

Eldred Township Board of Supervisors

Public Comment at Public Meetings Policy

The Eldred Township Board of Supervisors values the questions, comments and concerns of our residents. The Board encourages participation in public meetings, however Board meetings are business meetings and the business items on the agenda must be completed. Therefore, this policy has been adopted to ensure that both business and public comment and concerns can be addressed.

Limit on Participation

Audience participation at Board meetings is limited to the public comment portion of the meeting designated for non-agenda items and to public comments on a listed agenda item. At all other times during a Board meeting, the audience shall not enter into a discussion or debate on matters being considered by the Board, unless requested by the presiding officer.

Public Comment on Non-Agenda items

At regular meetings the Board shall allot no more than 30 minutes to hear persons who desire to make comments to the Board regarding items not listed as agenda items.

No presentation shall exceed three (3) minutes. When multiple speakers desire to speak on the same issue, the presiding officer shall relate the Boards desire that the speakers designate two or three people to speak for the group. Time for each presentation may be reduced if an unusually large number of people sign up to speak on the same topic. The presiding offices shall have the authority to extend or reduce the amount of time for public comment on non-agenda items.

Any person planning to address the Board on a non-agenda item shall complete the appropriate speaker participation form, available in the foyer, and submit it to the presiding officer at least ten minutes prior to the beginning of the meeting.

Public Comment Agenda items

At regular meetings the Board shall allot no more than 30 minutes to hear any persons who desire to make comments to the Board regarding an item on the agenda for the meeting. Public comment shall be heard after any motion of the Board and prior to any vote on such motion.

No presentation shall exceed three (3) minutes. When multiple speakers desire to speak on the same issue, the presiding officer shall relate the Boards desire that the speakers designate two or three people to speak for the group. Time for each presentation may be reduced if an unusually large number of people sign up to speak on the same topic. The presiding offices shall have the authority to extend the amount of time for public comment on agenda items.

Opening Statement

The following speakers have submitted a participation form to speak on non-agenda/ agenda item(s).

The Board asks the audience to refrain from responding to the speaker's comment, including cheering and applauding so that all Board members can focus their attention entirely on the speaker.

Although the Board may ask clarifying questions, please be reminded that the Board cannot respond directly to any comments made this evening.

Tonight, if we have any individuals signed up to speak, each person shall have three (3) minutes to speak.

*Public Comment
Procedures*

A speaker who signs up to address the Board, either in a non-agenda item or on an item listed on the agenda shall:

Be acknowledged by the presiding officer before publicly speaking;

State his/her first and last name and intended topic;

Address the Board only on matters relating to the Township and be limited to the topic as indicated on the speaker participation form;

Be limited to speaking for no more than Three (3) minutes;

Have allotted time reduced if the presiding officer deems it necessary to accommodate a large number of speakers wishing to address the Board on the same topic;

Not accrue time from another speaker;

Not use profane or vulgar language during his/her presentation;

Refrain from making personal attacks against any person;

Remain in the area designated for speaking during his/her presentation;

Address the presiding officer and refrain from directing questions to individual Board members, or members of the audience

The presiding officer shall have the authority to suspend the speaker's time if he/she does not comply with the listed procedures.

Board's Response

Specific factual information or recitation of existing policy may be furnished in response to inquiries, but the Board shall not deliberate or decide regarding any subject that is not included on the agenda presented at the meeting.

The presiding officer shall have the authority to request that the appropriate staff member follow up with the individual regarding the information or concern presented during public comment.

*Complaints and
Concerns*

The presiding officer shall determine whether a person addressing the Board has attempted to solve a matter administratively through resolution channels established by policy. If not, the person shall be referred to the appropriate policy to seek resolution.

Disruption

The Board shall not tolerate disruption of the meeting by members of the audience. If, after one warning from the presiding officer, any person continues to disrupt the meeting by his/her actions or words, the presiding officer may request assistance from the peace officer to have the person(s) removed from the premises.