

## Public Officials' Profile and Skills in Presiding Meetings, Writing Agenda, Minutes and Resolutions

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**Abstract** - Local legislation is effective for good governance. Legislators must be proficient in presiding meetings, drafting resolution, formulating agenda, taking down minutes and writing official communications. This study assesses public officials' profile in presiding meetings and in writing agenda, taking down minutes and drafting resolutions. The study used the descriptive design. Fish bowl technique determine 23 Village captains, their councilors, SK chairmen, secretaries and treasurers as respondents. Results revealed that most captains and councilors are male; most secretaries and treasurers are female. Majority are 50 years and below; Most are college graduates/ college level; first term. Councilors are reelected. Majority of the secretaries and treasurers are reappointed. Majority have attended one seminar on writing agenda/resolutions. Nearly all captains and secretaries can formulate agenda while majority of the councilors and treasurers cannot. Majority of the captains, councilors, and treasurers claim they cannot take down minutes and cannot draft resolutions. The study concludes that officials lack competence in presiding meetings and writing resolutions.

**Keywords** - Presiding Meetings, Writing Agenda Minutes Resolutions.

## INTRODUCTION

A barangay is the smallest local government unit in the Philippines and it is run by a captain, seven councilmen , one Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) chairman with the SK kagawads, the secretary, treasurer, tanods and health workers. All affairs are managed by the public officials as the governance of a barangay rests on the elected officials in the furtherance of the socio-cultural, economic and political developmental needs and aspirations of the inhabitants within its territorial jurisdiction.

Barangay legislators work for the deliberation, consultation, codification and consideration of all aspects that are geared towards development for the sustained capacity to achieve a better life. Better life means that citizens have higher life expectancy and higher quality of life regardless of age, sex, gender, religion or ethnicity. Local legislation is considered an effective tool for good governance and results in ordinances and resolutions that enable citizens to achieve a better life. It is effective if it contributes to the attainment of the community's shared vision and results in poverty reduction, gender equality, environmental protection, peace and unity, accountability and transparency of local officials, and active participation of citizens in social, economic and political transformation.

Barangay officials as local legislators are expected to be proficient in presiding meetings, in deliberating issues, drafting resolution, formulating agenda for the order of business, taking down minutes and in writing official communications more specifically on writing business letters.

An effective meeting serves a useful purpose which means that a desired outcome is achieved. Too often, people call a meeting to discuss something without really considering what the good outcome could be whether to arrive at a decision, to generate ideas, to get status report, to communicate something or to make plans. To help one determine the meeting's objectives, he has to complete this "At the close of the meeting, I want the group to...". With the end result clearly defined, he can plan the contents of the meeting and determine who needs to be present (<http://midtools.com/commskills/runningmeeting.htm>).

Keeping records of official discussions and decisions in an organized fashion is very important for Village officials and other civic leaders.

Anybody, whether officer or ordinary member of an organization should be skilled in taking down minutes of meetings. If nobody takes down minutes of the meeting, be it of small group or big group, then decisions and discussions made during that meeting are of no importance since it would turn out as hearsay and there is no evidence of what transpired during the meeting.

So, any official should learn how to write minutes of meetings. The decisions made on issues discussed during a meeting are crucial to the continued functioning of a business or organization. Therefore, keeping record of those discussions and decisions in an organized fashion is important (<http://www.gmanews.tv/story/120518/Village-officials-relearn-simp>). Brief and direct to the point minutes serve as snapshot of what transpires in a meeting ([http://www.umdnj.edu/ama/policy/how2\\_res.html](http://www.umdnj.edu/ama/policy/how2_res.html)).

