

GENERAL POLICY FOR PUBLIC ACCESS TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Citizen Participation

Property Tax Code, Section 6.04 (d), (e), (f), and (g)

It shall be the policy of the board of directors to allow opportunities for the public to speak to the board on any issue under its jurisdiction. The agenda for the order of business for all regular meetings shall include an item to allow receipt of citizens' input on appraisal district and appraisal review board policies and procedures. The period of time shall be determined at the discretion of the chairman of the board of directors at each meeting. Generally, the board's statutory duties are:

- (a) adopting the district's annual operation budget;
- (b) contracting for necessary services;
- (c) making general policy regarding the operation of the appraisal district; and
- (d) appointing appraisal review board members

At each regularly scheduled meeting on the second Wednesday of the month at 8:30 a.m., the chairman of the board shall announce that each person wishing to address the board on such policies, procedures or issues may have five (5) minutes in which to do so. The board may vote to expand any person's time for speaking. If a large number of persons wish to speak to the board, the board may vote to reduce each person's time for speaking as may be reasonably necessary to allow the board to complete its business and adjourn the meeting at a reasonable time. The board may refuse to hear any person who attempts to speak on a subject unrelated to the policies and procedures of the appraisal district or the appraisal review board and unrelated to any other issue under the board's jurisdiction.

The board of directors shall provide reasonable access to the board and appraisal review board for a person who does not speak English or who has a physical, mental, or developmental disability.

1. Any non-English speaking person, deaf person, or person who has any physical, mental or development disability desiring to appear before the board must file a written request with the chief appraiser, who will schedule the person to present testimony at the next regularly scheduled board meeting. The request should indicate any special assistance or arrangement required to make the presentation to the board possible.
2. The chief appraiser shall appoint at least one bilingual person in the office to serve as an interpreter. An interpreter shall attend any meeting of the board of directors of appraisal review board in which a non-English speaking person is scheduled to testify. The individual should notify the chief appraiser in writing at least three (3) business days prior to the meeting, and earlier if possible.
3. The chief appraiser shall coordinate with the area service council of the Texas Commission for the Deaf in obtaining services and allowing the interpreter to

attend any meeting of the board of directors in which a deaf person is scheduled to testify. The interpreter shall be paid a per diem amount equal to that paid to members of the appraisal review board. If a person has a disability and needs assistance to enter the appraisal district office and board room, the individual should notify the chief appraiser in writing at least three (3) business days prior to the meeting.

4. The chief appraiser shall coordinate with the Texas Rehabilitation Commission, the United Way, and other public and private agencies with regional offices to provide proper arrangements for public forums, to include the correct placement of microphones, sufficient area for wheelchairs and other mobility aides, and any other matter which would assist in improved access to the board of directors in a public hearing. If a person has a disability and needs assistance to enter the appraisal district office and board room, the individual should notify the chief appraiser in writing at least three (3) business days prior to the meeting.
5. Meetings of the board of directors for which written notice has been given from persons requiring barrier free access shall be conducted in public buildings complying with the standards and specifications adopted by the State Purchasing and General Services Commission pursuant to the Elimination of Architectural Barriers Act, Article 7 of Article 601b, V.T.C.S., where available. If no barrier-free public buildings are available in the district, the chief appraiser shall make arrangements for temporary wheelchair ramps to be available, as well as other physical aides for persons with disabilities. If a person has a disability and needs assistance to enter the appraisal district office and board room, the individual should notify the chief appraiser in writing at least three (3) business days prior to the meeting.
6. The board of directors provides for public complaints or grievances on any matter within the jurisdiction of the board of directors about policies and procedures against the Waller County Appraisal District, Appraisal Review Board and the Board of Directors. Complaints may not be addressed to any of the grounds for challenge and protest before the appraisal review board as set out in Section 41.03 and 41.41, Tax Code. The board intends that, whenever feasible, complaints and grievances be resolved at the lowest possible administrative level.

Correspondence shall be mailed to:
Chairman, Board of Directors
Waller County Appraisal District
P O Box 887
Hempstead, Texas 77445

- (1) The complaint/grievance should be in writing, request placement on the board agenda, along with all documentation, and specify the subject matter to be considered. The request must state who will make the presentation.
- (2) The complaint/grievance should be filed within 15 days of the event or series of events of which the complaint/grievance is alleged.

- (3) The chief appraiser shall have 10 days following the receipt of the complaint to notify the individuals, delegations, or complainants of the date, time and place of the meeting.
- (4) The chief appraiser shall provide the Board with copies of the original complaint/grievance, all responses, and any written documentation previously submitted by the individuals, delegations, complainants, and the administration. The board is not required to consider documentation not previously submitted or issues not previously stated.
- (5) The board's deliberations at its meetings with respect to complaints shall occur in open session, as authorized by the Texas Open Meetings Act, Article 6252-17, Tex.Rev.Civ.Stats.
- (6) The chairman of the board of directors may set reasonable time limits. The Board shall hear the complaint/grievance and may request a response from the appraisal district. The District shall make an audio tape recording before the Board. The Board shall then make and communicate its decision orally or in writing at any time up to and including the next regularly scheduled board meeting.

Exception: However, if the grievance involves a complaint or charge against another District employee or Board member, it shall be heard in a closed meeting unless an open hearing is requested in writing by the employee or Board member against whom the complaint or charge is brought. The employee will have to follow the guidelines set out in the Employee Handbook adopted by the Board of Directors.

The board of directors shall make to the public and taxing jurisdictions information of public interest describing the functions of the board and procedures for filing and resolving complaints by the board.

The board of directors, at least quarterly and until final disposition of any complaint filed, shall notify the parties to the complaint the status of the complaint unless notice would jeopardize and undercover investigation.

Citizens will not be permitted to enter into discussion or debate as other agenda items are being considered by the board.