

PUBLIC COMMENT POLICY

AGENDA MEETINGS / PUBLIC MEETINGS

LIMA-ALLEN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

The Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission (LACRPC) recognizes the value of public comment on government issues and the importance of allowing members of the public to express themselves on government matters of community interest.

LACRPC affords public participation following the procedures below. LACRPC applies these procedures to all speakers and does not discriminate based on the identity of the speaker, the content of the speech or the viewpoint of the speaker.

LACRPC is also committed to conducting its meetings in a productive and efficient manner. To ensure that agenda meetings/public meetings are completed in a reasonable period of time and to allow for fair and adequate opportunity for input to be considered, restrictions are necessary to regulate limited public participation. LACRPC shall provide a period for public participation at every regular agenda meeting/public meeting of LACRPC.

The presiding chairperson of the agenda meeting/public meeting shall administer the rules of the LACRPC for its conduct.

The presiding chairperson shall be guided by the following rules

- A. Anyone having business to be heard by LACRPC may participate during the public portion of an agency meeting/public meeting.
- B. Any member of the general public who wishes to speak before the Committee at the end of the meeting shall be required to fill out a Public Comment Request Form and return the form to LACRPC. Forms shall be available on the LACRPC website, in the LACRPC meeting room, or at the LACRPC front office.
- C. Participants must be recognized by the presiding chairperson and will be requested to preface their comments with an announcement of their name, group affiliation – if and when appropriate, address, and subject matter.
- D. Each statement made by a participant shall be limited to three (3) minutes. Participants may submit the remainder of their statement in writing to the LACRPC front office.
- E. No participant may speak more than once during the agenda meeting/public meeting.
- F. All statements shall be directed to the committee members as a whole. No person may address or question committee members individually.
- G. The use of visual aids during the public comment section is prohibited. Individuals are permitted to submit hard-copy materials to the LACRPC front office before the meeting to supplement their oral statements or testimony. It is suggested that ten (10) copies of any written testimony, materials, and/or information be provided before the meeting.
- H. Speakers' subject matter shall not contain obscenity, profanity, defamation or slander. Speakers shall not disrupt the order or decorum of the meeting.
- I. Speakers shall only give comments; no debating.

- J. The portion of the meeting during which the participation of the public is invited shall be limited to thirty (30) minutes unless extended by a vote of the Committee. This clause applies to agenda meetings only.
- K. The presiding chairperson may:
1. Prohibit public comments that are frivolous, repetitive and/or harassing;
 2. Interrupt, warn, or terminate a participant's statement when the statement is too lengthy, abusive, obscene, off-topic, or irrelevant. Speakers are expected to refrain from criminal behavior, including but not limited to, riot R.C. §2917.03, disorderly conduct R.C. §2917.11, or disturbing a lawful meeting R.C. §2917.12;
 3. Request any individual to leave the meeting when that person does not observe reasonable decorum or is disruptive to the conduct of the meeting;
 4. Call for a recess or an adjournment to another time when the lack of public decorum so interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting as to warrant such action;
 5. Waive these rules with the approval of the Board when necessary for the protection of privacy or the administration of the Board's business.
 6. The presiding chairperson is charged with preserving the order and decorum of the session pursuant to that authority, the presiding chairperson is vested with the authority to enforce these rules. If the presiding chairperson determines that these rules are not being followed, one warning shall be given. If the rules continue to be violated after one warning, the presiding chairperson may revoke the individual's speaking privileges. Any ruling pursuant to these rules by the presiding chairperson is subject to appeal by another member of the committee by calling for a Point of Order. If another member of the committee seconds the Point of Order, the presiding chairperson's ruling shall be overturned. Appeals pursuant to this rule are final.

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