

Request to Correct the Minutes

For when the official record does not say what you actually said

HOW TO USE THIS: everything in [square brackets] is for you to replace. Delete any item that does not apply to your situation — a shorter letter that means every word beats a long one that doesn't. Laws differ by state; where a statute is cited, check your own state's equivalent before you send it.

Official minutes are the only lasting record of a public hearing. If yours summarises five minutes of detailed testimony as three words — "spoke in opposition" — then as far as the record is concerned, you never made your argument.

This matters later. When a county says public comment shaped its decision, the minutes are the evidence of what that comment was. A technical submission reduced to a one-word category cannot be traced to anything.

Ask for a correction promptly, in writing, and be specific about the timestamp.

Before you write

- Find your remarks in the meeting recording and note the START and END times.
- Write down what you actually asked for, as a numbered list.
- Check how OTHER speakers were recorded. If some got a subject-matter summary and you did not, say so — you are asking for the same treatment, not special treatment.

THE LETTER

To: [Director], [County] Planning & Zoning

cc: [Chair of the Planning Commission], [County Clerk]

Re: Request to correct the minutes of the meeting of [date] — [case number]

I am writing to ask that the approved minutes of [date] be corrected as to my public comment.

The minutes record, in full: "[quote the entry exactly as written]"

My concern is not with being described as opposed. [Adjust this sentence to your situation.] My concern is that the minutes record no part of what I actually said.

My remarks appear in the county's own recording of the meeting at [start time] and conclude at [end time]. In those [number] minutes I made the following requests:

- [Request 1]
- [Request 2]
- [Request 3]

I note that the same minutes record the subject matter of other speakers' comments — for example "[quote one]". I am asking only for the same treatment.

I therefore request that the entry be corrected to read, or to substantially the effect of:

"[Your name], [town], spoke regarding [subject matter], consistent with the written comment submitted on [date]."

If the minutes as approved cannot be amended, I ask in the alternative that this letter and my written submission be entered into the file for [case number], and that the entry be noted in the minutes of the next regular meeting, so that the record is complete.

I would appreciate written confirmation of how this is handled. Thank you for your time.

[Your name] · [Town and county] · [Email] · [Date]

The alternative request in the second-to-last paragraph matters more than the correction itself. Minutes once approved are often hard to amend — but getting your submission into the case file is almost always possible, and it is what actually protects the record.

*From the free toolkit at immunocure.org/toolkit — companion to *The Battle for Tonganoxie* by L J Steele.*