Student government officers and even teachers and employees have difficulty in taking down minutes of meetings. However, trainings can develop the writer of minutes to capture the discussion of meetings, not to lead nor participate on the discussion and not to record every word being spoken but to get the gist of the discussion and take down notes to be summarized later.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This study attempts to 1.) describe the profile of the officials of Sogod; and 2.) determine how many officials could write agenda for the order of business in a meeting, take down minutes of a meeting, draft resolutions, write official communications and preside small group and big group meetings using parliamentary procedures.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This research is descriptive normative survey using 51.11% of the 45 barangays of Sogod. The 23 captains, 184 councilors including Sangguniang Kabataan chairmen, 23 secretaries, and 23 treasurers were the respondents. Fish bowl technique was used to determine which of the 45 were used as respondents where all the names of the 45 were written on rolled paper but only 23 pieces of rolled paper were picked.

Questionnaires given to every barangay consists of questions for sex, age, educational qualification, number of terms being elected/reelected or appointed/reappointed, number of seminars attended on writing minutes, resolutions, and number of other seminars attended on public speaking and other oral communication seminars. Further, same questionnaire gathers data if captains, councilors, secretaries and treasurers have the ability to write agenda for the order of business of meetings, take down minutes of meetings, draft resolutions, write official communication and preside small group and big group meetings using parliamentary procedures.

Percentages were used in the computation of data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Profile of Respondents

Majority (73.91%) of the captains are male; majority (61.96%) of the councilors and SK Chairmen are male; majority (65.22) of the secretaries are female; and nearly all (91.30%) of the treasurers are female.

Most (43.48%) of the captains are 41-50 years old; 58.69% of the councilors, 60.52% of the secretaries and 73.91% of the treasurers are 31-50 years old. Most (47.82%) of the captains, majority of the councilors, secretaries and treasurers are college graduates and college level.

Majority (65.21%) of the captains, 59.78% of the councilors, majority of the secretaries and treasurers are first term and second terms. More than half (65.22%) of the captains have not attended any seminar on public speaking and oral communications. More than three-fourths (80.43%) of the councilors, majority (73.91%) of the secretaries and 78.26% of the treasurers have not attended a seminar on public speaking and oral communication.

### Ability of Barangay Officials in Writing/Formulating Agenda of Meeting

In preparing agenda, Table 1 shows that 91.30% of the Captains claim that they can formulate agenda of meetings; 59.24% of the Councilors claim that they cannot; 100% of the secretaries claim that they can; while 56.52% of the treasurers believe they cannot. This result

is supported by Arong (2007) that of the Supreme Student Council Officers', only 39.33% claim they can formulate agenda for meetings.

In formulating agenda which keep the meeting running on target and on time, the priorities (or what absolutely must be covered), the results (what needs to accomplish at the meeting), the participants (who needs to attend the meeting for it to be successful), the sequence (in what order will he cover the topics), the timing (how much time will he spend on each topic), the date and time (when will the meeting take place); and the place (where will the meeting place) are to be considered.

Table 1. Barangay officials as to ability in formulating agenda of meetings

Officials	Yes F %	No F %	Total F %
Captain	21 91.30	2 8.70	23 100.00
Councilors	75 40.76	109 59.24	184 100.00
Secretary	23 100.00	0 0.00	23 100.00
Treasurer	10 43.48	13 56.52	23 100.00

### Taking Down the Minutes of Meetings

Table 2 unfolds that 65.22% of the captains claim they have no ability to take down minutes; 71.20% of the councilors believe they cannot; while 100% of the secretaries claim they can take down minutes; while 56.52% of the treasurers claim they cannot.

Secretaries' work is to take down minutes. Effective note taking is not recording every word being spoken but on getting the gist of the discussion and taking down notes to be summarized later.

Table 2. Barangay officials as to ability in taking down minutes of meetings

Officials	Yes F %	No F %	Total F %
Captain	8 4.78	2 8.70	23 100.00
Councilors	53 8.80	109 59.24	184 100.00
Secretary	23 00.00	0 0.00	23 100.00
Treasurer	10 3.48	13 56.52	23 100.00

### Drafting Resolutions

The most efficient way for Villages to write resolutions is to make a simple outline or list of premises for the WHEREAS clauses and a simple list of phrases for the RESOLVED clauses.

