

Public Participation – Open Meetings

City of Boerne
447 N. Main Street
Boerne, Texas 78006
830.249.9511

Welcome: *The City Council and staff welcome your attendance and comments at meetings. Members of the City Council value your comments at public meetings, and your personal conversations, written correspondence, and/or email messages.*

Meetings: Audience participation at a meeting is limited to the portion of the meeting designated for that purpose.

Who May Speak: Any interested party may speak.

When: **Public Comments:** In accordance with the Texas Local Government Code Section 551.007, Public Testimony: the City of Boerne is providing this opportunity to take public comment on any issue. The City Council may not deliberate or make any decisions regarding any subject that is not included on the posted agenda. The Presiding Officer may choose to refer the issue to a selected staff member.

Public Hearings: Public Hearings are times prescribed by law, after public notice, for the public to offer comments on a particular issue. This is your opportunity to make a statement or offer your opinion regarding the specific issue on the City Council's agenda.

Procedure: Individuals who wish to address the City Council should sign the City Council's Speaker List before the meeting begins. Please indicate whether you intend to speak during Public Comments or during a scheduled Public Hearing, or both.

Members of the public may address the City Council at the following times during a Regular or Special Meeting:

- 1) During Public Comments section of the agenda after your name is called by the Presiding Officer if you have signed up to speak prior to the start of the meeting;
- 2) During the Public Hearing section after your name is called by the Presiding Officer if you have signed up to speak prior to the start of the meeting;
 - a. Speakers must state their name and address for the record prior to making their comments. Speak clearly so everyone in the room can hear you.
 - b. Speakers must direct all comments to the elected officials, not to the audience or staff members.
 - c. Presentations will be limited to three minutes at the Presiding Officer's discretion. Members of the public who are non-English speakers who wish to address the governmental body through a translator will be given at least six minutes at the Presiding Officer's discretion.
 - d. Members of the audience are not allowed to speak out of turn or to interrupt the elected officials, staff, or other speakers when they are speaking.
 - e. Delegations of five or more persons should appoint one person to present their views before the Council. Speakers who attend the meeting as part of a group may not give their time to another member of the group, nor may they trade or reserve time.
 - f. At the discretion of the Presiding Officer, a speaker may be recognized more than once, depending on the time allocated and the number of speakers.

The Presiding Officer may stop the person from speaking further if the remarks or gestures are profane, abusive, inflammatory, or otherwise offensive. Persons who refuse to stop speaking at the direction of the Presiding Officer or who otherwise disrupt the meeting may be escorted from the meeting by a law enforcement officer at the request of the Presiding Officer.

The City Council will allot 30 minutes for Public Comments; the Presiding Officer may extend this time period by announcement. A City Council member may wish to continue to receive additional comments beyond the regular time period or the extended period announced by the Presiding Officer. In this case, a motion and a second to continue the comment period must be stated, with a simple majority voting in favor of the motion.

Any person in attendance to an open meeting may record all or any part of an open meeting by means of a tape recorder, video camera, cell phone or other means of aural or visual reproduction. The Presiding Officer will determine the location a person may place recording equipment during the course of an open meeting. The Presiding Officer will not prevent or unreasonably impair a person's right to record all or any part of an open meeting by means of a tape recorder, video camera, cell phone or other means of aural or visual reproduction. No person attending a meeting shall delay, interrupt or disrupt the proceedings or refuse to obey the orders of the Presiding Officer.

If you wish to bring hard-copies of documents to the meeting to distribute to the governmental body, nine copies must be provided to the City Secretary at least one-half hour prior to the time posted for the start of the meeting. This ensures the Mayor, City Manager, City Attorney, City Secretary and the Council Members each receive a copy. If fewer than nine copies are not timely provided to the City Secretary, the document will not be provided to the Council Members until after the meeting when sufficient copies can be made for each member.

No posters, signs, electronic displays or similar items shall be used by members of the audience during Public Comments and Public Hearings. No removable media such as USB flash drives will be permitted without approval 72-hours prior to the meeting.

All are welcome and invited to attend any open meeting. However, the number of individuals admitted shall be limited to the fire safety capacity of the building as determined by the Fire Marshal.

Citizens and other visitors attending City Council meetings shall observe the same rules of propriety, decorum and good conduct applicable to the members of the City Council.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION