

Policy No: GM-56
Revision No: 1
Effective Date: 07/26/22



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT COMMISSION MEETINGS

1.0 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Public Utility District No. 1 of Franklin County (the District) Board of Commissioners (the Commission) are elected by the public to make policies and provide general direction to the District. All public meetings of the District's Commission are governed by the Washington state Open Public Meetings Act (the Act) and are open to the general public. The Commission will conduct Commission meetings in a manner that supports participation from the public.

The purpose of this policy is to provide public attending a Commission meeting the opportunity to express an opinion or bring items to the attention of the Commission by providing public comment.

Commission meetings are set in accordance with the District's Organizational Statement and are regularly scheduled for the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month, at 1 p.m. at the District's Auditorium. The District will provide public notice of any changes to regular Commission meetings and special Commission meetings in advanced of the meeting.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

Act: Chapter 42.30 of the Revised Code of Washington, Washington state Open Public Meetings Act or OPMA.

3.0 IMPLEMENTATION

The Commission recognizes the public's interest in many of the topics considered at their meetings, welcomes public comments, and has approved the following options for public attendance and guidelines to facilitate public participation while still permitting the timely consideration of all Commission and District business. All public attending the meetings are requested to adhere to them.

3.1 Attendance Options:

Members of the public may attend in-person, remotely by phone or other technology. The options available are listed below:

- In- person: District's Auditorium located at 1411 W. Clark St., Pasco, WA 99301
- Remote: Telephonic and video access options are listed on the District's website www.franklinpud.com and can be found at <https://www.franklinpud.com/who-we-are/commission-meeting-information/>

3.2 Public Comment Options:

- In-person attendees should indicate they would like to speak by filling out the meeting sign in sheet, if provided, or wait until the Commission President asks for public comment.

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- Remote attendees should indicate they would like to speak by utilizing the virtual “raise the hand” feature offered in the virtual meeting platform or wait until the Commission President calls for public comment during the public comment period.
- In person or remote attendees listening to the proceedings that later determine they would like to address the Commission should raise their hand or make it known to the Commission. The Commission President will acknowledge and call for comment.
- Written or email comments should be submitted to the Clerk of the Board by:
 - Mail to PO Box 2407, Pasco, WA 99302, or
 - Email to clerkoftheboard@franklinpud.com
- Comments are encouraged to be sent ahead of the meeting and at least two days prior to the meeting to ensure proper distribution to the Commission. Comments received after 3:00 p.m. on the Friday before the regular meeting will be distributed by the Clerk of the Board and the President of the Commission will acknowledge receipt of these comments at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

3.3 Public Participation Guidelines:

- Information from Speaker:
As per the Act, members of the public are not required to sign in to attend the Commission meetings. However, providing a name, and name of organization, if representing one, allows the Commission or other District staff to provide the speaker with follow-up information or a response to questions posed to the Commission. The sign in information provided by the speaker will be included in the meeting minutes which are a public record.
- Procedure – Speaker:
The speaker should address the Commission as a group, and not direct remarks to an individual Commissioner, or staff member. No other speakers will be recognized by the Commission President while the present speaker has the floor. At the conclusion of the speaker’s comments, the Commission may or may not respond. In the interest of clarity, the Commission may comment or ask questions of those present.
- Duration/Timing of Comments:
Comments will normally be limited to (3) three minutes. The Commission President may reduce the comment period to two (2) minutes or as appropriate, when there is more than three (3) persons wishing to speak. When possible, public comments will be scheduled so that speakers need not be present for an entire meeting in order to provide public comment. To ensure time is available for each speaker the Commission President will ensure the length of time for public comment is adhered to.
- Lengthy Messages:
Public with lengthy messages are encouraged to summarize their comments and/or submit written information for consideration to the Commission prior to the Commission meeting.

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- Commission Response:
The Commission President is responsible for determining the appropriate response(s) to each issue raised during a public comment period. At the conclusion of the speaker's comments, the Commission may either ask clarifying questions, choose to acknowledge the comment or question without a specific response, offer a response during the meeting or refer an item identified during the public comments to the General Manager or other District staff for further action.
- Expected Demeanor:
All persons taking part in Commission meetings are expected to be courteous, reasonable, and businesslike.
- Disorderly Conduct:
If public comments compromise the ability of the Commission to conduct District business or a speaker displays disorderly conduct, the Commission President may act to restore this ability by calling for a recess, adjourning the meeting until a later time, or temporarily limiting public comments.

4.0 PREREQUISITES/LIMITATIONS/CAUTIONS


If the Commission determines an issue is of sufficient public interest to warrant a special, single-issue meeting, the Commission may arrange such a meeting at a later date. Notice of such special meetings will be provided as per requirements of the Act.

Public attending that requires an accommodation due to a disability should contact the District by:

- E-mail at clerkoftheboard@franklinpud.com or phone at (509) 546-5947.

The District will make every effort to reasonably accommodate the identified needs.

As approved by the Board of Commissioners at the July 26, 2022 Commission meeting.

Approved by:  Date: 07/26/2022
Scott Rhees, General Manager

Revision History:
Issued: 10/25/16
Revision 1: 07/26/22