



RULES OF PROCEDURE, CONDUCT AND DECORUM AT MEETINGS OF LUBBOCK COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT

The following guiding principles have been the foundation of the formation of these rules:

- The Commissioners Court must act as a body;
 - The Commissioners Court should proceed in the most efficient manner possible;
 - The Commissioners Court must act by a majority;
 - Every member of the Commissioners Court must have an equal opportunity to participate in decision-making;
 - The Commissioners Court Rules of Procedure must be followed consistently;
 - The Court's actions should be the result of a decision on the merits and not a manipulation of the procedural rules;
 - Meetings are accomplished in the spirit of openness with the encouragement of public participation.
- I. All Regular, Special, Emergency, and Executive Session Meetings of the Lubbock County Commissioners Court will be called and conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Texas Open Meeting Act, Texas Government Code, Chapter 551.
 - II. The County Commissioners Court, in regards to parliamentary procedure of meetings, abides by the rules of parliamentary procedure contained in *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, 11th Edition*, and any subsequent editions or amendments thereto, if any, shall govern the County Commissioners Court so long as *Robert's Rules of Order* are not inconsistent with the statutes of the State of Texas.
 - III. The Lubbock County Commissioners Court generally meets in Regular Session in the courtroom on the fifth floor of the Lubbock County Courthouse located at 904 Broadway in Lubbock, Texas on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of every month at 10:00 a. m., except on holidays or by order of the Commissioners or the County Judge. Each meeting notice will be approved and certified by the County Judge and posted at the Lubbock County Courthouse and on www.lubbockcounty.gov pursuant to the procedures listed in the Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code, Chapter 551. Every effort will be made by staff to ensure that the cable company televises and records every regularly scheduled Court meeting.
 - IV. With the exception of Executive Sessions (i.e. "Closed Meetings"), all meetings of the Lubbock County Commissioners Court are open to the public and to representatives of the media. Executive Sessions of the Commissioners Court are not open to the public or media and only individuals requested or ordered to attend are allowed.
 - V. In order for a matter or issue to appear as an agenda item on the agenda of any Regular Meeting of the Commissioners Court, a request must be filed with the agenda clerk appointed by the

Commissioners Court by 12:00 p.m. (noon) on the Wednesday immediately preceding the next Regular Meeting of the Commissioners Court. In addition, the agenda item request must be approved by at least one member of the Commissioners Court or the County Judge prior to being placed on the agenda.

- VI. The business of Lubbock County is conducted by and between the members of the Lubbock County Commissioners Court and by those members of the County staff, elected officials, department heads, consultants, experts and/or members of the public requested to be present and to participate. While the public is invited to attend all open meetings of the Commissioners Court, participation is limited to that of observer unless a member(s) of the public is requested to address the Commissioners Court on an issue(s) or unless a Public Participation Form has been completed and submitted to the County Clerk prior to Court. However, the Commissioners Court may only discuss issues that are properly posted on the agenda. A sample of the Lubbock County Commissioners Court Public Participation Form is attached hereto as Exhibit A and is available on the Lubbock County website at www.lubbockcounty.gov.
- A. Each member of the public who appears before the Commissioners Court shall be limited to a maximum of two (2) minutes to make his/her remarks. The designated representative of the Commissioners Court shall maintain time for each speaker.
 - B. Maximum discussion on any agenda item, regardless of the number of members of the public wishing to address the Court, shall be limited to thirty (30) minutes.
 - C. In matters of exceptional interest, the Court may, by the majority vote of the members of the Court in attendance at the meeting, either shorten or lengthen the time allocated for a particular member of the public, all members of the public and/or the amount of the time allocated for all agenda items and/or a specific agenda item.
 - D. While it is the intention of the Court to provide open access to citizens of Lubbock County, members are advised that the Court is a Constitutional Court with both judicial and legislative powers, created under Article V, Section 1, and Section 18 of the Texas Constitution. As a Constitutional Court, the Lubbock County Commissioners Court possesses the power to issue a Contempt of Court Citation under Section 81.023 of the Texas Local Government Code. Any member of the public shall conduct themselves with proper respect and decorum in speaking before the Court. Proper attire for men, women, and children is mandatory when appearing before the Court. Inappropriate attire includes, but is not limited to, items such as cutoffs, tank tops, shorts, suggestive or offensive t-shirts. Any member of the public who is not appropriately attired and/or does not conduct themselves according to these guidelines may be ordered to leave the meeting until such time as they comply with the Court's directive. Refusal to abide by the Court's Order and/or continued disruption of the meeting may result in a Contempt of Court Citation.
 - E. It is not the intention of the Lubbock County Commissioners Court to provide a forum to publicly demean any group or individual. Neither is it the intention of the Court to allow a member of the public to insult the honesty or integrity of the Court or its members. Any profane, insulting, or threatening language directed toward the Court and/or any person in the Court's presence and/or racial, ethnic, or gender slurs or epithets will not be tolerated. Violation of these rules may result in the following sanctions:
 - i. revocation and/or cancellation of a speaker's time;
 - ii. removal from the Commissioners Courtroom;
 - iii. a Contempt Citation; and/or

