

HUDSPETH COUNTY ESD #2 PUBLIC COMMENT POLICY

Adopted Date: TBD

Purpose

The Hudspeth County Emergency Services District #2 (ESD #2) adopts these rules governing public comment during regular and special ESD meetings. The intent of the rules is to ensure efficiency, maximize citizen participation and maintain public order.

Authority

During each regular and special meeting, members of the public shall have the opportunity to address the ESD on any issue within the subject matter jurisdiction of the ESD. This includes an inquiry as to an agenda item or public comment regarding a subject that has not been included on the agenda, as authorized by the following:

TEXAS GOV'T CODE §551.042 Inquiry Made at Meeting

(a) If, at a meeting of a governmental body, a member of the public or of the governmental body inquires about a subject for which notice has not been given as required by this subchapter, the notice provisions of this subchapter do not apply to:

- (1) a statement of specific factual information given in response to the inquiry; or
- (2) a recitation of existing policy in response to the inquiry.

(b) Any deliberation of or decision about the subject of the inquiry shall be limited to a proposal to place the subject on the agenda for a subsequent meeting.

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Time Limits

1. The speaking time limit for an individual speaker is five (5) minutes under the public comment portion of a regular ESD meeting.

- It is recommended that groups designate a spokesperson to avoid repetitiveness.

2. During the discussion of any other posted agenda item, the speaking time limit is five minutes per person. Time cannot be allocated from one speaker to another.

Definitions

“Public Comment Forms” – Any person wishing to speak during public comment or on an agenda item at a regular or special meeting must fill out and present a form to the ESD Administrator prior to the commencement of the ESD regular meeting as posted on the ESD Website <https://www.hudspethesd2.org/district-meetings>. Failure to do so could result in the ESD not recognizing or allowing you to speak.

All public comment forms are available on the ESD website or in the ESD Administrators Office at:

401 W. Main St.
Dell City, TX 79837
Phone 915-964-2372

“Presiding Officer” – is defined as the ESD President or Vice-President.

Guidelines for All Speakers

- Speaker order is usually decided on a first-come, first-served basis (using the date and time the public comment form is received).
- The Speaker will be called to speak by the Presiding Officer. We ask that you refrain from disruptive behavior that will prevent the next speaker from hearing their name called or beginning their comments.
- When speaking, please state your name and the agenda item that you will be addressing.
- Each speaker promptly shall conclude all comments when his or her time to speak has expired. A thirty (30) second warning and a (15) second warning will be given by the ESD Recorder, to allow the speaker to finalize speaking remarks.
- No person shall engage in political advertising contrary to state law.
- The Presiding Officer reserves the right to interrupt, request that the microphone be turned off and excuse a speaker when time allocated has expired, or if the speaker otherwise violates these guidelines.

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

Persons wishing to address the ESD on matters not on the agenda during the initial period for public comment must submit a public comment form to the ESD Clerk/Recorder prior to commencement of that meeting and are limited to (3) minutes to make his/her remarks. Speaker order will be determined by sequence of how those sign-up requests are received. During non-agenda items, public comments may not be addressed to staff or other members of the public, however, the ESD may ask staff to review an issue, or ask to have the matter placed on a future agenda.

Rules of Decorum

It is imperative that those who wish to speak during public comment adhere to these rules and guidelines so that Hudspeth County public meetings can proceed in a timely manner

- A member of the public addressing the ESD during regular and special meetings shall **stand and approach the table to be heard by the board and those attending via conference call**.
- When speaking please state your name for the record.
- No threats or disruptive behavior will be tolerated. Any person violating this policy will be required to leave immediately upon direction by the Presiding Officer.
- All persons attending a regular or special meeting shall obey any lawful order or direction of the Presiding Officer.
- Members of the audience and speakers shall not wear or display signs, flags, banners, hats, props or similar items larger than 8 ½ by 11 inches that can obstruct the view of other audience members or can be used as a weapon. This includes items that can be illuminated or be attached to any pole, stick or other devices.

Requests for Accommodations

Please contact the ESD Administrators office for assistance by email at admin@hudspethesd2.com.