

Trust

Alaska Mental Health
Trust Authority

PUBLIC COMMENT GUIDELINES

WHEN?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Trust bylaws call for a public comment period during all regular meetings of the Full Board of Trustees. See page 2 of this document for the relevant bylaw. ▪ Full Board meetings usually are held in late January/early February, May, September and November. Public comment typically occurs at the close of the first meeting day. Public notice is issued for all meetings. Meeting information and agendas are posted on The Trust’s website www.mhtrust.org.
PURPOSE?	The public comment period allows individuals to inform and advise the Board of Trustees about issues, problems or concerns. It is not a hearing.
PROTOCOL?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individuals are invited to speak for up to three minutes. ▪ A speaker may be granted the latitude to speak longer than the 3-minute time limit only by the Board Chair or by a motion adopted by the Full Board of Trustees. ▪ Participants addressing issues relating to Trust beneficiaries will have priority order. ▪ Speakers are not permitted to criticize or attack others. ▪ Anyone providing comment should do so in a manner that is respectful of the Board of Trustees and all meeting attendees. The Board Chair maintains the right to stop public comments that contain inappropriate or inflammatory language or behavior.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How can someone provide comments?	IN PERSON - please sign up for public comment using the clipboard provided by Trust staff during the Trustee meeting.
	VIA TELECONFERENCE – please call the meeting teleconference number on a telephone hard line. To prevent audio feedback, do not call on a speaker phone or cell phone. You may use the mute feature on your phone until you are called to speak, but do not put the call on hold because hold music disrupts the meeting. If this occurs, we will mute or disconnect your line.
	IN WRITING – send comments to the address or fax number below or email steve.williams@alaska.gov . Note that, if you wish your comments distributed to Trustees prior to a meeting, all comments should be received at least two days prior to the meeting to allow time to distribute them to Trustees.
Where is The Trust office?	The Trust Authority Building is located at 3745 Community Park Loop in Anchorage.
What is the call-in number?	Complete dialing instructions and the call-in number are posted on our website. Find the meeting under current upcoming meetings and click on the link to find the meeting agenda, call-in information and any meeting documents. Problems? Email info@mhtrust.org .
Is public comment taken at Trustee committee meetings?	Public comment is not regularly scheduled during Trustee committee meetings. Written comments are always welcome and may be submitted to the Trustees at any time to the address or fax number below or email steve.williams@alaska.gov . Note that, if you wish your comments distributed to Trustees prior to a committee meeting, all comments must be received two days prior to the meeting to allow time to distribute them to Trustees.
What is the process for commenting on projects on Trust land?	Public comment regarding projects on Trust land is most effective when provided early in the decision process. Trust land is managed by the Trust Land Office (TLO) on behalf of the Trust Authority. Written comment is sought by the TLO on a per-project basis. Before each project, the TLO consults with the Board of Trustees and issues a “best interest decision and public notice” regarding the project. The best interest decision and instructions for submitting comments are posted on the Trust Land Office website , through the State of Alaska Online Public Notices and in local newspapers. Following the comment period, the TLO may affirm, revise or rescind the best interest decision regarding the project. Of course, public comment regarding any Trust land issue may be provided to the Trustees at any time at the address or fax number below, by email to steve.williams@alaska.gov or at Trustee meetings as described above.
For additional information:	Call Steve Williams, Chief Operating Officer, at 907-269-7697 or email steve.williams@alaska.gov if you have additional questions.

ALASKA MENTAL HEALTH TRUST AUTHORITY

BYLAWS

ARTICLE V MEETINGS*

Section 6. The Trust Authority will schedule at least one period for public comment during each regularly scheduled Trust Authority meeting. Prior to beginning the public comment period, the presiding officer will specify any limitation on content or topics to be addressed. She or he should read or may paraphrase the following procedural constraints:

- (a) The purpose for having public comment is to allow persons the opportunity to provide information to the Trust Authority and to advise the Trust Authority about problems and issues.
- (b) The public comment period will not be considered a hearing and cannot be used for that purpose. Organizations are required to request hearings in advance in writing, and when granted by the Trust Authority, the hearing must be given public notice in accordance with law.
- (c) Public comments will normally be held to a maximum of three minutes per speaker. A waiver to the time limit may be granted by order of the Chair or motion adopted by the Trust Authority.
- (d) The public comment period is not to be used in order to criticize or attack specific individuals.
- (e) The Trust Authority may not take action during the comment period, but may take matters under advisement.
- (f) The Trust Authority may consider matters identified during the public comment period under new business, but may defer such matters to a subsequent meeting in order to complete the original agenda or to provide notice to the public that the item will be on the Trust Authority's agenda.
- (g) In order to afford the maximum amount of time to the public, responses or comments by Trust Authority members or Trust Authority staff during public comment periods will be held to a minimum.

* Excerpted from Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority Bylaws adopted May 2014. All statutes, regulations and bylaws governing The Trust can be found on our website

<http://mhtrust.org/about/governance/statutes/>

May 2014