- IV. Other civil and/or criminal sanctions as may be authorized under the Constitution, Statutes, and Codes of the State of Texas.
- V. The County Judge is the presiding officer of the Lubbock County Commissioners Court and is a fully participating member thereof. As presiding officer of the Court, the County Judge is responsible for conducting all meetings. In the event of the absence of the County Judge, the Commissioners Court will designate a Presiding Officer of the Court at the beginning of the Fiscal year.
- VI. The Sheriff of Lubbock County, Texas, or a designated deputy, shall serve as the bailiff at all Regular, Special, and Emergency Meetings of the Court when necessary. In the event of the absence of the deputy or a conflict of interest exists, the Court shall appoint such other commissioned peace officers to serve as bailiff as may be necessary.
- VII. Workshop/Work Session Meetings may be called to discuss items of special importance or complexity which may require longer than usual staff presentation(s) and Court questions. The purpose of a workshop meeting is to allow staff and others to make presentations, receive briefings on County operations and projects, and to allow questions by the Court. An agenda of the business at the workshop meeting shall be prepared and made available to the public in accordance with provisions of the Texas Open Meeting Act, Texas Government Code, Chapter 551. Members of the public are welcome to attend the workshop, save and except those posted as closed meetings.
- VIII. Any member of the Commissioners Court who announces a conflict of interest on a particular matter pursuant to Local Government Code, Chapter 171, who cannot vote or otherwise participate in the proceedings related to that matter, shall none the less be deemed present for the purpose of constituting a quorum.
- IX. The agenda format for a regular Commissioners Court meeting may follow the approximate form as set forth below:
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| 1. Call to Order | 9. Awards |
| 2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance | 10. General Business |
| 3. Citizens to be Heard | 11. Grant Matters |
| 4. Public Hearing(s) | 12. Departmental Reports |
| 5. Approval of Minutes | 13. Executive Session |
| 6. Auditor Matters | 14. Adjourn |
| 7. Consent Agenda | |
| 8. Presentations | |
- X. Consent Agenda
- The consent agenda includes non-controversial and routine items that the Court may act on with one collective vote
 - A consent agenda enables more efficient administrative meetings. Lubbock County will follow these essential use rules:
 - a. All documentation associated with consent items must be provided to the Commissioners Court in advance in order to make an informed vote on all consent agenda items.
 - b. The Judge or a Commissioner may pull any item from the consent agenda to allow the Court to discuss and act upon it individually as part of the regular agenda.

- c. All consent agenda items will be listed in the regular agenda under the consent agenda heading. Regular agenda items will be listed individually.
- d. At the beginning of the consent agenda, the Judge will ask if any of the consent agenda items should be moved to the regular discussion items.
- e. All items under the consent agenda are heard and acted upon collectively unless opposition is presented, in which case the contested item will be considered, discussed, and acted upon separately.
- f. If a member of the Court requests that a consent agenda item be removed, it must be removed from the consent agenda. Any reason is sufficient to move an item. A member of the Court can remove an item to discuss the item, to query the item, or to vote against it.
- g. Once the item has been removed from the consent agenda, the County Judge may decide to take up the matter immediately or move it to a discussion item.
- h. When there are no items to be removed or if all requested items have been moved, the Judge may accept a motion to adopt the remaining consent items on the consent agenda. It is not necessary to take an individual vote on each consent agenda item. Items on the consent agenda may include, but are not limited to:

1. Pre-approved financials per standard audit practice
2. Annual renewal contracts
3. Routine contracts/ templates
4. Change Orders
5. Out of State Travel Requests
6. Correspondence that requires court action
7. Program or committee report(s)
8. Board appointments
9. Utility Applications

- i. The County Clerk must retain with the meeting minutes the full text of all resolutions and reports that were approved as part of the consent agenda and provided to the clerk for retention.

- XI. Members of the public and/or media may request documents provided to or utilized by the Court for the agenda. Requests for such items must be submitted in writing, in accordance with the Texas Government Code Chapter 552, also known as the Public Information Act. Subsequently, any responsive records for such requests will be handled in compliance with the Public Information Act. Written requests must be submitted to the agenda clerk for the Commissioners Court. Forms for requests will be available with the agenda clerk.
- XII. Individuals with disabilities may request a reasonable accommodation necessary to fully and equally participate in a meeting. A request for accommodation should be made as far in advance as practical. Accommodation requests are granted to any individual with a disability for whom such accommodation is reasonable and necessary under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA") or other similar local, state, and federal laws. A request will be granted unless:
 - a. The requested accommodation would create an undue financial or administrative burden;
 - b. The requested accommodation would fundamentally alter the nature of the meeting; or
 - c. Permitting the requestor to participate in the meeting with the requested accommodation would create a direct threat to the safety or well-being of the requestor or others.