



Legislation Text

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PROPOSED ORDINANCE AMENDMENT

REMOTE MEETINGS

BE IT ORDAINED, by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County Board of Commissioners, that Section 4 of Chapter 5 of Title 1 of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County Code of Ordinances is hereby amended as Follows:

4-1. *Meeting.*

- (a) The Board shall hold regular meetings pursuant to an annual calendar adopted by resolution of the Board.
- (b) It shall be the duty of the President to call special meetings of the Board whenever such meetings are necessary in his or her opinion. The President must give no less than forty-eight (48) hours' advance written notice of such special meetings to the Commissioners and to the public.
- (c) In the event that the President states that an emergency exists, the President may call a special meeting, providing twenty-four (24) hours' advance written notice to the Commissioners and to the public, unless not reasonable under the circumstances. In such case notice shall be given as soon as practicable. All emergency meetings shall be held at the County Seat, in the County Office Building, unless another place within the County shall be designated by the President or Board.
- (d) Special meetings shall also be held whenever requested by at least one-third ($\frac{1}{3}$) of the Commissioners (six (6) Commissioners). At least forty-eight (48) hours' advance written notice of such special meetings shall be given to the remaining Commissioners and the public.
- (e) All notices of special meetings must include an agenda for such meeting, and such meeting shall be limited to the subjects and items specified in the call of the meeting. The notice of the call of the meeting shall be read at the beginning of the meeting.
- (f) Special meetings shall be held at the hour of 10:00 a.m., unless another hour is specified in the call.
- (g) All regular meetings shall be held at the County Seat, in the County Office Building, unless another place within the County shall be designated by the Board.
- (h) A regular or special meeting may be cancelled by the President by providing no less than twenty-four (24) hours' advance written notice that said meeting has been cancelled to the Commissioners and to the public.
- (i) Remote Meetings. All public meetings of the Board and its committees and subcommittees may be conducted by means of electronic, video, audio, or telephonic connection ("remote meeting") for the duration of the Illinois Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation, including any extensions thereto, related to COVID-19 or a public health crisis. A member who desires to attend and participate in a remote public meeting shall do so by the designated electronic means. For purposes of conducting a remote meeting, the terms "written", "in writing", "document" and "copy" in these rules includes printed or electronic means, and a rule that requires an instrument to be provided to the Board Secretary or a member or the meeting Chair may be satisfied by electronic transmission.

4-30. *Public Testimony.* ~~Subject to the provisions herein, public testimony will be permitted at regular and special meetings of the Board and at committee meetings of the Board.~~

The Board encourages public participation in the legislative process. The following rules shall apply at any meeting of the Board and its committees at which public comment or testimony is taken:

~~(a) *Public testimony at all meetings.* Public testimony at all meetings.~~ Subject to the provisions herein, public testimony will be permitted at all meetings of the Board, its committees and subcommittees. Any member of the general public may address the Board or any of its committees or subcommittees at any remote meeting required to be open to the public under the Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/1, et seq., as then in effect) in writing, or orally from a remote location by means of electronic, video, audio, or telephonic connection if permitted in the meeting notice.

~~(b) *Authorization to speak* Authorization to speak.~~ Authorization as a public speaker or to provide written testimony to be read into the record of a meeting of the Board, its committees and subcommittees shall be granted to those individuals who have submitted in writing, their name, municipality of residence, subject matter, and organization (if any) to the Secretary.

~~(c) *Public comment period* Public comment period.~~ Duly authorized public speakers shall be called upon to deliver testimony at a time specified in the meeting agenda, or at the discretion of the chair, but prior to final action by the meeting body as is practicable. The public comment period during a remote meeting may be limited to written testimony which shall be read into the record by the Board Secretary.

~~(d) *Germane subject matter encouraged* Germane subject matter encouraged.~~ Public testimony shall be germane to a specific item(s) on the meeting agenda. To preserve order and decorum and in the interest of efficiency, the presiding officer may impose subject matter limits on public comment or testimony.

~~(e) *Time limit for public speakers* Time limit for public speakers.~~ Written public testimony or oral testimony will be limited. During their testimony, each public speaker may have up to three (3) minutes. The Secretary will keep track of the time and advise when the time for public testimony has expired. Responses to inquiries of the public speaker by the presiding officer or members shall not count towards any time limit. With leave, the presiding officer or members may extend a public speaker's time as desired.

~~(f) *Prohibited behavior for public speakers* Prohibited behavior for public speakers.~~ Public speaker Oral or written testimony shall not include the use of vulgar, abusive or otherwise inappropriate language when addressing the Board.; Failure failure to act appropriately; failure to speak to an item that is germane to the meeting, or failure to adhere to the time requirements may result in expulsion from the meeting and/or disqualify the person from providing future testimony.

~~(g) *Disruptions of meetings prohibited* Disruptions of meetings prohibited.~~ Disruptions of meetings are prohibited. Disruptions include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Speech or testimony by an individual after expiration of the time allotted for the speaker's public comment or testimony;
- (2) Speech or testimony by an individual that is not germane to a specific item or items on the meeting agenda;
- (3) Speech or testimony by an individual who has not been recognized by the presiding officer for public comment or testimony, who is speaking in a volume louder than a low, conversational level appropriate for communication between persons seated next to each other in the chamber, or whose

speech is audible by others; or

(4) Holding or placing a banner or sign during a meeting in a way that may endanger other individuals or that obstructs the free passage or view of others attending or viewing the meeting.

(5) Verbal comments and testimony must be conducted in respectful speech with no personal attacks.

(6) If an individual engages in disruption of the meeting, including but not limited to, any of the actions described above, the presiding officer may ~~rule~~ Rule the individual out of order and, direct the individual to cease the activity and impose other reasonable conditions for the individual's continued presence at the meeting. If the individual does not immediately comply with the presiding officer's order, the presiding officer may direct the removal of the individual from the meeting. Unless otherwise ordered by the presiding officer, any individual ordered to be removed from a meeting is excluded from returning to that meeting, unless the decision of the presiding officer is overruled by a majority vote of those members in attendance. Any two (2) members may place before the body the question of whether to permit the individual to return to the same meeting.

Effective date: This ordinance amendment shall be in effect immediately upon adoption.