

To: Executive Committee
From: Sup. Heidi Wegleitner
RE: Chapter 7 Amendment Proposals
Date: April 1, 2020

Dear Chair Eicher and Executive Committee members:

I have updated my proposals based on my understanding that the staff recommendation includes a requirement for audio recording of committee meetings and on further information that two county board budget hearings are already required under other applicable laws. I would like to draw your attention to one new proposal I am submitting which would allow public comment to the County Board on issues not on the agenda. As the current public health emergency demonstrates, sometimes issues emerge after agendas are noticed and the public is understandably interested in providing input on these issues. Public comment on issues not on the agenda is already allowed in the committee rules and I think it makes sense to expand it to the Board as we continue to increase strategies and methods for improved public engagement.

Expanding Public Comment Opportunities at County Board and Committee Meetings

Delete 7.225(2)(a). Remove authority to deny public comment to a member of the public if that person has already spoken on that item (e.g. an amendment).

~~(2)(a) If a committee has taken testimony on an item and the same committee considers action on the item at a separate meeting, the public shall not have the opportunity to testify if that same item appears on subsequent agendas of the same committee. Items are not considered to be the same item if a new amendment has been posted and the public has not had the opportunity to testify on the new amendment.~~

Delete the second sentence from 7.51(7). Remove authority to deny public comment at County Budget meetings.

~~(7) During the fall budget session, the county board may designate meetings at which no matters other than the annual budget may be considered. At such meetings, no public testimony or registrations shall be taken, provided a public hearing has been held on the budget prior to the budget meeting.~~

Delete 7.63(2) to remove authority to deny public comment at meetings where an item has already been noticed for public hearing.

~~If the county board has taken testimony on an item and considers action on the item at a separate meeting, the public shall not have the opportunity to testify when that same item appears on subsequent county board calendars.~~

Allow Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda at County Board

Amend 7.51 or 7.60 to create new section allowing public comment to the county board on issues not on the agenda. (This already exists in chapter 7 for committees. See Section 7.225(1), D.C. Ords.).

(1) The agenda for each board meeting shall contain an item titled public comment at which point on the agenda any member of the public shall be allowed to speak on any issue which is not on the agenda or, with the consent of the board, any issue over which the board has jurisdiction. Persons wishing to speak shall first file with the board or its staff a form complying with s. 8.10. Copies of the form shall be made available at the meeting.

Double Comment Time for Registrant Using Interpreter

Amend 7.63(6) as follows:

(6) No registrant shall speak for more than five minutes, subject to the following exceptions: that:

- (a) No registrant using an interpreter shall speak for more than ten minutes; and
- (b) No registrant shall speak for more than two minutes, except registrants using an interpreter may speak for four minutes, on matters being reconsidered by the board, and consideration of motions to override county executive vetoes, no registrant shall speak for more than two minutes.

Providing Free Child Care at County Board Budget Hearings

Add the following to section to 7.51: The County Board shall make child care available to the public at no cost at the County Board budget hearings.

Create Opportunity for County Board Rule Change by Majority Vote at Beginning of Session (Every April)

Amend 7.99 as follows 7.99 AMENDMENT OF CHAPTER 7. Ordinances in chapter 7 may be amended or repealed by a majority vote of supervisors present at the county board's first (organizational) meeting in April of even numbered years and the first meeting of the county board session in odd-numbered years, which is the second meeting in April, but otherwise shall only be amended or repealed by a two-thirds vote of the quorum of supervisors present at the board meeting.

Annual Committee Public Engagement Plans

Create new section as follows 7.235(?)

Annual Committee Public Engagement Plans.

(a) Each committee shall identify at least three significant issues or items per session to include in the committee's public engagement plan. One of the items shall be the annual operating and capital budget recommendations of the committee. A significant issue could be identified by name or, if it has a budgetary impact, an issue or item could be identified as significant if it meets a certain cost threshold set forth by the committee.

(b) The committee's public engagement plan shall identify: (i) who is most impacted by the issue or item, (ii) the strategies for connecting with those most impacted to provide meaningful opportunities to guide the committee's policy and budget decisions on the issue or item, (iii) the need for translation and interpretation services, and (iv) how County Board funds may support the engagement.

© The committee's public engagement plan shall be provided to the Executive Committee and Equal Opportunities Commission no later than September 1,

(d) Meetings noticed for potential action on an issue or item identified in the public engagement plan shall be prioritized for video-recording resources and be live-streamed or video-recorded when possible.