does.
  - Executive Minutes are read, posted or distributed, however the Branch sees fit, to ensure the General Membership has them as an FYI and insight into the activities of the Executive Committee.
2. On Tuesday, Lois, our Branch President decided to go golfing the next day, the day of our General Meeting so I had to send out emails and put a notice on the bulletin board moving the meeting from Wednesday to Friday. *(Incorrect)*
  - **GBLO November 18, 2023 – Article IX – Branches - Notifications Re Meetings of The Branch, Page 21**
    - 918. (1) A Meeting Notification shall be communicated to every Member of the Branch in good standing for receipt at least seven (7) days in advance of each General Meeting and Annual General Meeting, if scheduled for a day and time other than that specified in their Branch Regulations.
    - 918 (8) All reasonable means and efforts must be made by the Branch to notify all Members when any scheduled Meeting of the Branch is cancelled and/or rescheduled due to exigent circumstances and the required Meeting Notification cannot be completed by the prescribed means and within the time periods contained herein.
    - See entire Article 918. for more info. re other meeting notifications, communication methods, etc.
  - **GBLB November 18, 2023 – Article VIII – Meetings, Page 44**
    - 802. (2) A Meeting Notification, as stipulated elsewhere in the By-Laws, shall be required when any Meeting of the Branch is cancelled and/or rescheduled from its original time as provided under their Branch Regulations.
3. My Executive are complaining because I've given them a deadline to send me their written and signed committee reports before our General Meetings. *(Acceptable)*
  - **GBLB November 18, 2023 – Article VI – Committees, Page 41**
    - 607. All reports of Committees shall be presented in writing and those of:
      - (1) Standing Committees must be signed by the Chair or Acting Chair.
      - (2) Special Committees must be signed by all Members who concur with the report.
      - (3) Minority reports of Special Committees must be signed by those Members who do not concur in the report and the report shall indicate that its existence is acknowledged by the majority of Members of the Committee.
  - Not to say an oral report or submission of a report won't be accepted on the day of
  - What is not acceptable is a "no report" meeting after meeting – a chair must have done something.
  - We do a lot by email now, personally I download and keep a copy of the submitted report in an applicable folder and then amalgamate the reports as a handout to have consistent fonts and less paper.

4. I don't bother with an Order of Business or Agenda; the Presiding Chair should know what they need to do.

*(Incorrect)*

- **Officers Manual May 2024 – Section A – The Branch, Secretary, Page 15**
  - Be familiar with GBLB, Branch Regulations, GBL and GBLO to the extent that they can turn to any given section for reference. The Secretary should prepare a written agenda and review same with the President prior to the meeting.
- **Officers Manual May 2024 – Section A – The Branch, Branch Meetings, Order of Business, Page 19**
  - The Order of Business is a list of items of business to be transacted at a meeting and should be prepared by the Secretary. An Amendment to the By-Laws in 2015 resulted in the requirement that Branches create Orders of Business for a number of different scenarios and include as Attachment Forms to their Branch Regulations. The purpose of the Order of Business is to ensure that no business is overlooked and to retain consistency.
  - Note: Refer to GBLB Sections 804, 806 and 808 or your Branch Regulations for the Order of Business for General, Annual, Special General Meetings etc.
- **GBLB November 18, 2023 – Article VIII – Meetings, Page 44**
  - 804. The following Order of Business shall govern at all General Meetings unless Branch Regulations make provision for variation:
    - (1) The following Order of Business shall govern at all General Meetings unless otherwise specified:
      1. Call to Order by the Presiding Officer;
      2. Opening Ceremony as determined by the Ritual approved by Dominion Command;
      3. Motion to deviate from the Agenda;
      4. Introduction of Guests;
      5. Welcoming Ceremony for new Members;
      6. Admission of transferred or reinstated Members or both;
      7. Minutes of the last General Meeting and any intervening Executive and Special General Meetings;
      8. Business arising from the Minutes and unfinished business;
      9. President's Report;
      10. Treasurer's Report;
      11. Correspondence;
      12. Reports of Standing Committees;
      13. Reports of Optional Standing Committees;
      14. Reports of Standalone Positions;
      15. Reports of Special Committees;
      16. Motions or Special Business of which Notice was previously given;
      17. General and new Business including matters respecting the welfare of the Legion and the Branch;
      18. Tabling of Notice(s) of Motion(s);
      19. Motion to adjourn; and
      20. Closing Ceremony as determined by the Ritual approved by Dominion Command.
  - See also 806. Special General Meetings, and 808. Annual General Meetings & Order of Election.
- An example of an agenda has been provided for your reference.

