

**RULES OF PROCEDURE, CONDUCT, AND DECORUM AT MEETINGS OF THE
WISE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT**

- I. All Regular, Special, Emergency, and Executive Session Meetings of the Wise County Commissioners Court will be called and conducted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act.
- II. Regular, Special, and Emergency Meetings of the Wise County Commissioners Court are open to the public and to representatives of the press and media. Executive Sessions of the Commissioners Court are not open to the public, the press, or the media, and only those individuals expressly requested or ordered to be present are allowed to attend Executive Session.
- III. All business requiring a vote of the Commissioners Court will be deliberated and decided in a posted meeting with a quorum present.
- IV. The Wise County Commissioners Court meets in Regular Session on the second (2nd) Monday of each month. Additional called Commissioners Court meetings also regularly occur on the fourth (4th) Monday of the month.
- V. The business of Wise County is conducted by and between the members of the Wise County Commissioners Court and by those members of the County staff, elected officials, department heads, consultants, experts, and/or members of the public requested to be present and participate. While the public is invited to attend all meetings of the Commissioners Court (except Executive Sessions), the public's participation therein is limited to that of observers unless a member (or members) of the public is requested to address the Commissioners Court on a particular issue (or issues) or if a member of the public requests to speak during the Community Forum portion of the meeting.
- VI. The Commissioners Court invites persons with comments or observations related to County issues, projects, and policies to briefly address the Court for the limited purpose of determining whether the matter should be referred to staff for study and response and/or be placed on a future meeting agenda. Anyone speaking during the Community Forum should first identify themselves by their first and last names for the public record. There is a 3-minute time limit, and large groups interested in the same topic should select a spokesperson. State law prohibits the Court from deliberating on any item not listed on the posted agenda.
- VII. It is the intention of the Court to provide an open access to the citizens of Wise County to address the Commissioners Court and express themselves on issues of County Government. Members of the public are reminded that the Wise County Commissioners Court is a Constitutional Court, with both judicial and legislative powers, created under Article V, Section 1 and Section 18 of the Texas Constitution. As a Constitutional Court, the Wise County Commissioners Court also possesses the power to a Contempt of Court Citation under Section 81.024 of the Texas Local Government Code. Accordingly, members of the public in attendance at any Regular, Special, and/or Emergency meeting of the Court shall conduct themselves with proper respect and decorum in speaking to and/or addressing the Court; in participating in public discussions before the Court; and in all actions in the presence of the Court. Proper attire for all in attendance is mandatory. Those members of the public who are inappropriately attired and/or who do not conduct themselves in an orderly and appropriate manner will be ordered to leave the meeting. Refusal to abide by

the Court's Order and/or continued disruption of the meeting may result in a Contempt of Court citation.

- VIII. It is not the intention of the Wise County Commissioners Court to provide a public forum for the demeaning of any individual or group. Neither is it the intention of the Court to allow a member (or members) of the public to insult the honesty and/or integrity of the Court, as a body, or any member or members of the Court, individually or collectively. Accordingly, profane, insulting, or threatening language directed toward the Court and/or any person in the Court's presence and/or racial, ethnic, or gender slurs or epithets will not be tolerated. Such action shall result in one or more of the following sanctions by the Court:
- a. Cancellation of a speaker's remaining time;
 - b. Removal from the Commissioners Court meeting;
 - c. A Contempt Citation; and/or
 - d. Such other civil and/or criminal sanctions as may be authorized under the Constitution Statutes and Codes of the State of Texas.
- IX. The County Judge is the presiding officer of the Wise County Commissioners Court and is a fully participating member thereof. In the event of the absence of the County Judge, the senior member of the Commissioners Court (in terms of total number as an elected representative) present at the Regular, Special, Emergency Meeting, or Executive Session, shall serve as the Judge Pro-Tem of the Court. However, nothing herein shall prevent the senior member of this Commissioners Court from delegating this duty to another member of the Commissioners Court.
- X. The County Judge (or the designated Judge Pro-Tem of the Commissioners Court), as presiding officer of the Commissioners Court, is responsible for conducting all meetings and members of the public who desire to speak during a meeting must wait to be recognized before they will allowed to address the Court.
- XI. Media personnel are required to coordinate with the County Judge's office for appropriate placement of equipment, including lights, cameras, or microphones, so that equipment does not impede the proceedings of the meeting. Reporters and media technicians are required to structure their movements, equipment set-up and take-down and adjustments, etc., in such a manner as to not disrupt the Commissioners Court deliberations or the ability of the public to see, hear, and participate in the proceedings. Interviews shall not be conducted inside the Commissioners Courtroom during the time the Court is in session. Media interviews which are conducted outside the Commissioners Courtroom should be conducted in such a manner that the interview does not disturb, impede, or disrupt the proceedings of any Regular, Special, Emergency, and/or Executive Session Meeting of the Court.
- XII. The Sheriff of Wise County, Texas, or his designated deputy shall serve as the Bailiff of all Regular, Special, and Emergency Meetings of the Court. However, in the event of the absence of the Sheriff, or in the event that that there exists a conflict of interest between the Sheriff, any member of the Sheriff's Office, and the Commissioners Court, or in the event of an Executive Session of the Court in which the Sheriff is not an authorized participant, then in such event, the Court shall appoint such other commissioned peace officers as may be necessary and proper to serve as Bailiff of the Court to maintain order and decorum in the Courtroom.

- XIII. From time to time, the Commissioners Court shall conduct town hall meetings and public hearings. These rules of procedure, conduct, and decorum shall also apply to such town hall meetings and public hearings. The Commissioners Court may also adopt such additional and supplemental rules for such meetings as may be necessary and appropriate to conduct such meetings in an orderly, efficient, and proper manner.
- XIV. These Rules of Procedure, Conduct, and Decorum at meetings of the Wise County Commissioners Court shall be effective immediately upon adoption by the Court and shall remain in full force and effect until amended or repealed by a majority vote of the Commissioners Court.

Adopted by the unanimous vote of the Wise County Commissioners Court on the 11th day of March, 2019.

J.D. Clark

J.D. Clark, County Judge

Danny White

Danny White, Precinct 1 Commissioner

Absent

Kevin Burns, Precinct 2 Commissioner

Harry Lamance

Harry Lamance, Precinct 3 Commissioner

Gaylord Kennedy

Gaylord Kennedy, Precinct 4 Commissioner

Attest:

Sherry Lemon

Sherry Lemon, County Clerk

