

Public Comment #30 BOS RCVD 6/4/2026

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Subject: Request to Rescind the January 2026 Public Comment Procedure and Reconstruct Item-by-Item Public Testimony - Agenda Item 26-1003, Tuesday June 9th, 2026
Date: Thursday, June 4, 2026 12:58:44 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

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Madame Secretary, please attach these public comments to the above agenda item. Thanks so much for you help.

Executive Summary

On January 6, 2026, this Board implemented a revised public comment procedure with the stated intent of increasing operational efficiency, maintaining transparency, and optimizing meeting lengths. The core of this procedural shift required the public to consolidate all testimony for multiple, distinct agenda items into single, bundled comment blocks at the beginning of meetings.

At the time of adoption, the Board committed to a six-month trial period to evaluate the real-world performance of this structural change. Six months of empirical data has now been collected and compiled by staff. **The data is clear: the experiment has failed to achieve its objectives.**

The revised format has failed to save time, failed to shorten meetings, and has artificially suppressed meaningful public engagement with the taxpaying community. On behalf of the Taxpayers Association of El Dorado County, I urge this Board to follow the data, acknowledge the results of this trial, and revert to the historical protocol of taking public comment dynamically as individual agenda items are called.

Data Analysis: Evaluating the "Efficiency" Narrative

The primary justification for restricting when and how the public can speak was to streamline meetings. However, the data presented by staff directly refutes the idea that any efficiencies were achieved.

1. Meetings Are Longer, Not Shorter

A direct comparison of 12 regular meetings before the implementation against 12 regular meetings under the new procedure reveals that meeting lengths actually increased:

- **Average Meeting Duration (2025 - Before Change):** 6 hours, 43 minutes.
- **Average Meeting Duration (2026 - After Change):** 6 hours, 53 minutes.

Restricting the public's right to speak on an item-by-item basis resulted in a **2.5% increase in total meeting time (+10 minutes per meeting)**. Clumping public testimony together did not save a single second of administrative time.

2. The Meeting Schedule Reduction is an Artificial Metric

The data highlights a 15% reduction in the average number of meetings per month (dropping from 2.75 to 2.33). However, staff explicitly notes the actual cause: *"The Board reduced its meeting schedule from 33 meetings in 2025 to 28 meetings in 2026."*

Fewer meetings on the calendar is an artificial, top-down scheduling choice made by the Board itself—it is not an organic efficiency yield generated by the new public comment model.

3. The Taxpaying Public Was Never the Source of Meeting Bloat

The data demonstrates that El Dorado County residents are overwhelmingly respectful and concise with the Board's time:

- The average public comment length across all periods is just **2 minutes and 6 seconds**.
- Only **22% of speakers** commenting on Consent or Closed Session items utilized their full 3-minute limit.
- Only **29% of speakers** commenting on Non-Hearing items utilized their full 3-minute limit.

The vast majority of your constituents stand up, briefly state their piece in roughly two minutes, and sit down. The public was never the source of meeting delays, yet they are the ones being penalized by this policy.

The Civic Cost: Reduced Interaction and Poor Governance

While the procedural change failed to deliver any mathematical time savings, it succeeded in severely damaging the relationship between the Board and the public.

Forcing a resident who wants to comment on multiple agenda items to bundle all of their thoughts into a single 3-minute window at the open of the morning session is a logistical and democratic failure. It forces disjointed, confusing testimony and completely divorces public feedback from the specific window of time when the Board actually discusses, debates, and votes on that specific issue.

As an association representing the taxpayers who fund this local government, we believe good governance requires that public input be integrated into the decision-making process organically, not treated as an administrative nuisance to be cleared out of the way before the real meeting begins.

Conclusion & Action Required

When this trial was initiated, it was framed as an effort to enhance the governance structure

of El Dorado County. Now that the six-month mark has arrived, we must look at the facts objectively:

1. It did not shorten meetings (it lengthened them).
2. It did not create organic monthly efficiencies (the calendar was simply cut).
3. It reduced the quality of interaction between the taxpayers and their elected representatives.

It is not a sign of weakness to admit that a policy experiment did not work; it is a sign of strong leadership. The Taxpayers Association of El Dorado County formally requests that the Board of Supervisors abandon the bundled public comment framework and restore the traditional, item-by-item public testimony protocol to bring true transparency back to our local government.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

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