5. I picked up my Secretary pay at the Branch before our Executive Meeting yesterday which made me happy. Oh, that reminds me I made a motion at that Executive Meeting to increase bar prices. *(Incorrect)*
- **GBLB – Memorandum Re The General By-Laws for Branches and Branch Regulations, Page 35**
    - (2) Some Branches pay their Secretary and/or Treasurer (or Secretary-Treasurer), while others do not. Regardless, the positions are considered to be Officers of the Branch, and may be voting Members of the Executive Committee, if unpaid. If paid, they do not have the authority to move or second motions or vote on any business at Executive Meetings. However, they do retain the aforementioned rights as Branch Members and may exercise those rights at General Meetings.
    - Note: Increasing bar prices is something that the Executive Committee has control over and motions at their meeting, it is then an FYI to the general body – the general body does not vote on this.
6. We don't get much incoming mail by Canada Post anymore but what I get I consider as mail of the Branch and open it. *(Correct with an unofficial caveat)*
- **on.legion.ca → Forms and Manuals → Leadership Development → Branch: Officer's Information and Sample Outlines → Secretary Pamphlet**
    - The Branch Secretary receives and replies to all correspondence, completes questionnaires, corresponds with all levels of Command and other agencies for the business of the Branch. Properly handled correspondence will go a long way to solving the communication problems.

In order to do this, you must have the co-operation of your Executive Committee. All incoming mail is the business of the Branch, not just one individual. If mail is received at the home address of the Branch President or a Branch Chair, they should give a copy to the Branch Secretary for inclusion on the Executive Agenda.
  - **GBLB November 18, 2023 – Article VII – Duties of Officers and Executives, Page 42**
    - 703. (1) (d) Bring all correspondence, as soon as practicable, to the attention of the President or other appropriate Officer;
  - **GBLO November 18, 2023 – Article IX – Branches, Page 20**
    - 913. (1) Each Branch shall appoint the following Chairs who shall be Members of the Executive Committee of the Branch and shall be the official recipients of all correspondence relating to their respective Committees:
      - Leadership Development;
      - Legion Seniors;
      - Membership;
      - Poppy;
      - Public Relations;
      - Sports;
      - Track and Field;
      - Veterans Services;
      - Youth Education
  - **Officers Manual May 2024 – Section A – The Branch, Secretary, Page 15**
    - All correspondence received pertaining to the business of the Branch is drawn to the attention of the President, Committee Chairs, appropriate Officer or placed on the Executive agenda file.
  - Good idea to date stamp incoming mail.
    - Email is automatically date and time stamped.
  - A suggestion: Keep track of mail so that you have a reference of what came in.
  - **Unofficial caveat:** It's illegal under the Canada Post Corporation Act to open someone else's mail.
    - This has caused issues within some Branches who believe mail addressed to an individual should only be opened by them and as such put that into place.
    - It should be rare that mail is address to an individual vs. a chair, e.g. Membership.
7. I presented a Notice of Motion to amend our Branch Regulations at our General Meeting on Thursday and Frank was angry at me because I refused to discuss the proposed changes. *(Correct)*
- **GBLO November 18, 2023 – Article IX – Branches - Notifications Re Meetings of The Branch, Page 21**

