

War of the Words:

Public Comment at Open Meetings

(aka "How to Navigate the Stifle-Your-Lough School Board Challenge")

Presented by John M. Hardy
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An illustration of a man in a dark blue suit and white shirt standing at a wooden podium. He is gesturing with his right hand. To his right are two flagpoles; the one in front has a yellow flag, and the one behind has a teal flag.

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An illustration of a woman with blonde hair, wearing a dark suit and a red pin, standing at a wooden podium. She is holding a microphone to her mouth.

**Public
Comment:**

The Karen Show

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This presentation is NOT about...

<p>01 First Amendment You can't say that in the middle of a school board meeting!!!</p>	<p>02 Transgenderism Which kid uses which bathroom and locker room?!?</p>
<p>03 Porn in the Library <i>All Lawn Boys Aren't The Bluest Eye</i> is an objectively lousy read anyway.</p>	<p>04 Football Win-Loss Records This is Texas, so yes, it actually matters to someone attending your meeting.</p>

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...and this presentation is ALL about...

<p>01 First Amendment You can't say that in the middle of a school board meeting!!!</p>	<p>02 Transgenderism Which kid uses which bathroom and locker room?!?</p>
<p>03 Porn in the Library <i>All Lawn Boys Aren't The Bluest Eye</i> is an objectively lousy read anyway.</p>	<p>04 Football Win-Loss Records This is Texas, so yes, it actually matters to someone attending your meeting.</p>

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Public Comment Basics



Mandatory

Must a school board hear public comments at every meeting? How many, or for how long?



Boundaries

How can a school board control the course of public comments at a meeting?



Challenges

How can a school board respond to matters presented during public comment?

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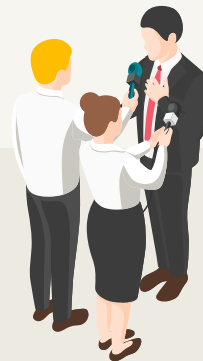
The Very Basics: Texas Open Meetings Act

The public's right to comment at an open meeting arises under the Texas Open Meetings Act.
TEXAS GOV'T CODE Chapter 551, and specifically, § 551.007.

IMPORTANT FREE RESOURCE:

Get the OAG's Handbook!

https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/sites/default/files/files/divisions/open-government/openmeetings_hb.pdf



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