



Public Comment Policy

To: Davidson Board of Commissioners
From: Jamie Justice, Town Manager
Re: Proposed Public Comment Policy
Date: April 24, 2018

1. OVERVIEW

The Town of Davidson rules of procedure indicate that the board of commissioners can adopt a public comment policy that applies to public comment periods for citizens at regular board meetings. The Town of Davidson has not had a public comment policy. Recently, there was discussion and questions around the expectations of citizens, elected officials, and staff with public comment periods. Comments made during past public comment periods led to the crafting of a draft policy.

Town staff researched other communities public comment policies and reviewed a UNC School of Government publication on the topic. Town staff then used that information to create a policy that is specific for the Town of Davidson. The board of commissioners reviewed this proposed policy at the April 3 and 10, 2018 board meetings and has received citizen input.

Attached is the draft public comment policy for the board to consider adopting.

2. RELATED TOWN GOALS

Strategic Plan: Community Engagement Goal

Core Value(s):

- Citizens are the heart of Davidson, so town government will treat all people fairly, with courtesy and respect.
- Open communication is essential to an engaged citizenry, so town government will seek and provide accurate, timely information and promote public discussion of important issues.

Constituents served: All citizens, elected officials, and staff.

3. OPTIONS/PROS & CONS

Option 1: Adopt the proposed public comment policy.

Pros:

A written policy serves to outline the expectations for public comments that is communicated to citizens, elected officials, and staff.

Cons:

A written policy provides guidelines and a structure that is expected to be followed by speakers and enforced by the mayor.

Option 2: Do not adopt the proposed public comment policy.

Pros:

The town has not had a policy before and the town could continue without one.

Cons:

The town would go without receiving the benefits of having a written policy outlining expectations that is communicated to citizens, elected officials, and staff

4. FYI or RECOMMENDED ACTION

Recommended action:

Approve the proposed public comment policy

5. NEXT STEPS

If approved, we will put the new policy on our website, explain it in our newsletter, and display it during board meetings, etc.