

AMENDED AND RESTATED ORDER FOR ADDRESSING COMMISSIONERS COURT  
FOR INDIVIDUALS NOT ON COMISSIONERS COURT AGENDA

WHEREAS, individuals or groups of individuals who are not listed on the agenda of Commissioners Court desire to address the Commissioners Court during meetings of Commissioners Court; and

WHEREAS, Commissioners Court desires to provide a limited amount of time (to be known as the "open forum") during each regular or special meeting of the Commissioners Court to allow such individuals or groups to so address Commissioners Court; and

WHEREAS, individuals or groups of individuals who are not listed on the agenda of a Commissioners Court meeting are not allowed to comment or present information on an agenda item during meetings of Commissioners Court except during the open forum; and

WHEREAS, Commissioners Court desires to set forth certain guidelines for the open forum portion of the agenda for an orderly conduct of meetings; and

WHEREAS, Commissioners Court desires to amend its previous Order effective June 16, 2015, to provide a more efficient manner to conduct meetings and the open forum.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDERED that the Commissioners Court of Hidalgo County, Texas, sets forth the following amended guidelines to hear citizen communications not on the agenda during the open forum portion of the Commissioners Court meetings:

1. At each regular or special meeting of the Commissioners Court, the Commissioners Court shall schedule no more than thirty (30) minutes to hear all communications that have not been designated on the agenda by topic. Each presentation shall not exceed a maximum of three (3) minutes, provided, however, if more than (10) six individuals desire to present, Commissioners Court may limit the time of each presentation to an amount of time less than three (3) minutes to accommodate the number of presentations registered so as to allow all individuals registered to address the Commissioners Court during the open forum portion of the agenda.
2. Time limitations shall not preclude the Commissioners Court from requesting specific reports from anyone attending the Commissioners Court meeting and having information desired by the Commissioners Court pertaining to a specific topic under discussion.
3. Audience participation at a Commissioners Court meeting is limited to the open forum portion of the meeting designated for that purpose.
4. At all other times during a Commissioners Court meeting, the audience shall not enter into discussion or debate on matters being considered by the Commissioners Court, unless requested by the presiding officer.
5. Each individual or group of individuals desiring to so make a presentation to Commissioners Court during the open forum portion of the agenda may do so by following the steps listed below:
  - a. Persons desiring to make a statement to the Commissioners Court shall be required to register in the register log located in the Commissioners Court prior to the commencement of the meeting of Commissioners Court. The

person making the request shall complete, in the space provided, the registration log which shall include at a minimum the person's name, and the specific subject matter to be presented by that person during the open forum.

- b. Complaints or charges against a specific employee(s) or a specific public official(s), matters related to potential or current litigation, and matters related to the purchase or sale of real property shall not be heard unless the item is submitted at least four working days in advance, and the item is scheduled on the agenda. The presiding officer may halt any person who violates this provision and require that the person engage in no further discussion regarding any such prohibited matter.

- 6. The Commissioners Court shall not take action on any request or item that is not listed on the agenda. Although the Commissioners Court may respond to requests for future information, the Commissioners Court shall not deliberate, discuss or make any decision on any communication presented during open forum that is not properly listed on the agenda for the meeting.

7. It is not the intention of the Hidalgo County Commissioners Court to provide a public forum for the demeaning of any individual or group. Neither is it the intention of the Court to allow a member (or members) of the public to insult the honesty and/or integrity of the Court, as a body, or any member or members of the Court, individually or collectively. Accordingly, profane, insulting or threatening language directed toward the Court and/or any person in the Court's presence and/or racial, ethnic, or gender slurs or epithets will not be tolerated. Violation of these rules may result in the following sanctions:

- 1. cancellation of a speaker's remaining time;
- 2. removal from the Commissioners Courtroom;
- 3. a Contempt Citation; and/or
- 4. such other civil and/or criminal sanctions as may be authorized under the Constitution, Statutes and Codes of the State of Texas.

WHEREUPON, Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_ moved for the adoption of said Amended and Restated Order, which motion was seconded by Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_ and adopted by the following vote: \_\_\_\_\_ "AYE" \_\_\_\_\_ "NO," all members being present.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, this Order amends and restates all previous Orders of the Commissioners Court concerning the same subject matter and is entered this the \_\_ day of June 2015.

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Ramon Garcia  
Hidalgo County Judge

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Arturo Guajardo, Jr.  
Hidalgo County Clerk