COUNTY OF FREESTONE

Commissioners Court
Lloyd Lane, County Judge
Andy Bonner, Precinct No. 1
Will McSwane, Precinct No. 2
Richard McGowan, Precinct No. 3
Clyde Ridge Jr., Precinct No. 4

County Courthouse
Commissioners Courtroom
118 E. Commerce, Rm. 203
Fairfield, Texas 75840
903/389-3335 Phone
903/389-3839 Fax

COMMISSIONERS COURT RULES OF DECORUM

The Freestone County Commissioners Court ("Court") adopts the following rules of decorum to govern regular and special meetings of the Court. The intent of these rules is to ensure the safety of the public, the staff, and members of the Court, and to maximize citizen participation, efficiently receive public input, and maintain respectful decorum during each meeting.

I. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

During the regularly called meetings of the Commissioners Court, members of the public shall have two opportunities to address the Court. One public comment period shall be exclusively for Proclamations, Resolutions, and Presentations and shall take place before said items. The second section for public comments shall be held prior to the Commissioners Court consideration of remaining agenda items. During the second public comment section, members of the public may address any remaining matter on the Commissioners Court agenda and may also deliver general public comments unrelated to topics on the agenda. Members of the public may address the Court once they are verbally recognized by the County Judge or, in the absence of the County Judge[1], the presiding officer. The County Judge will recognize a potential speaker during the designated "Public Comments" agenda item.

A. TIME LIMITS

i. The speaking time limit is up to three (3) minutes per speaker during a regular or special called meeting regardless of the number of agenda items which the speaker seeks to address. At the discretion of the County Judge, this time limit can be reduced for the purpose of efficiency based on the total number of public commenters registered to speak during the public comment periods. If there are thirty (30) to forty-nine (49) speakers signed up to speak during the public comment periods, the time limit will be reduced to two (2) minutes per speaker. If fifty (50) speakers or more are signed up to speak during the public comment periods, the time limit will be reduced to one (1) minute per speaker. In making such adjustments to speaker time limits, the County Judge shall act in a reasonable and non-discriminatory manner. If an adjustment is made to speaker time limits, such adjustment shall be applied equally to all speakers the Deputy

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County Clerk or Deputy Clerk serving as Clerk of the Court, or another person designated by the County Judge shall keep the time for all speakers.

ii. If a person is addressing the Commissioners Court through a translator, the speaking time limit is up to six (6) minutes. In the event the time limit has been reduced, a person addressing the Commissioners Court through a translator shall be given twice the amount of time as a member of the public who does not require the assistance of a translator.

iii. During public hearings, the Commissioners Court will listen to public comments after the County Judge has opened the public hearing and prior to taking any vote, if needed. Each speaker can use their full allotted time to discuss the matter before the Court at the public hearing, within any time limits set by Section I(a)(i). Public comments can be made while the Court is considering the public hearing item rather than during the designated comment periods. Registration to address the Commissioners Court during a public hearing is not required.

iv. At the conclusion of the speaker's time, the County Clerk, Deputy Clerk or other person designated by the County Judge shall sound a buzzer, alarm, or other audible device to signal the conclusion of the speaker's time.

B. ONLINE PUBLIC COMMENT FORMS

For each Commissioners Court meeting, members of the public may obtain public comment forms on the Freestone County website and send them to the emails listed below immediately after the posting of the agenda. Alternatively, members of the public who need assistance submitting a form may come to the County Judge's Office located on the second (2^{nd}) floor of the Freestone County Courthouse during normal business hours. Public comment forms are due twenty-four (24) hours before the commencement of the regular or special Commissioners Court meeting. The County Judge's Office is located at the following address:

Freestone County Judge's Office

118 E. Commerce St, Rm. 205 Fairfield, Texas 75840 Phone (903) 389-3335

court.assistant@co.freestone.tx.us

cojudge.clerk@co.freestone.tx.us

Written public comments are available to Commissioners Court upon submission.

Forms will be available before each Commissioners Court in case an individual is not able to submit one to the County Judge's Office before the meeting.

C. GUIDELINES FOR SPEAKERS

i. Speaker order may be on a first-come, first-served basis (using the date and time the public comment form is received). However, speaker order is wholly up to the discretion of the County Judge. The County Judge may allow public commentors who are residents of Freestone County to speak prior to commentors who are not Freestone County residents.

ii. Speakers will be called to speak by the County Judge or presiding officer.

iii. A member of the public addressing the Court during regular and special meetings shall do so only from the podium.

iv. Before addressing the Court, speakers may be asked their name, address or Commissioner precinct number, and the agenda item that they will be addressing, if any.

v. Speakers shall stop speaking when the allocated time to speak has expired.

vi. The County Judge maintains the right to interrupt and/or excuse a speaker when the allocated time has expired, if the speaker otherwise violates these guidelines, or for any other matter at the discretion of the County Judge.

