
From: Kay Bertken <kaybertken752@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 6, 2026 2:46 PM
To: Clerk/BOS; District 5; District 4; District 3; District 1; District 2
Subject: April 7, 2026 Agenda item 9, updates to public participation procedures

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April 6, 2026

Brian Pacheco, Supervisor District 1
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The League of Women Voters of Fresno opposes your agendized proposal to amend policy #29 limiting the time for public comment at Board of Supervisors meetings. It is of particular concern to us that staff omitted a description of the new public comment limitation in its description of Agenda Item 9 and left that information to be ferreted out in an attachment. A vague reference to “updates to public participation procedures” did not appropriately announce this new restriction.

A primary concern of the League has always been the importance of public access to their elected officials and participation in the decisions they make on our behalf. Representative government depends on more than the free and fair election of our representatives. It also includes structured means for continued dialogue between representatives and their constituents. Those means include appropriate public comment time in public meetings of our officials.

It is hard to imagine justification for reducing the time for public comment in your meetings. Those opportunities are already quite limited to three minutes per comment and 15 minutes per item of concern. Reducing the time to hear from constituents broadcasts an inappropriate denigration of their input. Please vote against this proposal.

Yours truly,

Kay Bertken, Co-president, League of Women Voters of Fresno

Robin Chiero, Co-president, League of Women Voters of Fresno

Item #9
4-7-2024

Fresno County Board of Supervisors
2281 Tulare, Room #301
Fresno, CA 93721

April 7, 2026

RE: Item No. 9 on the Board of Supervisors Agenda for April 7, 2026: Revision to Administrative Policy No. 29 — Board of Supervisors Meetings

Dear Members of the Board of Supervisors:

I have an observation and a question.

First my observation. From what I can see, the County is reluctant to disclose that modification of Administrative Policy No. 29 will reduce by a third — from 3 minutes to 2 minutes — the amount of time available for public testimony. I say this because this information is not found in the board agenda and not found in the staff report to your Board.

The information is elsewhere. The only way for the public to know that the time allotted for public testimony is being reduced is to open the attachments to this agenda item and read the proposed change to policy. The agenda only hints at the change, saying that the purpose of this item is to incorporate “updates to public participation procedures.” And while the staff report adds that the updates include modifications to speaker time limits, it doesn’t say what those changes are.

The proposed time change should be clearly stated in the agenda, and if not in the agenda, then in the staff report to your Board. County residents should not have to search through attachments to learn that the time allotted for public testimony is being reduced by a third.

And now to my question. Policy No. 29, as previously written and as proposed for revision, states that the rule regarding time limits “does not apply to quasi-judicial items” that come before your Board. These are matters where your Board applies existing policies to a specific set of facts, often requiring findings based on evidence, common examples being board action with respect to the approval of conditional use permits or the granting of a variances to the Zoning Ordinance.

In the past, your Board has applied the time limit rule to quasi-judicial matters despite the directive in Policy No. 29 not to do so.

So my question is this: From this time forward, is your Board going to honor Policy No. 29 and set aside the time limit rule when considering quasi-judicial matters?

Thank you,

Radley Reep
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