



## Public Comment Administrative Process and Policy

### Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to encourage public participation in open meetings held by governing bodies within the City of Seaside, Oregon. Generally speaking, this applies to Seaside City Council and Planning Commission meetings. This policy should encourage engagement with the public in open meetings and increase public access to make open comment or add comment and discussion to scheduled agenda items.

### Policy:

The City of Seaside encourages public participation in open public meetings through various avenues, which includes in-person, in-writing and now via a virtual/electronic method that includes any combination of audio/video available in council chambers. The City of Seaside welcomes public comment, healthy debate, and the expression of diverse opinions in a respectful manner. When the governing body has the authority to limit comments, they should seek inclusive options and avoid unnecessary barriers that create exclusivity. For example, a governing body may limit comments from the public if the length of the meeting would otherwise be unduly increased by reason of repetition, when comments are not reasonably related to the agenda item being discussed, or when a member of the public is using threatening or abusive language, profanity or language that is intended to be, or is reasonably perceived by others to be demeaning, berating, threatening, intimidating, hostile, or offensive.

### Directives:

- In accordance with ORS Chapter 192 and HB2560, the City of Seaside should continue to post adequate notice of any open meeting on the City's website, on City Hall doors and via other channels available. Instructions for attending or accessing the meeting will be included in the notice.
- When the City of Seaside is aware that topics of particular interest to the public will be discussed at an open meeting, the governing body should make efforts to provide notice that such topics will be discussed and seek to notify a wide range of public audiences.
- If the City of Seaside has specific instructions that a member of the public must comply with to participate in an open meeting, the city will make every effort to include those instructions along with the notice of the open meeting. When a member of the public is present (virtually or in person) at a meeting but has not followed instructions that were required to participate in the open meeting, if feasible, the governing body should allow the member of the public to participate and make attempts to collect required information after the meeting or at a future meeting.
- The City of Seaside will attempt to have multiple avenues that members of the public may use to participate in public meetings. If feasible, the public should be able to comment in person, virtually, or by submitting comments beforehand by email or in writing to be included in the public record during the meeting.
- The City of Seaside is committed to principles of equal access. When a member of the public needs assistance with attending or accessing any open meeting due to a disability, such member of the public should contact the Seaside City Hall at (503) 738-5511 or at [publiccomment@cityofseaside.us](mailto:publiccomment@cityofseaside.us).

**Public Comment Process and Options:** *In all situations of public comment that follow below, registration ahead of time will be required beginning with the council meeting on February 28, 2022. Those wishing to comment can register at Seaside City Hall, online at [CityofSeaside.us](http://CityofSeaside.us), calling (503) 738-5511 or by sending an email to [publiccomment@cityofseaside.us](mailto:publiccomment@cityofseaside.us). Comment is limited to no more than three minutes per individual and no more than 45 minutes total during the open comment period of a public meeting. The mayor and council reserve the right to adjust for a given meeting depending on the topic or necessity of the public. Agenda item comments will also be limited to no more than three minutes but subject to adjustment as noted above.*

• **Method 1: Attend the public meeting in person.**

- As of the effective date of this policy, in-person attendance continues to be permitted in Oregon and the City of Seaside but has been limited at times due to the ongoing pandemic. Those attending the meeting are permitted to offer comment of items not already on the agenda or at times when an agenda item calls for public comment. In-person testimony is limited to three (3) minutes per person, unless directed differently by the mayor at the time of the meeting.

• **Method 2: Submit written comment prior to the commencement of a public meeting.**

- If you wish to provide written comment, you must submit it by *noon*, the day of the meeting to [publiccomment@cityofseaside.us](mailto:publiccomment@cityofseaside.us). All written comments received by the deadline will be distributed to the City Council and the appropriate staff prior to the start of the meeting. These written comments will be included in the record copy of the meeting when finalized.

• **Method 3: Provide spoken comment through Virtual Process and Zoom Link.**

- If you wish to provide public comment via Zoom, please submit your request to speak by *noon*, the day of the meeting to [publiccomment@cityofseaside.us](mailto:publiccomment@cityofseaside.us) or via the city's website. Please include the name that appears on your Zoom account (you must register to use this method) and the subject of the public comment. To make a public comment through the Zoom link, the device you use to access the link will need to have a microphone. When logging into the meeting, please ensure the name listed on the attendee list is the name you submitted. It is also helpful for you to "raise your hand" on the Zoom software to indicate you are there to make a public comment so your name will rise to the top of the attendees list. The Zoom link may be found on the agenda page of our website.

• **Method 4: Provide spoken comment by Calling in via Cellular or Landline Phone.**

- If you wish to provide public comment via phone, please submit your request to speak by *noon*, the day of the meeting to [publiccomment@cityofseaside.us](mailto:publiccomment@cityofseaside.us) or by calling (503) 738-5511. Please include the phone number you will be calling from on your request and the subject of the public comment. You will need to provide a phone number, so we know which user to unmute when the time comes for you to give a public comment. We will call on you when it is your time to make a comment. To call into the meeting, please use the phone number, meeting ID and password on the agenda. This information is available by calling City Hall or via the City of Seaside's website.

*This policy was discussed by the Seaside City Council at the Council meeting on Monday, February 14, 2022, and approved for adoption. Depending on additional Oregon Legislation or technology changes that necessitate adjustment of this policy, this will stand to be the public comment policy effective immediately on the date signed below.*

  
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Jay Barber, Mayor                                  Date

 2/23/2022  
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Mark Winstanley, City Manager                                  Date