Table 3 shows the distribution of the ability of the barangay officials in drafting resolutions. The captains (69.57%) claim that they do not have the ability to draft resolutions; more than three-fourths of the councilors believe they cannot draft; the entire secretaries (100%) claim they can; but majority of the treasurers (65.22%) claim they cannot.

Table 3. Village officials as to skills in drafting resolutions

Officials	Yes F %	No F %	Total F %
Captain	7 30.43	16 69.57	23 100.00
Councilors	45 24.46	139 75.54	184 100.00
Secretary	23 100.00	0 0.00	23 100.00
Treasurer	8 34.78	15 65.22	23 100.00

## Writing Official Communications

Cursory conversation with barangay officials resulted to their admission that they lack the ability to write official communication such as business letters. Several times these officials come to SLSU English teachers to request them to draft a letter of request requesting SLSU for a seminar workshop in writing resolutions, and official communication as extension program of said university.

Table 4 presents that 56.52% of the captains claim that they are deficient in writing official communications as they are not equipped with the knowledge and skill in addition to their grammar deficiency in doing such; 55.43% of the councilors claim they cannot do the job with correctness and precision; 69.57% of the secretaries believe they are doing the job correctly; 69.57% of the treasurers claim they cannot do the job.

Table 4. Barangay officials as to ability in writing official communications.

Officials	Yes F %	No F %	Total F %
Captain	10 43.48	13 56.52	23 100.00
Councilors	82 44.57	102 55.43	184 100.00
Secretary	16 69.57	7 30.43	23 100.00
Treasurer	7 30.43	16 69.57	23 100.00

## Presiding Meeting Using Parliamentary Procedure

Anybody can call for a meeting even without following the order of business or even without formulated agenda. However, the presiding officer could go anywhere else or could just discuss any topic as it comes to his mind. The provisional agenda are to be presented, moved for approval and duly seconded so that the meeting has a guide. A meeting is effective if the meeting's planning, preparation, execution and follow-up are well-structured.

Table 5 shows that 100% of the captains claim that they preside

their meetings using parliamentary procedures; 72.28% of the councilors claim they do not have the ability to preside meetings using parliamentary procedures; 52.17% of the secretaries; and, 60.87% of the treasurers believe they cannot preside meetings.

Table 5. Barangay officials as to ability in presiding meetings using parliamentary procedures.

Officials	Yes F %	No F %	Total F %
Captain	23 100.00	0 0.00	23 100.00
Councilors	51 27.72	133 72.28	184 100.00
Secretary	11 47.83	12 52.17	23 100.00
Treasurer	9 39.13	14 60.87	23 100.00

This result is similar to the SLSU SSC Officers’ ability in presiding meetings that only 17.33% claim they can preside meetings using parliamentary procedure.

### CONCLUSIONS

This study has the following conclusions:

1. Nearly all captains claim they can formulate meeting agenda; majority of the Councilors cannot; all Secretaries can; while majority of the treasurers claim they cannot formulate agenda.
2. Majority of the captains, councilors, SK chairmen and treasurers claim they do not have the ability to take down minutes of meeting; while all secretaries claim they can take down minutes of meetings as it is the nature of work.
3. Majority of the captains, councilors, SK chairmen and treasurers believe they cannot draft resolutions; while all secretaries claim they can.
4. Majority of the captains, councilors, SK chairmen and treasurers claim they do not have the ability to write official communications; while majority of the secretaries have the ability as it is their

work.

5. All captains claim they have the ability to preside meetings using parliamentary procedures; while majority of the councilors, sk chairmen, secretaries and treasurers claim they cannot.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that a seminar – workshop on presiding meetings, formulating agenda, taking down minutes of meetings, writing resolutions and in public speaking should be conducted to Village officials so that they will be equipped with the necessary skills for handling the governance of the Village officials.

## LITERATURE CITED

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