D. PUBLIC COMMENT DURING THE AGENDIZED "PUBLIC COMMENTS" ITEM

During the specifically agendized "Public Comments" item on the agendas, public comments may not be addressed to staff or other members of the public; however, the Court may ask staff to review an issue. Members of the Court cannot respond to public comments on a non-agendized item except as permitted by

Texas Government Code Section 551.042.

II. GENERAL RULES OF DECORUM

Everyone attending a regular or special meeting of Commissioners Court must adhere to these general rules of decorum, so each meeting is conducted in a timely and orderly manner.

A. PROHIBITED BEHAVIOR

i. Personal attacks, impertinent, profane, obscene, or slanderous remarks.

ii. Threatening, disruptive, or unruly behavior.

iii. Disruptive remarks or actions of approval or disapproval from the audience, such as feet stomping, snapping, whistling, yelling, clapping, verbal affirmation or rejection, or similar distractions, except that orderly clapping during the Proclamations, Resolutions, and Presentations section of the agenda is permissible.

iv. Approaching the dais on which the members of the Commissioners Court sit beyond the speaker's podium or to the immediate left or right of the podium, unless by the invitation of a member of the Commissioners Court.

v. Wearing or displaying signs, flags, banners, props, placards, or similar items larger than 8 ½ by 11 inches. This includes items that can be illuminated or be attached to any pole, stick, or other device. This does not include words or symbols on personal apparel, such as shirts, hats, and other standard items of clothing.

vi. Proper attire for men, women and children is mandatory. The following items of clothing are prohibited in the Commissioners Courtroom:

- Pajama-style clothing, excessively tight garments, or revealing clothing.
- Clothing advertising anything illegal.
- Words or pictures on clothing or jewelry which are offensive, vulgar or profane.

B. CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

All cellular phones, electronic devices, or other communication devices are to be placed on "silent" mode and must remain on silent mode while Commissioners Court is in session.

III. FAILURE TO COMPLY

Failure to comply with any part of the Freestone County Commissioners Court Rules of Decorum may result in sanctions, including but not limited to, the following:

i. removal from the Court by the County Judge or presiding officer;

ii. temporary prohibition from commenting in person during Court;

iii. cancellation of a speaker's remaining time;

iv. a finding of contempt of Commissioners Court pursuant to Texas Local Government Code Section 81.023 which is punishable by a fine of not more than twenty-five (25) dollars or by confinement of not more than twenty-four (24) hours;

v. referral of matter for other civil sanctions and/or criminal charges as may be authorized under the Constitution and laws of the State of Texas.

IV. BAILIFF

The Freestone County Sheriff or designee shall provide Bailiffs at all meetings of the Court. Bailiffs are charged with maintaining order in the courtroom and will remove any person from the courtroom who has violated the decorum of the Court at the request of the County Judge.

The Bailiff is permitted to issue criminal trespass warnings barring entrance to the premises of the Freestone County Commissioners Courtroom during meetings of the Court to members of the public who have: 1) caused a continuing series of disruptions over a single or multiple meetings of the Commissioners Court and have failed to comply with less restrictive means of correcting the disruptions; or 2) caused a substantial and serious disruption of a Commissioners Court meeting such that less restrictive means of correcting the disruption would be futile. Any criminal trespass warning notice issued shall prevent entrance to the Commissioners Courtroom for a period determined by the Bailiff to be proportionate to the necessity to stop and remediate any misconduct, but shall be for no longer of a period than one hundred and eighty (180) days per incident that results in a criminal trespass warning.

V. COURTROOM CAPACITY

Members of the public are welcome to attend all public portions of Court meetings. In the event the Commissioners Courtroom is unable to accommodate seating for all members of the public or the fire safety capacity of the courtroom is reached, the Court meeting will be moved to the District Courtroom located on the third (3rd) floor of the Freestone County Courthouse. If the District Courtroom has reached it's capacity limit or the fire safety capacity is reached, the Bailiff or Freestone County Fire Marshal may close admission to the courtroom. If admission to the courtroom is closed, Attendees will be let into the courtroom once space is available.

VI. REQUESTS FOR ACCOMMODATIONS

Persons with disabilities who plan to attend Court and need accommodations, auxiliary aids, or services such as interpreters, readers, or large font size are requested to contact the Freestone County Judge's Office at (903) 389-3335. The request needs to be made at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the Commissioners Court meeting. If the County receives a request less than forty-eight (48) hours before the Commissioners Court meeting, the County will make reasonable attempts to provide accommodations.

PASSED AND APPROVED at this public hearing of the Freestone County Commissioners Court, at which a quorum was present, on the 17th day of June, 2026.

Lloyd Lane
Freestone County Judge

Andy Bonner, Commissioner
Precinct No. 1

Richard McGowan, Commissioner
Precinct No .3

Will McSwane, Commissioner
Precinct No. 2

Clyde Ridge, Commissioner
Precinct No. 4

ATTEST:

Renee Gregory, County Clerk

(Seal)

FILED FOR RECORD
At 9 ,o'clock A M

JUN 17 2026

RENEE GREGORY
Clerk County Court, Freestone County, Texas
By

COMMISSIONERS COURT
FREESTONE COUNTY, TEXAS