

HB 265 - VERSION ADOPTED BY BOTH BODIES

04/17/2025 1544s

2025 SESSION

25-0331

11/02

HOUSE BILL

265

AN ACT

requiring that a public body's meeting minutes include start and end times of the meeting and the printed name of the recording secretary.

SPONSORS:

Rep. M. Smith, Straf. 10; Rep. Lynn, Rock. 17; Rep. Kuttab, Rock. 17

COMMITTEE:

Judiciary

AMENDED ANALYSIS

This bill requires that public meeting minutes be documented with the start time, end time, and recording secretary's printed name.

Explanation:

Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.

Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struck through.]~~

Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Five

AN ACT requiring that a public body's meeting minutes include start and end times of the meeting and the printed name of the recording secretary.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 Access to Governmental Records and Meetings; Meetings Open to Public. Amend RSA 91-A:2,
2 II to read as follows:

3 II. Subject to the provisions of RSA 91-A:3, all meetings, whether held in person, by means
4 of telephone or electronic communication, or in any other manner, shall be open to the public.
5 Except for town meetings, school district meetings, and elections, no vote while in open session may
6 be taken by secret ballot. Any person shall be permitted to use recording devices, including, but not
7 limited to, tape recorders, cameras, and videotape equipment, at such meetings. Minutes of all such
8 meetings, including nonpublic sessions, shall include the names of members, persons appearing
9 before the public bodies, ~~and~~ a brief description of the subject matter discussed and final decisions,
10 ***the start time and end time of the meeting, and name of the person who produced the***
11 ***minutes.*** The names of the members who made or seconded each motion shall be recorded in the
12 minutes. Subject to the provisions of RSA 91-A:3, minutes shall be promptly recorded and open to
13 public inspection not more than 5 business days after the meeting, except as provided in RSA 91-A:6,
14 and shall be treated as permanent records of any public body, or any subordinate body thereof,
15 without exception. Except in an emergency or when there is a meeting of a legislative committee, a
16 notice of the time and place of each such meeting, including a nonpublic session, shall be posted in 2
17 appropriate places one of which may be the public body's Internet website, if such exists, or shall be
18 printed in a newspaper of general circulation in the city or town at least 24 hours, excluding
19 Sundays and legal holidays, prior to such meetings. An emergency shall mean a situation where
20 immediate undelayed action is deemed to be imperative by the chairman or presiding officer of the
21 public body, who shall post a notice of the time and place of such meeting as soon as practicable, and
22 shall employ whatever further means are reasonably available to inform the public that a meeting is
23 to be held. The minutes of the meeting shall clearly spell out the need for the emergency meeting.
24 When a meeting of a legislative committee is held, publication made pursuant to the rules of the
25 house of representatives or the senate, whichever rules are appropriate, shall be sufficient notice. If
26 the charter of any city or town or guidelines or rules of order of any public body require a broader
27 public access to official meetings and records than herein described, such charter provisions or
28 guidelines or rules of order shall take precedence over the requirements of this chapter. For the
29 purposes of this paragraph, a business day means the hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Monday through
30 Friday, excluding national and state holidays.

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1 2 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.