

Railroad Commission of Texas Public Engagement and Participation Policy

The Railroad Commission of Texas (“Commission”) is committed to providing meaningful, accessible opportunities for public participation and engagement. Members of the public can participate through events and sessions conducted by the Commission’s Office of Public Engagement, open meetings, or direct communication with any Commissioner or with Commission leadership or staff.

Office of Public Engagement

The Commission has increased the opportunities for public engagement and participation through its Office of Public Engagement (“OPE”). OPE offers multiple opportunities for members of the public and their communities to learn more about the Commission’s work and to share their perspectives and comments on issues within its jurisdiction.

These opportunities include:

- *Listening sessions.* These sessions may be held in person and/or virtually where the public may ask questions, offer feedback, and express their views directly to Commission staff. Sessions will be held no less than 12 times in a calendar year or as directed by Commission staff. They will be scheduled, hosted, managed, and attended by OPE staff to provide the public with an opportunity to offer comments or information on any matter within the Commission’s jurisdiction. These meetings will be held at the William B. Travis State Office Building in Austin, Texas. Meeting dates and location will be posted on the RRC website. In addition, the website will have information and links to register in-person and virtual attendance, as well as a telephone number for audio-only participation. Registration is required whether attending a session virtually, in-person or telephonically. Individuals who wish to speak at these sessions must include the subject matter of their comments in their registration. When necessary, time limits may be imposed on registered speakers to ensure a fair opportunity for all registered speakers.
- *Outreach events.* Hosted by OPE staff at locations throughout the State of Texas, these events provide education about the Commission’s responsibilities and the role of the Texas energy industry in state, national, and global economies. They also offer opportunities for face-to-face interaction with Commission representatives where persons may ask questions, offer feedback, or provide comments.

Open Meetings

The Commission's regularly posted open meeting agenda will include specific instructions for registering to speak at the open meeting. Persons who have registered to speak are subject to a time limit as indicated in the meeting agenda. The Commission will accept unsolicited comments from elected officials who are present at an open meeting when they are acting in their official capacities.

Items on the posted Open Meeting Agenda

Individuals wishing to speak on items posted on the meeting agenda must register in advance in accordance with instructions contained in the posted open meeting agenda. Persons who register in advance may speak on that item only if specifically requested to do so when that item is pending before the Commissioners. A person may not make a verbal request to comment or provide information at or during the open meeting.

The Commissioners may request written or oral comments on items posted on the meeting agenda. The Commission may set deadlines for filing written comments or briefs on posted items. In determining whether to request or allow comment or information on an agenda item, the Commissioners may consider all relevant factors, including without limitation:

- can the information be presented in writing rather than orally;
- would the information be useful to the Commissioners; and
- have opportunities already been provided for submission of such information.

Items not listed on the posted Open Meeting Agenda

The Commission may, at the request of any Commissioner, include on an open meeting agenda an item for public comment. When included, this allows persons to address the Commission on matters within its jurisdiction that are not specifically posted for deliberation at that meeting.

Public comment may not be used to discuss any matter currently pending before the Commission, such as pending contested cases, rulemaking proceedings, permit applications, or inspection and enforcement matters. Texas law provides that the Commissioners may receive information and comments but cannot deliberate or otherwise act upon any matter not duly posted on the meeting agenda for the meeting.

Conduct at Meetings

Persons attending open meetings of the Commission, including those offering public comment, shall conduct themselves with dignity, courtesy, and respect toward the Commission, agency staff, and other persons in attendance in accordance with 16 TAC Sec. 1.5. Disruptive behavior, including speaking out of turn or allowing devices to emit ring tones

or other sounds, is not permitted. Recording open meetings is permitted as long as the equipment does not obstruct the visibility or hearing of the Commissioners or the attendees.

Accessibility and Accommodations

Individuals needing special equipment or assistance, such as interpreters, audio/visual aids, or accessible presentation formats, should notify the Commission prior to the meeting in accordance with the instructions contained in the meeting agenda.

In-Person Meetings

Members of the public may request an appointment with Commission leadership or staff to discuss a specific matter within the Commission's jurisdiction. Requests are considered in accordance with applicable laws, policies, and scheduling availability.