

Commission Changes to Public Comment Process – Jan 22, 2018

The Colorado Oil & Gas Conservation Commission (COGCC) has recently experienced a significant increase in the volume of public comment at its regularly scheduled hearings. To maximize its limited hearing time, and balance its regulatory obligations with its commitment to hear from the public, the Commission is instituting changes to its public comment processes.

Online Sign-Up Available

A pre-hearing public comment sign-up sheet will be available on the Commission's website starting the Wednesday prior to the hearing, ending at noon on the Friday prior to the hearing. Those who sign up online will be given priority to speak during the hearing's public comment period. The total time for public comment will be limited as described below.

Hearing Day Sign-Up

Persons who did not sign up for public comment online may sign up the day of the hearing, but the Commission may limit the time for comment or the number of walk-in commenters based on the total time allowed for public comment.

Summary of Comments

All commenters will be asked to provide a short written summary of the substance of their comments when they sign up. The Commission encourages commenters to refer to a specific Docket Number in their summary. Docket Numbers may be found on the hearing agenda posted on the Commission's website.

Time Limits

Two hours will be set aside at the beginning of each Commission hearing for public comments. Any elected officials wishing to speak will be called first. Following elected officials, commenters who signed up online will be called in the order in which they signed up. Walk-in commenters will be called as time allows. Generally, commenters can expect to have two to three minutes to speak, depending on the number of commenters who have signed up.

The Commission, in its discretion, may elect to group public comments according to the docketed matter commenters wish to address rather than take all comments in the order in which commenters signed-up. Alternatively, the Commission may elect to hear

all public comments on a specific docketed matter at the time the Commission hears the matter rather than during the initial public comment period. In all cases, the Commission retains discretion to adjust the time allocated to the general public comment period.

After the two-hour public comment period, if there are commenters who did not have an opportunity to speak, they will be invited to return at the conclusion of Commission business to provide their comments. Note that some Commission hearings continue into the next day.

Commenters who are invited to return at the conclusion of Commission business to provide their comments should be aware that the Commission's agenda may change substantially before or during the hearing. As a result, the Commission may conclude its business earlier or later than is stated in the posted agenda. It will be the commenter's responsibility to follow Commission proceedings and appear at the appropriate time. Any member of the public may follow Commission proceedings online at the Commission's YouTube channel.

Commenters who are speaking on behalf of an organization are encouraged to consolidate their comments with other members of the same organization.

Written Comments Accepted

At any time, a member of the public may submit a written statement to the Commission for consideration. Written comments may be submitted on the online sign-up sheet or by email to cogcc.hearings_unit@state.co.us.

Commission Discretion

The Commission Chair has discretion to modify this process at any time, for any reason.