

Running your meeting for clean minutes

The software records what is said out loud. It does not read your screen, your packet, or a show of hands.

THE THREE THAT MATTER MOST

- 1. Announce the item.** Say the agenda number and title before you begin it. The section headings in your minutes come from this.
- 2. Name the mover and seconder.** A bare “so moved” and “second” cannot be attributed to anyone. The chair repeating both names takes two seconds.
- 3. State the vote count.** “Carries four to zero,” not just “carries.” Name anyone opposed or abstaining.

SAY THIS, NOT THAT

SAY THIS

Motion by Ms. Cruise, seconded by Mr. Cumming, to approve the contract. All in favor? Opposed? Motion carries three to zero.

That completes item five. We now move to item six, the FY27 capital plan.

The quote is for eighty two thousand four hundred dollars, from the Kimley-Horn memo dated July 2.

Motion to adjourn at 8:47 pm.

NOT THIS

So moved. Second. All in favor? Motion carries.

Okay, next.

The amount is in your packet, on the screen there.

Motion to adjourn. All in favor? Good night.

A FEW MORE THAT HELP

Motions and votes

- Restate the motion in one sentence before the vote.
- On an amendment, restate the full amended motion.
- Abstentions and recusals have to be spoken, along with the item they apply to.
- On a roll call, let each member answer distinctly.

Names and numbers

- Read dollar figures aloud in full.
- Name documents and their dates, not “this one here.”
- Read the legal notice aloud at a public hearing.
- Ask public speakers for name and address, spoken slowly.

Moving through the agenda

- Say when you enter executive session and when you return.
- When something is tabled or continued, say so and give the date.
- On a consent agenda, read what is on it or name the items by letter.

Audio

- Let a speaker finish before jumping in. A sentence talked over is the one most likely to come back garbled.
- Give staff and guests a moment to identify themselves the first time they speak.
- If a remote participant cuts out, ask them to repeat the part that dropped.

Adjournment

- State the real clock time out loud.
- The time is never taken from the video timer, so if nobody says it the line reads only that the meeting adjourned.

Tell us when your roster changes

- A new member, town administrator, or department head.
- Names are loaded in before the recording is processed, so a name we do not have is the one most likely to come back misspelled.