- 918. (9) Meeting notification does not replace the requirement to provide Notice of Motion for any item that requires a significant financial decision or is a major decision of the Branch. Meeting notification may however include a Notice of Motion. A Notice of Motion is presented and tabled at one General, Special General or Annual General meeting of the Branch. The motion is then made at the next General, Special General or Annual General meeting of the Branch at which time it shall be discussed and voted on.
  - **Officers Manual May 2024 – Section A – The Branch, Notices of Motion, Page 21**
    - Any item that requires a significant financial decision or is a major decision of the Branch should be by way of a Notice of Motion. It is also mandatory respecting the surrender of a Branch Charter, introduction or amendment of Branch Regulations, borrowing, leasing and the sale of property. The Notice of Motion is presented and tabled at one Meeting of the Branch and the motion is made at the next Meeting of the Branch. The Chair also has the authority to defer a motion to the next meeting and thus allow the initial presentation of a motion to become a Notice of Motion.
    - The procedure is as follows:
      - 1) A Member presents a Notice of Motion at a General Meeting of the Branch.
      - 2) The motion is not seconded or discussed, and it is tabled to the next Meeting of the Branch.
      - 3) A copy of the Notice of Motion may be posted on the Branch bulletin board (regulations and regulation amendments) and may also be communicated to all Members in good standing (surrender of charter, mortgaging, leasing and sale of property – GBO Section 918. (4)). These aspects may be covered in the Notice of a Special General Meeting, if applicable. The notice should specify what is proposed and the date and time of the General Meeting at which the motion will be discussed.
      - 4) The motion is presented and seconded at the next General Meeting or a Special General Meeting (which has been called and the details of which appeared in the notice mailed to the Members).
      - 5) A 2/3 majority is required for regulations, mortgaging, leasing, sale of property and surrender of the Branch charter. An amendment to the motion does not require a 2/3 vote. It is only the main motion, as originally made or as amended, to which the 2/3 rule applies.
  - **Rules of Procedure for Legion Meetings January 2022 – Classification of Motions, Page 14**
    - NOTE: NOTICE OF MOTION Is notice of a motion given at a meeting to be presented to the next meeting of the same body. Its use should be provided for in the appropriate by-laws. The Notice of Motion on presentation does not require a seconder and is not debatable. If the motion is introduced at the next meeting, normal rules apply.
  - Notices of Motion can be found:
    - on.legion.ca → Forms & Manuals → Committee Forms → BCR Notice of Motion
    - on.legion.ca → Forms & Manuals → Committee Forms → BPPM Notice of Motion
    - on.legion.ca → Forms & Manuals → Committee Forms → BRF Notice of Motion for Branch Regulation Amendments
    - on.legion.ca → Forms & Manuals → Committee Forms → BRF Notice of Motion for Branch Regulations
    - on.legion.ca → Forms & Manuals → Legion Officers Manual → Notice of Motion - Generic
8. Sometimes members get me confused with their motions so as long as I show in the minutes that it was moved by the person, seconded by another person and carried I figure I'm good. *(Not 100% correct)*
- **Rules of Procedure for Legion Meetings January 2022 – Classification of Motions, Page 14 (also see Page 15 to 25 for additional information)**
    - Privileged Motions: Takes precedence due to important, e.g. to adjourn.
    - Subsidiary Motions: Amends/delays action of a motion, e.g. to table a motion.
    - Main Motions: Introduces new business, e.g. donate \$ to.

- Incidental Motions: Related to business already being considered, e.g. choose a voting method.
- Miscellaneous Motions: Reconsider/rescind a motion, e.g. cancel previous motion not executed.
- Not all motions require a seconder, e.g. election nomination.
- Ensure there is enough detail to recollect what the motion is about, e.g. donation of funds – don't simply say donated \$500. Detail \$500 was donated to March of Dimes.
- Note: Generally, the Executive Committee will take recommendations to the general body to be motioned. Except for things like increasing bar prices or wages – that they control and motion at their Executive Meeting.
  - E.g. Recommendation that we look at replacing our air conditioning unit, 3 quotes received.
- Robert's Rules of Order is in place for things not covered/providing the appropriate authority in the Rules of Procedure at Legion Meetings.

9. Our elections are coming up and I know Lewis wants to be on the executive but he will be away. I told him not to worry because as Secretary I would just put his name forward. *(Incorrect)*

- **GBL May 2023 – Article 111 – Qualification to Vote and/or Hold Office, Page 6**
  - b. No person shall be nominated for any office in the Legion unless present or having signified in writing a willingness to accept such office and signed by a member in good standing.
- **Officers Manual May 2024 – Section A – The Branch, Qualification to vote or hold office, Page 5**
  - No person shall be nominated for any office in the Legion unless present or having signified in writing a willingness to accept such office and signed by a member in good standing - GBL Section 111. b.
- **Officers Manual May 2024 – Section A – The Branch, Guide to Nomination and Election of Branch Officers, Page 27**
  - To be eligible for election, a nominee must be in attendance at the Election Meeting or have signified their intention in writing to the Branch Secretary, prior to the meeting, with respect to the office for which they have been nominated.

