

Resolution of the Flathead Reservation Water Management Board

#frwmb 02: Board Meeting Decorum

Date of Approval: DRAFT not yet approved by the Board April 13, 2023

Purpose: Clarify Expectations for Decorum at Board Meetings and During Board Business

Board Intent for Rules of Decorum:

- Provide a safe and secure setting for the Board and the public to attend.
- Enable the Board to conduct its deliberative process without interruption in a manner that can be heard and viewed by all in attendance.
- Ensure that the public has a full opportunity to be heard during public hearings and open comment periods of Board meetings.
- Facilitate transparency in the conduct of Board meetings so that all persons have the opportunity to observe and hear all of the Board discussion and votes.
- State specific rules so that all may know the rules in advance and be subject to the same rules.
- Limit interruptions, unreasonable delay, or duplication of comments, presentations, or discussion.
- Develop an atmosphere of civility that is respectful of diverse opinions and allows presentation of positions that vary from the position of others at the meeting without insults or intimidation.
- Balance the need for the Board to conduct effective meetings without the meetings extending for an unreasonable length of time with the need to give a full opportunity for the public to be heard.
- Facilitate Board meetings as business meetings, therefore public comments should relate to the business of the Board and, as such, be addressed to the Board as a whole, which conducts the business of the Board and the Office of the Water Engineer.
- Adopt these rules of decorum as the standard for conduct of meetings of the Board.

Rules of Decorum for the Public: During all times a meeting is being conducted, the following rules shall apply:

- Prior to addressing the Board, a person shall sign-up providing information for the Board record.
- All public comment to the Board shall be only after the speaker is acknowledged by the Board Chair and shall be addressed to the Board as a whole, and shall be limited to the amount of time indicated by the Board or Board Chair.
- While in attendance at a Board meeting, no attendee shall disrupt, disturb, or otherwise impede the orderly conduct of any Board meeting by any means in a manner that obstructs the business of the meeting. Disorderly conduct also includes failing to obey any lawful order of the Board Chair or Board Vice Chair, to be seated, leave the meeting room, or refrain from addressing the Board.
- No attendee shall make threats or other forms of intimidation against any person in the Board chambers or meeting room or any employee of the Board or the Office of the Water Engineer.
- To maintain the fire code occupancy limits and allow for safe exit, unless addressing the Board or entering or leaving the Board chambers or meeting room, all persons in the audience shall remain seated in the seats provided. No person shall stand or sit in hallways, corridors, doorways, or other avenues of ingress or egress.
- All persons in the Board chambers or other meeting room, including, without limitation, Board members, staff, and attendees, should silence all cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices to prevent disruption at the meeting.
- No person at any Board meeting shall be in a state of intoxication caused by the person's use of alcohol or drugs.
- Members of the public shall make every effort to be respectful at all times of those with opposing views.
- No sign shall be displayed in Board chambers in a manner that blocks the view of another person or in a manner that would violate subsection iv above.

Enforcement of Decorum: The Board Chair or Board Vice Chair shall be responsible for maintaining the order and decorum of meetings. The Board Chair or Board Vice Chair may order removed from the Board chambers, or other room in which a meeting of the Board is occurring, any person who fails to observe these rules of decorum:

- The Chair or Vice Chairperson may interrupt any speaker who is violating these rules of decorum or disrupting a meeting.
- The Chair or Vice Chairperson shall attempt to provide a verbal warning to any attendee or particular speaker that may be violating these rules of decorum, but such verbal warning shall not be required as a condition of removing an offender from the Board chambers or meeting room.
- These enforcement provisions are in addition to the authority held by any peace officer in attendance to maintain order pursuant to the officer's lawful authority.
- Any person removed from the Board chambers or meeting room shall be excluded from further attendance at the meeting from which the person has been removed, unless permission to attend is granted upon the motion adopted by a majority vote of the Board.
- In addition, by vote of the Board, any person removed from a meeting may be excluded from attendance at Board meetings for thirty (30) days after such removal. A longer period of prohibition from attendance at Board meetings may be determined by the Board by a vote, if the person has been removed from the Board chambers or meeting room in the past twenty-four months for violation of these rules of decorum, or the Board determines that the attendee's conduct was so severe as to necessitate a longer period of prohibition.
- A person prohibited from attendance at Board meetings may request a hearing with the Board to dispute prohibition. The scope of the hearing will be limited to the following: (1) the nature and extent of the behavior resulting in the suspension; and (2) if applicable, whether there was a prior removal in the past twenty-four months. The Board will consider the matter and make a determination about prohibition through majority vote. The Board may choose to conduct this hearing in-person or through online/telephonic methods.

- In addition to any other authority of the Chair or Vice Chairperson, the Chair or Vice Chairperson may call a recess during which time the members of the Board shall leave the meeting room. Similarly, if necessary for the safety of the Board and public, the Chair or Vice Chairperson may order the Board chambers or meeting room cleared of all attendees, and call a recess, adjourn or continue the meeting until another date.

Rules of Decorum for Board: Members of the Board shall attempt to balance the right of the public to know positions of the elected and appointed officials and rationale for decisions with the need for balanced discussion and timely adjournment of the meeting. In order to realize this balance, Board members shall endeavor to:

- Articulate questions, opinions, comments and reasons for votes succinctly;
- Exercise self-discipline by avoiding repeating statements of others, being verbose in expressing opinions or straying off the topic;
- Allow the Chair or Vice Chairperson to manage the meeting and call on members before speaking;
- Support the Chair or Vice Chairperson in enforcement of these rules;
- Permit other members an opportunity to speak once on an issue before speaking a second time on the same issue;
- Focus on the issue being discussed rather than disagreement of ideas and avoiding personal attacks or assuming motives of another;
- Consider the adopted Board goals, staff work plans, and limited resources when making requests for delay or additional information;
- During a Board meeting, refrain from electronic communication regarding subjects considered at that meeting. Except that Board members may receive electronic copies of materials from staff displayed on monitors or otherwise made available at the meeting.

Resolution Certification

This resolution, #frwmb 02, is hereby adopted by the Flathead Reservation Water Management Board on April 13, 2023, with [redacted] members voting in favor and [redacted] members voting opposed. This resolution will be hereby serve to guide and govern Board and OE operations.

Board Chair, Clayton Matt: Date: _____

Board Vice Chair, Kenneth Pitt: Date: _____

