



LWV ABC <lwwabc@gmail.com>

LWV ABC request to consider allowing public comment at Anoka County Board meetings

1 message

League of Women Voters ABC <lwwabc@gmail.com>

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To: Matt Look <Matt.Look@co.anoka.mn.us>, Scott Schulte <scott.schulte@co.anoka.mn.us>, Julie.Braastad@co.anoka.mn.us, Jeff Reinert <jreinert@mnpharm.com>, Mandy Meisner <mandy.meisner@co.anoka.mn.us>, Mike Gamache <mike.gamache@co.anoka.mn.us>, Commissioner Robyn West <robyn.west@co.anoka.mn.us>

Cc: Rhonda Sivarajah <rhonda.sivarajah@co.anoka.mn.us>, jjeppson@blainemn.gov

Bcc: LWV ABC <lwwabc@lwwmn.org>

To Anoka County Board Members, current and incoming:

Congratulations on your recent election to the Anoka County Board of Commissioners! LWV ABC appreciates your participation in the candidate forums conducted this fall. These forums enabled voters to make informed decisions about the candidates; we logged more than 1600 views of County Commissioner forums this fall. And we find that voters return to the videos after the election to learn more about the elected officials who will now represent them.

We understand that the Board's December 2 meetings will include discussion of the organization and operation of the Board, including how Board meetings are conducted. LWV ABC respectfully requests that changes be made to current operating practices to allow public comments at Regular County Board meetings in 2023, in addition to at Board committee meetings.

Several Commissioner candidates recognized that public comments should be allowed when asked at candidate forums this fall. Adding public comments would be an important step towards improved transparency, and it can be done without incurring costs. This request is based on the League of Women Voters County Governance Study, which was completed in 2022. We attach it for your review. The study can also be accessed online [on the LWV ABC website](#).

The following chart provides summary comparisons from that study. You can see that Anoka County is in the minority of Metro Counties in not allowing public comment. Allowing an opportunity for public comments is an important step toward a more open and inclusive county government.

Thank you in advance for consideration of this request.

Respectfully yours,

Gretchen Sabel

President, League of Women Voters Anoka, Blaine & Coon Rapids Area

B. County Board Meetings

- Anoka County does not permit public comment at county board meetings.
- Ramsey County does not generally permit public comment at county board meetings.
- Whether members of the public have the opportunity to make comments at public meetings varies among the counties.

Table 2: County Board Meetings

COUNTY BOARD MEETINGS	ANOKA	CARVER	DAKOTA	HENNEPIN	RAMSEY	SCOTT	WASHINGTON
Are there Board Committees made up exclusively of Commissioners?	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Are County Board Agendas posted on the county website?	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Are County Board Meetings posted on the website?	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Are County Board Meetings Recorded?	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Are the minutes of a County Board Meeting posted on the website?	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Can the public subscribe to receive notice of Meetings, Agendas, Minutes via the website?	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Are public comments permitted during County Board Meetings?	NO	YES	YES	YES	NOT GENERALLY	YES But only on topics that are not the agenda	YES

LWVABC meets on the second Monday of the month virtually and/or in person, usually Andover City Hall's Senior Center, located at 1685 Crosstown Boulevard NW. In person or virtually, we provide monthly programs on civic engagement topics and other opportunities for community involvement. Visit our website at www.lwvabcmn.org for meeting information and much more!

The League of Women Voters ABC is a grassroots organization that encourages informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. LWV ABC advocates on issues but never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.



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