



New York State Archives

**New York State Civil Service Commission Meeting Minutes
B0500**

New York State Archives
222 Madison Avenue
Albany, NY 12230
archref@nysed.gov
URL: <http://www.archives.nysed.gov/>

Table of Contents

Overview of the Records	3
Arrangement	3
Scope and Contents	3
Related Information	5
Other Finding Aids	5
Use of Records	5
Access Terms	6

Overview of the Records

Repository:	New York State Archives
Summary:	This series contains the Civil Service Commission's official meeting minutes signed by its secretary. The Commission was set up "to regulate and improve the Civil Service of the State," and these minutes document their work toward that end. There are entries for all Commission meetings except those between 1944 and 1947, when only verbatim minutes were kept. Pre-1899 minutes are handwritten while all others are typewritten.
Creator:	New York (State). Civil Service Commission
Title:	New York State Civil Service Commission meeting minutes
Quantity:	21.2 cubic feet
Quantity:	98 volumes
Inclusive Date:	1883-1968
Series:	B0500

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Arrangement

Organized into two subseries: Subseries 1, Official Minutes, 1883-1968, Boxes 1-14; Subseries 2, Verbatim Minutes, 1944-1954, Boxes 15-19.

Chronological by date of commission meetings (beginning in 1965, entries in volumes are in reverse chronological order).

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Scope and Content Note

This series contains the Civil Service Commission's official meeting minutes signed by its secretary. The Commission was set up "to regulate and improve the Civil Service of the State," and these minutes document their work toward that end. There are entries for all Commission

meetings except those between 1944 and 1947, when only verbatim minutes were kept. Pre-1899 minutes are handwritten while all others are typewritten.

Early minutes (1883-1905) are extremely detailed, listing the meeting site (usually New York City or Albany) and containing descriptions of proceedings, resolutions, Commission rules and opinions, classification plans, verbatim transcripts of statements, and copies of and extracts from correspondence. Their early work to professionalize the civil service by establishing classes and divisions of workers and corresponding pay scales, along with regulations to govern their implementation, are detailed, in addition to the Commission's advocacy of hiring through open, competitive examinations, and promotions through merit and competition. Revisions and clarifications in regulations are also discussed, and an intense interest was shown in the administration of early examinations.

These minutes also reveal the Commission's work to maintain and enlarge the area under its influence, as it aggressively disciplined State officials who flaunted civil service regulations and examined the civil service operations of various cities and, acting as a consultant, formulated regulations for them to follow. Classification of positions, disbursements, appointment of test examiners, consideration of exemptions from Civil Service regulations or appointments through non-competitive examinations, and amendments to the Civil Service Code are also discussed. For the most part these minutes are frank and detailed, though often routine.

After 1905, the minutes contain fewer verbatim documents but still include much detail about Commission meetings, though the topics are conventional: requests for exemptions, budgetary matters, and further clarification of regulations. During the 1920s and 1930s, however, the amount of information progressively declines, and routine subjects (review of appeals, exemptions, salary grades, job requirements, temporary jobs, and civil service regulations) are peremptorily handled.

In 1948 the minutes' content and format change radically. They consist of listings of agenda items with short comments, varying in length from two sentences to two paragraphs, on the disposition of the matters before the Commission. Rarely does an extended policy statement or opinion appear in these minutes.

Pre-1948 minutes document the Commission's actions and intent in policy matters and contain information on individual appeals, investigations, and other matters brought before the Commission. Post-1948 minutes deal almost exclusively with the disposition of individual matters and give little information on their background or the Commission's intent. Information in these later minutes, however, is supplemented by the Commission Meeting Calendars (1930-1968) which include memoranda on each calendared item.

The verbatim minutes, prepared from audio recordings or stenographers' notes, were kept in lieu of official minutes from 1944 to 1947. (A two-inch dictaphone tape, presumably from the 1944-1954 period, is housed in the series.) When the compilation of official minutes resumed in 1948, the Commission continued to keep verbatim minutes. In 1954 these were discontinued at the suggestion of the Temporary State Commission on Coordination of State Activities. These minutes contain complete transcripts of discussions of Commission policy as well as individual appeals, petitions, investigations, and other matters. They also contain the text of verbal presentations of Department of Civil Service staff, State and municipal agencies'

representatives, and individual appellants and petitioners. Much information was shared with Commission members via memoranda in advance of the meetings and hence the verbatim minutes usually do not contain extended discussions.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Related Information

Related Material

14105Series 14105, Civil Service Commission meeting calendars, consists of bound agendas or "calendars" and background memoranda relating to commission meetings.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Other Finding Aids

Available at Repository

Volume list is available at the repository.

Official minutes are indexed as follows: Volumes 1 and 2 are subject indexed by a separate volume; Volume 3 is not indexed; Volumes 4-7 are chronologically indexed by meeting date; Volumes 8-60 and 69-74 have subject indices included in each volume; and Volumes 61-68 are indexed by meeting dates with tabs in each volume. Verbatim minutes are not indexed.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Use of Records

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions regarding access to or use of the material.

Access Terms

- Coordinating government employees
- Personnel management
- Labor
- New York (State)--Officials and employees
- New York (State)
- Minutes (administrative records)
- Civil service reform
- Civil service
- New York (State). Department of Civil Service