

Handling Written Comments Submitted in Advance of Board Meetings

BACKGROUND

In March 2014, the Board of Trustees adopted a policy for conducting board meetings. The policy guides the development of agendas, the order of business, and procedures for appearing before the Board. In the past two years, the Board has made minor adjustments in its practices and new circumstances have arisen that were not addressed in the policy. For example, in January 2017, the amendments to the Public University Fund Investment Policy garnered a number of written comments from faculty and students. The policy provides no guidance on how written comments addressing particular agenda items should be handled by the Board Office. Lacking any specific guidance, the Board Office forwarded the materials to the Board in batches.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

As follow-up, staff developed amendments to the policy for handling written comments on agenda items. These amendments are intended to provide transparency to the public, as well as guidance to staff. The proposed amendments are shown in red text and strikethrough in Exhibit A of Attachment 1.

The proposed amendments also change the order of business for Board meetings to reflect the Board's shift to taking public comments earlier in the meeting. The current policy provided flexibility to the Chair to change the order of business, and so this change was instituted last October to give students and other members of the public greater certainty on when general public comments would be taken. The amendments also request that those appearing before the Board provide an email address when signing up for comment. This will assist the Board Office in following up with the commenter, if needed.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff propose that the Executive & Audit Committee recommend to the Board that it adopt the resolution amending the Conduct of Board Meetings policy as provided in Attachment 1.



Oregon State University Conduct of Board Meetings

Board Agenda

Staff will make every effort to deliver the proposed agenda, and all available, pertinent materials, for each regular Public Meeting of the Board to each trustee by regular mail, electronic mail, or otherwise, not less than seven days before any regularly scheduled meeting. Each item on the agenda must be approved by either the Chair or the President before being placed on the agenda. Except in unusual circumstances, staff must submit proposed agenda items, including consent agenda items, and pertinent materials to be included with the agenda, to the Secretary of the Board at least fourteen days prior to a Board meeting.

Order of Regular Meetings

The following shall be the order of business at each regular Public Meeting of the Board:

1. Call to Order/Roll/Declaration of a Quorum
2. Opening Comments and Reports
3. **Public Comments**
- ~~3.~~ 4. Consent Agenda (including approval of minutes)
- ~~4.~~ 5. Reports of Standing Committees of the Board
- ~~5.~~ 6. Reports of Special Committees of the Board
- ~~6.~~ 7. Action Items
- ~~7.~~ 8. Discussion Items
8. ~~Public Comment~~
9. Adjournment

The order of business of the Board may be changed or suspended at any Public Meeting by the Chair or by a majority of the voting trustees present. An item may be moved from the consent agenda to the regular agenda by request of any trustee.

Procedure for Appearing Before the Board

Individuals who wish to provide public comment must sign up with the Secretary of the Board in advance of the public comment section of a meeting, stating their name, **email address**, affiliation, and the topic to be discussed. A sign-up sheet will be available at each meeting. Unless otherwise indicated on the agenda or by the Chair, each public comment period will be for up to 30 minutes with a five-minute limit per speaker.

The Chair is authorized to control meetings of the Board, to enforce requirements of order and decorum, and to limit comments that are duplicative, disruptive, or irrelevant.

Procedure for Submitting Written Comments Related to Items on the Agenda

Individuals who wish to provide written comment related to a specific item on the agenda may do so by 1) sending that information electronically to trustees@oregonstate.edu; 2) delivering the materials to the Board Office; or 3) mailing the material to the Board Office.

Written material must be received at least two business days in advance of the meeting at which the agenda topic is scheduled. Material should be no more than three pages in length. Please note that documents provided to the Board may be subject to disclosure under Public Records Law. The Chair and Board Secretary will determine whether and, if so, when, submitted material is appropriate for dissemination to trustees and posting on the Board's website based on relevant Board actions. Written comments submitted to the Board not directed to a specific agenda item will be handled as general correspondence. The Board Chair will direct the distribution and response to these comments.

Document History

- Adopted by the Board of Trustees March 13, 2014
- Amended _____