

**RULES OF PROCEDURE, CONDUCT AND DECORUM  
AT MEETINGS OF THE  
WALKER COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' COURT**

- I. All Regular, Special, Emergency, and Executive Sessions of the Walker County Commissioners' Court will be called and conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Texas Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code.
- II. Regular, Special, and Emergency Sessions of the Walker County Commissioners' Court are open to the public and to representatives of the press and media. Executive Sessions of the Commissioners' Court are not open to the public, the press, or the media. Only those individuals expressly requested or ordered to be present are allowed to attend Executive Session.
- III. The Walker County Commissioners' Court meets in Regular Session the second and fourth Monday morning of each month at 9:00 a.m. unless otherwise posted. Special Sessions are called as necessary. In order for a matter or issue to appear as an agenda item on the agenda of a Regular or Special Session of the Commissioners' Court, a request must be filed with and approved by at least one member of the Commissioners' Court and/or the County Judge by the scheduled cut-off date for that Session. (See County Judge's Administrative Secretary for scheduled cut-off dates.)
- IV. The business of Walker County is conducted by and between the members of the Walker County Commissioners' Court and by those members of the County staff, elected officials, department heads, consultants, experts and/or members of the public requested to be present and participate. While the public is invited to attend all meetings of the Commissioners' Court (except Executive Session), the public's participation therein is limited to that of observers unless a member of the public completes and submits a Citizen's Input Form to the County Judge prior to the start of that Session. A sample of the Walker County Commissioners' Court Citizen's Input Form is attached.
  - A. Each member of the public who appears before the Commissioners' Court shall be limited to a maximum of five (5) minutes to make his / her remarks. Time for each speaker shall be maintained by the County Judge or such other designated representative of the Commissioners' Court.
  - B. In matters of exceptional interest, the Court may, by a majority vote of the members of the Court in attendance at the meeting, either shorten or lengthen the time allocated per speaker and/or the total amount of time allocated for all agenda items and/or a specific agenda item.
  - C. It is the intention of the Court to provide an opportunity to the Citizens of Walker County to address the Commissioners' Court and express themselves on issues of County Government. Members of the public are reminded that the Walker County Commissioners' Court is a Constitutional Court, with both judicial and

legislative powers, created under Article V, Section 1 and Section 18 of the Texas Constitution. As a Constitutional Court, the Walker County Commissioners' Court also possesses the power to issue a Contempt of Court Citation under Section 81.024 of the Texas Local Government Code. Accordingly, members of the public in attendance at any Session of the Court shall conduct themselves with proper respect and decorum in speaking to, and/or addressing the Court; in participating in public discussions before the Court; and, in all actions in the presence of the Court. Proper attire for men, women, and children is mandatory. Those members of the public who are inappropriately attired and/or who do not conduct themselves in an orderly and appropriate manner will be ordered to leave the meeting. Refusal to abide by the Courts Order and/or continued disruption of the meeting may result in a Contempt of Court citation.

D. These Rules do not prohibit public criticism of the Commissioners' Court, including criticism of any act, omission, policy, procedure, program, or service. However, it is not the intention of the Walker 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 any member of the public to insult the honesty and/or integrity 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 any racial, ethnic, or gender slurs or epithets will not be tolerated. Such behavior may result in any or all of 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.


V. The County Judge is the presiding officer of the Walker County Commissioners' Court and is a fully participating member thereof. In the event of the absence of the County Judge, the senior member of the Commissioners' Court (in terms of total number of years as an elected representative) present at any Session of the Court shall serve as Judge Pro-Tem. However, nothing herein shall prevent the senior member of the Commissioners' Court from delegating this duty to another member of the Commissioners' Court.

VI. The County Judge (or the designated Judge Pro-Tem of the Commissioners' Court), as presiding officer of the Commissioners' Court, is responsible for conducting all meetings. Members of the public who have properly completed a Citizen's Input Form and submitted it to the County Judge must wait to be recognized before being allowed to address the Court.


VII. Special Rules for the Press and Media:

- A. No media or equipment, including lights, cameras, or microphones will be located on the Commissioners' Court bench or closer than five feet (5') from the front of the Commissioners' Court bench. Any exceptions must be approved by the County Judge or Judge Pro-Tem.
  - B. Reporters and media technicians are required to conduct themselves and operate their equipment in such a manner so as not to disrupt the Commissioners' Court deliberations or the ability of the public to see, hear, and participate in the proceedings.
  - C. Interviews shall not be conducted inside the Commissioners' Courtroom during the time the Court is in session.
  - D. Media interviews which are conducted outside the Commissioners' Courtroom should be conducted in such a manner that the interview does not disturb, impede, or disrupt the proceedings of any Session of the Court.
- VIII. The Sheriff of Walker County, or his designated deputy, shall serve as Bailiff at all Sessions of the Court. However, in the event that the Sheriff or his designee is absent or for any reason is unable to serve as Bailiff, then the Court shall appoint such other commissioned peace officer as may be necessary.
- IX. From time to time, the Commissioners' Court shall conduct town meetings and public hearings. These rules of procedure, conduct, and decorum shall apply to such town meetings and public hearings. However, the Commissioners' Court may adopt such additional and supplemental rules for such meetings as may be necessary and appropriate to conduct such meetings in an orderly, efficient, and proper manner.
- X. The Rules of Procedure, Conduct, and Decorum at meetings of the Walker County Commissioners' Court shall be effective immediately upon adoption by the Court and shall remain in full force and effect until amended or repealed by a majority vote of the Commissioners' Court.


  
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Danny Pierce  
County Judge


  
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Danny Kuykendall  
Commissioner Precinct 1

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Bill Dauge  
Commissioner Precinct 3

  
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Attest: Kari A. French  
County Clerk



  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ronnie White  
Commissioner Precinct 2

  
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Jimmy D. Henry  
Commissioner Precinct 4

Revised 2-10-97  
Revised 9-24-12  
Revised 8-26-19