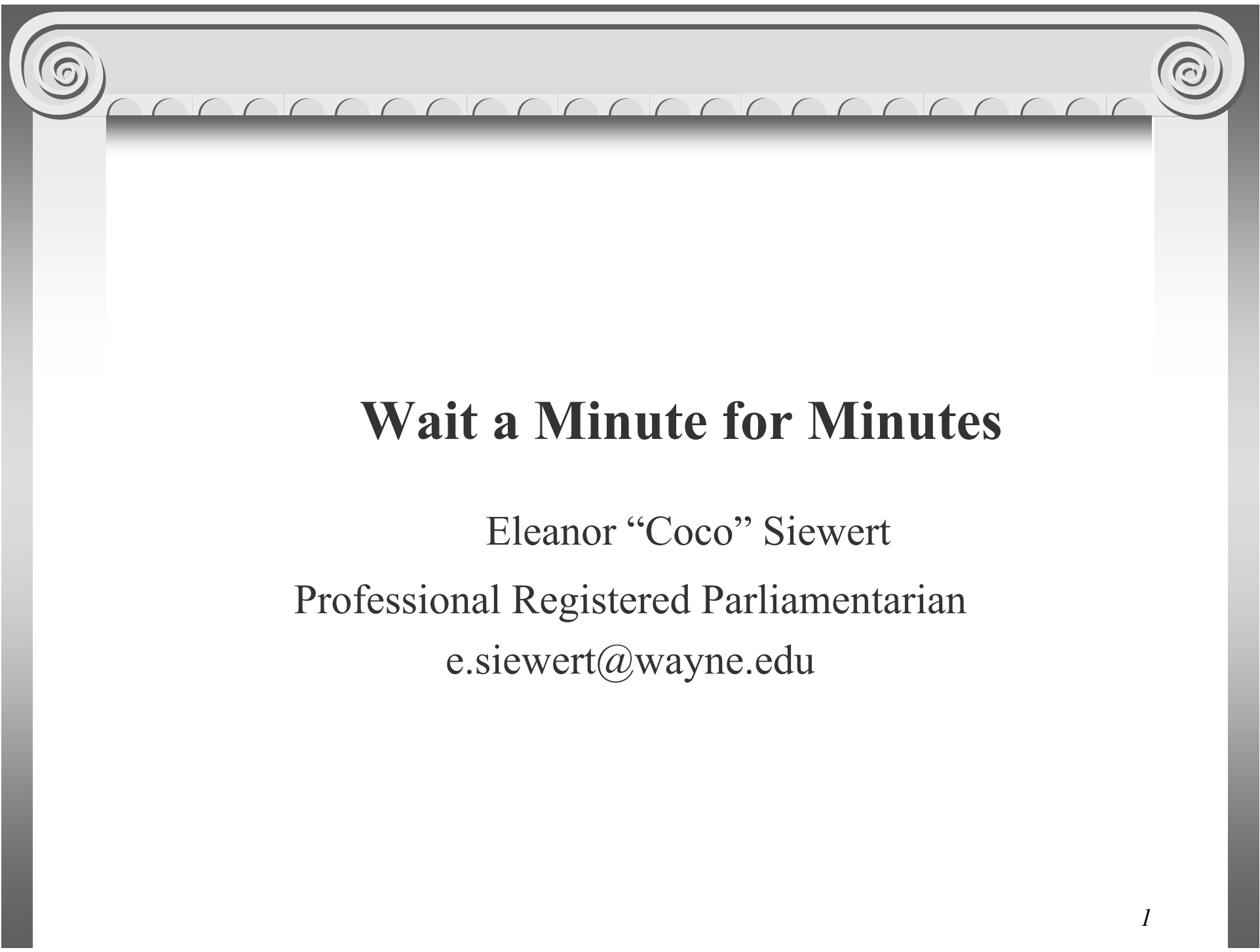




Wait a Minute for Minutes

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What Minutes Should Contain

- The official record of the proceedings of a deliberative assembly is usually called the “minutes”.
- Organizations develop certain practices related to minutes which become routine and in many cases are successful and in some cases can be improved.

What Minutes Should Contain

- *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* (RONR)(12th ed.) & *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised In Brief* (RONRIB) (3rd ed.) make recommendations.
- The Open Meetings Act (OMA) (Act 267 of 1976) has requirements about minutes for public bodies.
- RONR and the OMA partner with each other.

First Paragraph (RONR)

- Kind of meeting – i.e. regular, special, annual.
- Name of the organization.
- Time, date, and (unless always the same) place of the meeting.
- That the president (or chair) and secretary were present or names of substitutes.
- Whether the minutes of the previous meeting were approved/amended.

Body of Minutes (RONR)

- ✦ In general minutes should contain only what was done, not what was said. (p. 468)
- ✦ Separate paragraph for each subject matter.
- ✦ Notation that specific reports were given and related action, if any.

Recording Motions (RONR)

- The name of the marker of the motion, but not the seconder is recorded.
- The content of the motion is recorded exactly as it was worded when adopted.
- If amended, the amendments are included as part of the final wording.

Recording Motions (RONR)

- Whether the motion was adopted or lost “after debate,” “after amendment,” or “after debate and amendment.”
- Secondary motions when the main motion is carried over to another meeting, i.e., motion to postpone, refer to committee.

Recording Motions (RONR)

✦ Secondary motions needed for clarity, i.e., a roll call having been ordered, the tellers reported....

✦ Votes:

If counted, number of votes on each side.

Roll call votes, names of those voting on each side.

Recording Motions (RONR)

- Notices of motions to be considered at the next meeting.
- Points of Order and Appeals, whether sustained or lost, together with chair's reasons for ruling.

Last Paragraph

- The last paragraph should give the time of adjournment, the mover or and the adoption of the motion to adjourn.

Signature (RONR)

- Minutes should be signed by the secretary and, if the group wishes, the president.
- There is no need to include “respectfully submitted.”

Correction/Approval of Minutes

- Circulate minutes clearly labeled DRAFT.
- Corrections are made in the text of the minutes being approved.
- Minutes of the meeting at which the corrections are being made should merely indicate that the minutes were approved “as corrected.”

Requirements for Minutes (OMA)

- Minutes must be kept of all meetings.
- Minutes are public records open to public inspection and must be available for review and copying (except minutes of closed sessions).

Requirements for Contents (OMA)

- Date, time and place.
- Members present, members absent.
- Purpose or purposes for which a closed session is held.
- All roll call votes taken at the meeting.

Requirements for Minutes (OMA)

- Draft minutes must be available for public inspection within 8 business days of the meeting. Approved minutes must be available within 5 business days after the meeting at which they were approved.

Requirements for Minutes (OMA)

- ✦ Corrections must be made no later than the next meeting after the meeting to which they refer.
- ✦ Corrected minutes must show both the original entry and the correction.

Closed Meeting Minutes (OMA)

- Contents: Start and ending time; names of those present; subject of meeting; and any assignments.
- The public body may meet in closed session to approve the minutes of a closed session if the decision to do so is made in an open session of the public body.

Closed Meeting Minutes (OMA)

- The minutes may only be disclosed if required by court order in a civil action.
- The minutes may be destroyed one year and one day after approval of the minutes of the regular meeting at which the closed session was approved.

OMA Information Source

- The source of OMA material is Don Schmidt's chapter on OMA from *Local Government Law and Practice in Michigan*. The 19 chapter publication is by the Michigan Municipal League and the Michigan Association of Municipal Attorneys. Mr. Schmidt is a partner in the law firm of Miller Canfield Paddock and Stone.