

## Rules for Public Comment

### **I. Purpose and Application:**

A. Purpose: Public engagement is a vital component to the democratic process, and it assists the Board of Commissioners in shaping effective policy for the Park District. Further, the President and Commissioners volunteered to serve as a voice for residents, so resident participation naturally enhances that role. To help balance public participation during public meetings with the obligation to complete necessary scheduled business, many public bodies establish a set of rules and procedures to help manage the public comment process.

B. Application: The rules and procedures adopted herein (“Rules”) by the Park District Board of Commissioners shall govern the Park District Board of Commissioners, committees, commissions and other public bodies that have been created by the Board; provided, however, that in the event that a different or more specific protocol or procedure is required by law, or by a declaration of a federal, state, or local emergency, the different or more specific protocol or procedure shall govern and control. For the purposes of these Rules, meetings of those bodies shall be defined as “public body meetings.”

### **II. Forms of Comment:**

A. Primary Methods: Anyone interested in speaking during the defined public comment portion of public meetings may do so in writing (as provided below) or in-person, subject to the compliance with these Rules. Individuals providing comments in-person are asked to sign in just prior to the start of the meeting. Written comments may be submitted to the board by mail, courier, electronic mail, or presented in-person during a public body meeting. Written comments submitted in advance of a meeting should be addressed to the respective public body and should contain the contact information of the commenter. Or at a public body meeting, written comments for the respective public body. Comments may be submitted by mail, courier, electronic mail, or presented in-person during a public body meeting. Written comments submitted in advance of a meeting should be addressed to the respective public body and should contain the contact information of the commenter. Submitting a written comment does not eliminate an individual’s opportunity to address the public body in-person at the meeting. However, it may be used as an effective means to convey complex information when presenting an overview in-person. Written comments can be mailed to the Park District Board Secretary at 410 Kenilworth Ave. Kenilworth, IL 60043. Additionally, they can be submitted electronically by emailing them to [info@kpdistrict.org](mailto:info@kpdistrict.org)

B. Audio/Visual Aids: On occasion, speakers may desire to use an audio/visual aid to supplement their presentation. Physical handouts such as photographs and petitions should be presented to the Board Secretary or Chair of the meeting. The Park District Board does not routinely utilize electronic aids during public meetings. However, there are times when a presenter has a particular purpose for needing to use an electronic presentation aid such as a computer projector. Presenters wishing to address a public body with the aid of an electronic device shall notify the Executive Director of the request in advance. The written request shall outline the device(s) desired to be used, describe how the electronic aid will improve the clarity of the presentation, and state the desired length of the presentation. Absent extenuating circumstances, the written request must be received by the Executive Director at least two business days prior to the public body meeting. The Executive Director

shall carefully consider the material submitted and make a determination. A request may be denied for several reasons including but not limited to: availability of equipment, meeting room characteristics, described necessity to enhance delivery of the desired message, impact on the efficiency of the meeting and length of the presentation, public safety or security reasons, or any other reason determined by the Chair.

### **III. Rules for In-Person Comments:**

The following rules for public comment are intended to maintain the orderly conduct of meetings and ensure fairness to those who wish to address the Board:

A. Chair of Meetings: The President, as the chair of public meetings, or the chair pro-tempore in the President's absence, is responsible for ensuring the orderly conduct of public meetings and will rule on the appropriateness of any public comment issue that may arise.

B. General Rules: Members of the public wishing to participate in public comment during the designated public comment portion at a public meeting may do so subject to compliance with these Rules.

C. Specific Rules: The following rules shall be followed by members of the public who are addressing the Park District Board or other Park District public bodies. Members of the public who refuse to conform with the rules despite being cautioned to do so by the Chair may be asked to stop speaking and/or asked to leave or be removed from the meeting.

1. Public Comment During Public Comment Period Only: No person may address the board or engage in public comment except during the defined public comment period, when recognized by the Chair.
2. Leave to Speak and Order of Speakers: Speakers will be entitled to address the public body on a first-recognized basis by the Chair. If a speaker sign-up form was passed out, speakers will address the public body in the order they called by the Chair.
3. Time Limits Per Speaker: Speakers will be limited to three minutes per person during the defined public comment portion of the meeting.
4. Total Time Limit for Public Comment: The total time allotted for the public comment periods during any particular public meeting will be 30 minutes, unless a majority of the board affirmatively votes to extend the discussion.
5. One Speaker At A Time: Only one person may speak at a time during the defined public comment period.
6. Chair Selection of Speakers at Random: If more than 10 people want to speak during the public comment period, the chair will select speakers at random until the 30 minutes are filled.
7. One Comment Per Speaker: The chair may deny a person who has previously addressed the board from speaking again during the same meeting on the same topic.

8. No Assignment of Time: No person may assign their time to any other person.
9. Speaker Identification: Each speaker shall state their name so it can be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The speaker may also provide other identifying information.
10. Order and Decorum: Any person who engages in threatening, slanderous, or disorderly behavior when addressing the board, or who speaks out of turn or otherwise disrupts the board meeting, will be deemed out-of-order by the Chair. Repeated or extraordinary occurrences of disorderly conduct will be grounds for the Chair to cause the violator to be removed from the meeting room. The chair will rule on whether remarks made are in violation of these Rules.
11. Interruption of Speakers: Members of the public shall refrain from interrupting the designated speaker. The Chair may interrupt a speaker at any time to enforce the Rules.
12. Referral to Committee and Commissions: When appropriate, matters raised by the public may be referred, without further debate or discussion, by the Chair, to the appropriate committee, commission or other public body of the Park District.
13. Board Not Obligated to Answer Speaker Questions: During the defined public comment period, board members may ask questions of the speaker while the speaker is speaking, if recognized by the Chair. However, the board need not answer questions from a speaker during the defined public comment period. If a person has a question for the board, the individual may be asked to submit the question in writing.
14. Procedural Matters: The board has the authority to determine procedural matters regarding public participation not otherwise defined in these Rules and not inconsistent with these Rules.
15. Recording: Attendees at board meeting are permitted to film or otherwise record the open portion of Park District meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Act and other applicable laws, provided that such recording activity does not create a safety hazard or disrupt the meeting, members of the public body, or persons in attendance at the meeting. If notice has been given to the Chair or the Executive Director that a person will be recording the meeting, the Chair shall announce at the time the meeting is called to order that notice has been received that the meeting is being recorded.

#### **IV. Reasonable Accommodations:**

All public meetings are open to all members of the public. Those wishing to address a public body may request reasonable accommodation be made in order for them to do so and shall contact the Executive Director at (847) 251-1691 prior to the meeting date to make the request.