

## **Procedures for Public Comment**

### **Framework**

The Board of Directors at the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) shall provide an opportunity for members of the community to provide oral comments during its monthly Board meetings. Comments shall be limited to matters that pertain to WMATA or other transportation issues. The Board Chair shall have discretion to waive or modify any of the following rules and guidelines governing public comment at WMATA.

The public comment period shall follow the approval of minutes on the agenda and generally shall be limited to no more than 20 minutes. All persons who wish to provide public comment shall print and sign their name on a sign-up sheet, and shall include their home address and topic about which they wish to speak.

Persons who wish to provide written comments should bring a copy of their comments for staff to copy and distribute to the Board and to the public.

### **Time Limit**

The period for the public comment period generally shall be limited to no more than 20 minutes. At her/his discretion, the Board Chair may extend the initial public comment period beyond the 20-minute limit, prior to the commencement of public comment. The Board Chair may also reduce the time limit of public comment, prior to the commencement of public comment, if fewer than 10 persons have signed up to speak.

### **Procedure for Oral Comment**

1. Any person wishing to address the Board with comments pertaining to WMATA/transportation-related topics during the 20-minute oral comment forum shall sign a speakers' list prior to the commencement of the meeting. A list will be available beginning at 9:00 A.M. on the day of the Board Meeting, and it will be closed once the meeting begins. Persons who have not signed up prior to the start of the meeting will not be permitted to provide public comment. Comments related to personnel issues or contractual matters will not be allowed for this forum, as there are other avenues to pursue these matters. WMATA staff shall be responsible for ensuring that members of the public have properly signed up for the public comment period, and will ascertain the topic to be discussed consistent with these guidelines.
2. Speakers shall identify themselves in writing by providing their name, address, signature, and the subject matter and/or agenda item to which their comments pertain.
3. In order to ensure that as many people as possible have an opportunity to address the Board, speakers may address the Board only once during a three-month period.
4. Speakers shall be limited to members of the public who are not WMATA employees.

5. If the Board Chair waives the requirement that persons sign up before the start of the meeting, the Board Chair shall do so before the start of public comment but shall require that persons still fill out the sign-up sheet before they provide oral comment.
6. At the public comment period, each person will be limited to a time not to exceed 2 minutes. The Board Chair shall have discretion to modify the allotted time for speakers, particularly when a large number of persons are interested in participating in the public comment period. If the Board Chair chooses to modify the allotted time per speaker, the Board Chair shall do so before the start of public comment. WMATA staff is responsible for ensuring that the time limit for each speaker is not exceeded.
7. WMATA staff will provide a microphone to persons who have signed up to provide public comment, in the order in which they have signed up. Each person shall state his or her name, city/county of residence and topic of discussion before providing comment.
8. Comments are to be directed to the Board as a whole. The forum is intended to provide the Board of Directors an opportunity to hear members of the community. It is not intended to subject the Board to answering impromptu questions.
9. The Chair of the Board will moderate the comment period. Persons who engage in a consistent pattern of disruptive behavior at WMATA Board meetings which includes use of slurs, derogatory comments, or any other conduct, whether physical, verbal or written directed at another person or based upon another person's race, color, origin, sex, religion, sexual orientation, disability or age will not be permitted to participate in public comment at WMATA Board meetings.
10. The list of persons who signed up to provide public comment but who did not have an opportunity to speak will be transferred to the next Board meeting. At the next Board meeting, they will be permitted to speak in the order they appeared on the list.

The Office of the Secretary will administer these guidelines.