

The Catholic Women's League of Canada
Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council
Secretary Communique #2 – Fall 2014

Suzanne S., Secretary

There is nothing more important than reporting accurately. The manner which should be applied to minutes is one of gentleness, and kindness in maintaining true accuracy. An example of this type of kind communication is in using gentle words in reporting various “disagreements” that may occur at a meeting.

For example: Your September meeting is intended to prepare a calendar of events for your group. One of these events turns out to be a “traditional pie sale” for the Thanksgiving fund raiser. One or two of your members is not in favour of such a sale and propose an alternative for the council to try. Conversation goes back and forth with members saying they should stick with a fund raiser that is tried and true, why change something that works, why mess with tradition, etc., etc.

How would you report this in your minutes?

My recommendation is that you find the gentlest language to report this **discussion**. (Note the word discussion and **not argument!**) Your minutes might read as follows:

‘There was some lively discussion concerning the Thanksgiving Annual Pie Sale. After listening to several other suggestions as an alternative event, then hearing from members who preferred to carry on with the traditional Annual Thanksgiving Pie Sale, the president called for a show of hands in an effort to seek consensus regarding the pie sale. There were 17 ladies in attendance and 14 raised their hands in favour of the Pie Sale. The president suggested that we should consider the alternative ideas put forth for a fund raiser later on in the year. She agreed to discuss these ideas at the next meeting.’

This type of reporting would allow the membership resolution on the event being discussed and at the same time assist in planning a future event, making this particular discussion a win/win situation.

Wording is very important to effective communications. I truly recommend to all secretaries to choose their words well. That way, you can avoid hurt feelings, nasty confrontations, and many unnecessary negative results. Remember to be especially kind in the written word! The minutes stay in the council and serve as a record of your fine works. Be kind; be loving; be gentle – WE HAVE SEEN THE LORD!