THE WATER WORKS BOARD OF THE CITY OF BIRMINGHAM PUBLIC SPEAKER POLICY

The meetings of The Water Works Board of the City of Birmingham (the “Water Works Board”) are open to the public, in accordance with the Alabama Open Meetings Act. It is the expressed intent of the Water Works Board to ensure that public has an opportunity to provide the Water Works Board with public comments while at the same time ensuring that the order and decorum of board meetings is not unduly burdened and interfered with.

It is deemed to be appropriate and necessary that the following policy and procedures be put in place. Members of the public shall have access to the agenda and, subject to the below requirements, be permitted to speak to the Board at regularly scheduled board meetings.

Individuals who wish to speak to the Board of Directors at regularly scheduled board meetings must comply with the following:

A. Speakers must register prior to the meeting on the sign-up sheet located at the boardroom (or at any other location that a regularly scheduled board meeting may be held). The sign-up sheet will be available prior to the start of each meeting and will be closed once the meeting begins. All persons who have not signed-up prior to the start of the meeting will not be permitted to provide public comment. Such registration shall include the following:

   (1) The speaker’s name, address, and telephone number;
   (2) Whether the individual is speaking on behalf of an organization, company, agency or another individual and, if so, whether they are being paid to do so; and,
   (3) The general topic on which they wish to comment. In the event matters are discussed during the board meeting upon which a speaker wishes to comment, the speaker shall not be limited to the topic listed on the sign-up sheet.

B. Speakers must limit their remarks to topics germane to the business of the Water Works Board.

C. Each public comment will be limited to three (3) minutes, unless the Chairman, at his or her discretion, extends further time.

D. If a delegation or group has requested to speak, then the delegation or group shall be allowed five (5) minutes to address the Board, unless the Chairman, at his or her discretion, extends further time.

E. All remarks shall be addressed to the Board as a body and not to any specific member thereof.

F. The Chairman shall moderate the public comment period. The Chairman shall have discretion to modify the allotted time for speakers, particularly when a large number of persons are interested in participating in the public comment period.

G. Unless approved by the Chairman prior to the meeting, speakers may not speak on the same topic more than once every two months.

H. Neither the Board nor any employees shall be required to provide answers to speaker questions extemporaneously.

I. The Board seeks to present a respectful environment to all speakers and encourages the same in return. Persons who engage in the use of slurs, derogatory comments, disrespectful, threatening, abusive language or conduct will not be permitted to participate in public comment and are subject to being removed from the premises of the Water Works Board and/or being banned from future meetings for a period not to exceed three (3) board meetings.

J. Speakers are encouraged to attempt to address any issues with management and staff of BWWB prior to addressing the Board.

The board reserves the right to modify, amend, or waive this policy, in whole, or in part, as deemed necessary to conduct board meetings efficiently and effectively.