10. Our VSO resigns every other month but we know he comes back; I don't bother providing Branch Directory updates. *(Incorrect)*

- First, my opinion is that the President needs to look at having a stable VSO or any chair for that matter.
- Second, its important directories are kept updated with accurate contact information for all chairs and especially when it comes to VSO.
  - The ability to contact the VSO immediately in times of crisis is vital, a Veteran in need cannot wait for someone to decide if they are the chair today.
  - Put a note on your calendar to check your directories on a monthly or regular basis and update as necessary, ensuring you update all areas, e.g. Ontario Command.
  - Form can be found:
    - on.legion.ca → Forms & Manuals → Committee Forms → Branch Information Form – Fillable

11. Our Branch office was a mess so I cleaned it up on Tuesday and found minutes from 1999. That is so long ago I thought about throwing them out but changed my mind. *(Correct)*

- **Officers Manual May 2024 – Section A – The Branch, Retention of Records, Page 54**

<b>MINUTE BOOKS</b>	All written and Electronic formats – ensure that the electronic formats are kept up to date with available technology.	Permanent
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12. The Article IIIs at our Branch are getting crazy, I received one against a member and I told the President I'm no longer responsible for sending out a copy of the complaint to the person complained about. *(Incorrect)*

- **GBL – Article III, Hearing Procedures, Page 32**
  - 308. a. In all complaints the Secretary of the branch or Executive Director of the Command shall immediately bring it to the attention of the President and acknowledge receipt to the

complainant as either being properly lodged or not as determined by the President. The Secretary of the branch or Executive Director of the Command shall serve (see Subsection 301.i.) a copy of the properly lodged complaint on the member against whom the complaint was lodged within seven days.

- **Officers Manual May 2024 – Section E – Complaint Procedure – Handling a Complaint at Branch Level, Page 4**
  - 2. In all Complaints the Secretary **shall immediately** bring it to the attention of the President and **acknowledge receipt** to the complainant as **either** being properly lodged or not as determined by the President. The Secretary shall serve (see Subsection 301.i.) a copy of the **properly lodged Complaint** on the Member against whom the Complaint was lodged **within seven days**.
- Ensure you read up on how Article IIIs are handled as there are differences between what stays within the Branch and what goes to Ontario Command, i.e. complaints against the President go to Ontario Command.

13. Did you hear that Branch over in Smalltown appointed a Recording Secretary? Good for them. *(Correct)*

- **Officers Manual May 2024 – Section A – The Branch, Secretary, Page 14**
  - The Branch Secretary will attend all regular and Executive Committee meetings and keep a complete and accurate account of all business transacted. **Note:** A Branch may by a Branch Regulation, appoint a Recording Secretary or Correspondence Secretary, which would be under the direction of the Branch Secretary.

#### **Additional Tips:**

- Ensure you back up your minutes and any other work
- Keep a list of motions per meeting at the front of your minute book
- Use a recorder, if necessary, remember to let members know you are recording the meeting
- Use dates as naming conventions as it helps keep items in order, e.g. 2024-08-10 General Meeting Minutes
- Have the current manuals printed and available for members, ensure you have your own version
- Be mindful of email etiquette, e.g. don't reply all unless asked to do so
- Utilize templates, e.g. Branch letterhead, minutes etc.
- Check Branch Regulations and Clubhouse Rules for updates to keep them current
  - Branch Regulations can only be updated once per term
  - Branch Regulations are currently being looked at for revamping to make them easier
- Resignations must be in writing, presented at the next meeting and are effective when that meeting adjourns
- Don't forget the motions required in the June General Meeting, e.g.
  - Executive to carry on the business of the Branch for July and August if no General Meeting
  - Funds for VSO/Poppy Chairs to attend September Seminar
- Don't forget a motion to destroy ballots, if necessary, at the end of the Election Meeting
- Look for efficiencies, e.g. mail merge, mailing labels, distribution lists etc.
- Always have succession planning in mind
  - Don't hoard information
  - Be available to help those taking over your office, set up time to meet before hand off etc.
- Search "Secretary" in the manuals, you might be surprised to see the areas you touch or are a part of
- Be a Branch Ambassador setting the right examples in your dress and how you generally present yourself
- Always be willing to learn as well as learn from our mistakes
- Above all have fun!