

Borough of Wyomissing  
Virtual Meeting  
Public Comment Policy

In order to ensure that all regular virtual public meetings and special virtual public meetings of the Wyomissing Borough Council and all Wyomissing Borough Committees and Boards have a consistent policy for virtual public comment, the following shall be the policy of the Wyomissing Borough Council and all Wyomissing Borough Committees and Boards:

**Section 1. Virtual Public Comment Period.**

- I. Every regular virtual public meeting and special public meeting of the Wyomissing Borough Council and all Wyomissing Borough Committees and Boards shall have, as an agenda item, a period of time set aside for reviewing comments from members of the public as identified in the Sunshine Act, hereinafter referred to as the “Virtual Public Comment Period.”
- II. Each Virtual Public Comment Period shall not exceed twenty (20) minutes in total length unless by motion passed by a majority of the members of the Council, Committee, or Board conducting the virtual public meeting and who are virtually present and voting. The length of time the Virtual Public Comment Period is extended shall be stated in such motion.

**Section 2. Resident and Taxpayer Comment.**

- I. Prior to making any public comment, residents and taxpayers who are not members of the Borough Council, Committee, or Board conducting the virtual public meeting or Borough Staff or Borough Consultants, referred to hereinafter as “Public Participants,” shall identify themselves to other participants in the virtual public meeting by stating their full name and address.

- II. Immediately prior to the chairperson opening the meeting for public comment, the following statement shall be read: “Public comment shall only be given during the public comment period of the meeting. All visitors to a public meeting shall refrain from any comments during any other period of the meeting, unless they are directly asked by a Committee, Commission, Board or Council member to provide comment.”
- III. No Public Participant shall make a comment for more than five (5) minutes during the Virtual Public Comment Period. No member of the public shall be allowed to delegate his/her time to any other member of the public during a virtual public meeting.
- IV. Any Public Participant’s time not used for comment shall be deemed waived.
- V. All public comments shall be related to the subject matter jurisdiction of the Borough Council, Committee, or Board conducting the virtual public meeting, and shall be limited to matters of public concern, official action, or deliberations that are, or may come, before the Borough Council, Committee, or Board.
- VI. Presenting comment in the form of questions shall be avoided since the purpose of the Virtual Public Comment Period is to receive comment, not to engage in question and answer sessions, or to engage in public debate or argument with members of Borough Council, Committee, Board members, Borough Staff, or other members of the public participating in the virtual public meeting. No such questions shall be answered without permission of the presiding officer.
- VII. Notwithstanding the requirements of this Section 2, Paragraphs I through VI, any person has the right to raise an objection at any time to a perceived violation of the Sunshine Act, 65 Pa.C.S. 701 *et seq.*, at any meeting of Borough Council or of a Committee or Board of the Borough.

### **Section 3. Borough Council, Committee, Board, Staff, and Consultant Comment.**

- I. Any member of a Borough Committee or Board, Borough staff, and Borough consultants shall have the right to speak at any time during a virtual public meeting of such Borough Committee or Board. In addition, any member of the Borough Council shall have the right to speak at any time during a virtual public meeting of Council, a Borough Committee, or a Board, regardless of whether the member of Council is a member of such Committee or Board.

### **Section 4. Use of Technology Equipment.**

- I. Recording devices or the use of recording functions are permitted so long as the use of the recording device or the recording function is identified by the operator of the recording device or the recording function at the start of the meeting by use of the Chat function on the Zoom program being used by the Borough Council, Committee, or Board conducting the virtual public meeting, and so long as the use of the recording device or the recording function does not interfere in the conduct of the virtual public meeting.
- II. Pictures, exhibits, or other audio-visual aids that a Public Participant engaging in virtual public comment wishes to present must be provided to the Borough Secretary no less than twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the scheduled virtual public meeting.

### **Section 5. Inappropriate Behavior and Language.**

- I. No Public Participant shall be permitted to participate in the Virtual Public Comment Period if the Public Participant engages in or exhibits inappropriate behavior or offensive language.

### **Section 6. Charge and Control of Virtual Public Comment Period.**

- I. The presiding officer of the virtual public meeting shall have full charge and control of the Virtual Public Comment Period and enforcement of the provisions of this Policy.
  
- II. Should any Public Participant fail to comply with the requirements under this Policy, the presiding officer shall have the right to discontinue the Virtual Public Comment Period, stop the speaker's comment, or remove the offending speaker from the virtual public meeting. If a Public Participant in the virtual public meeting is asked to mute their electronic device and does not comply, the presiding officer shall have the right to remove the Public Participant from the virtual public meeting.