Recording and Processing Minutes of Meetings of the TPNA Steering Committee

This is a generic description of the minutes-taking process for meetings of the TPNA Steering Committee, including annual meetings of the general membership. It can be altered to suit your own preferences or the prevailing circumstances.

Minutes-taking process:

1. During a Steering Committee meeting, record minutes. Ask for clarifications or summaries as required to ensure the minutes are accurate. Also ask for things to be repeated if you cannot keep up with the pace of the conversation. If necessary, interrupt what is being said to get the needed information.

2. As soon as possible after the meeting, transcribe the minutes into an electronic file, preferably with a version of software that anyone can read. Include in the text of the file the word "preliminary" or "draft" or the like so someone reading the file knows it is not a final, approved version of minutes.

3. Save the file in a meaningful folder on your hard drive. Give it a name that indicates it is a preliminary or draft version (example: filename_preliminary.doc). Back up files religiously!

4. Generate an e-mail message for the TPNA Steering Committee and attach the just-saved file to it. In the message, ask recipients to review the minutes and inform you of any omissions or other mistakes. Quote a short-time deadline to ensure that correspondence takes place while memories are still fresh. A week seems about right. Send the message.

5. If you receive feedback from the recipients:
   A. Make a copy of the original preliminary minutes file and give it a slightly different name to distinguish it from the first one. One way to do this is to add a number to the end of the file name (example: filename_preliminary2.doc).
   B. Edit the just-created/renamed file to incorporate any suggested changes and mark those changes in a way that is easy to see (highlighting, underlining, text color, strike-out, etc.). Whatever method you choose, use that same method all the time for consistency's sake.
   C. Save the file.

6. Give the Committee members a chance to see what changes were requested, using one of the following methods.

   - Repeat the e-mail distribution process, or

   - Print the both versions of the minutes and mark the changes in the second version if not already marked. Read the changes at the next Committee meeting.

7. In the Committee meeting, record additional changes (if any) requested by the Committee. The Committee will then approve the minutes, either as brought to the meeting or "with requested changes."

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8. Open the latest preliminary version of the minutes file and make permanent any changes requested by e-mail and during the meeting. Remove any identification of changes (highlighting, strike-outs, underlining, etc.). If the text of the minutes contains the word "preliminary" or something similar, remove that from the text. Add a phrase stating the date of approval of the minutes.

9. Save the file, then rename it by removing any words like "preliminary" or "awaiting approval" and adding the word "approved." Store the file with other approved minutes files.

10. Send an electronic copy of the approved minutes to the webmasters. One of the webmasters will use that file to create a PDF file for posting on the TPNA website.

REV LEVEL	DATE	REVISIONS
NEW	11 Jan 2015	Created file from a more detailed version written for my process.
a	16 Mar 2015	Made several changes for clarity's sake or to correct omissions.
b	27 Jun 2017	Shortened the introductory paragraph.