

Excerpt from RULES, PROCEDURES, AND GUIDELINES For INTERIM COMMITTEES

Proposed amendment:

II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

A. A functional role of each interim committee is to review and assess the development and implementation of public policy. Public comment should be solicited and be designed to assist committees in their policy role.

B. Each committee is committed to providing an opportunity for effective public involvement in public policy development and review.

C. Public comment will be taken at the discretion of the committee chairman or chairwoman. Public comment may be taken in person or through written communication. Public comment may not be accepted over the phone.

D. In order to manage the committee's time and agenda, the chairman or chairwoman of a committee may limit individual public comment in a manner that allows equal and fair opportunity for public comment.

E. Submission of written comments is encouraged. Written comments may be accepted at any time through electronic or regular correspondence and will be copied to all committee members and entered into the record.

F. Common courtesy is required of all parties at all times.

G. The chairman or chairwoman has the discretion to recess committee meetings whenever considered appropriate.

H. Recording or videotaping of committee meetings is permissible in a manner that does not disrupt the meeting.

Rationale:

Logistically, last minute requests are difficult to arrange, especially if the committee is out of town. The ability to provide testimony in this manner has not been announced to the public and has been limited to specific individuals and not an equitable and fair treatment of the general public. Currently, we do not have the equipment or processes in order to open this to the general public. Other alternatives such as conference calls need to be set up in advance and the number of speakers must be identified ahead of time. Met-Net or other electronic communications also need to be set up in advance and specific locations must be identified. This adds additional expense that has not been anticipated nor can be estimated easily without some parameters and advance notice. There is also a concern that this will set up an expectation for session committee testimony. If this is an area that the Council wishes us to explore, we will be happy to do so, but until processes and procedures are in place, we recommend not allowing this type of public testimony at this time.