

SPEAKER TOWNSHIP

Sanilac County, Michigan

Rules of Public Comment & Participation – Board Meetings

The Speaker Township Board recognizes the value of public comment on Township issues and the importance of allowing members of the public to express themselves on matters of community interest. But, for the benefit of all, and in the interest of all, the following rules of participation and public comment shall apply at all meetings as allowed by the Open Meetings Act.

The intent of these rules is:

1. To allow members of the public a fair and adequate opportunity to be heard;
2. To grant the Township Manager and/or the presiding member of the Township Board the authority to deny any request that an item be placed on the agenda. Such denial shall be based on a determination by the Township Manager and/or presiding member of the Township Board that the request is frivolous, harassing or repetitive.
3. To provide adequate time for the Board to obtain necessary information, conduct fact finding and give thorough consideration to situations in which an individual, during the requested presentation, addresses or questions a Township policy, procedure or decision that does not exist, a change to a Township policy, procedure or decision is proposed, or an exception to a Township policy, procedure or decision is specifically requested by the individual;
4. To assure that the regular agenda of the Board is completed; and
5. To recognize the nature of the Boards' time and to use that time efficiently.

Person or Delegations wishing to be placed on the Agenda:

1. A individual or delegation desiring to appear before the Board may request placement on the agenda by making such request in writing to the Township Manager and/or presiding member of the Township Board no less than seven (7) business days before the meeting at which the individual would like to speak. The request shall include, at a minimum, the following information:
 - o a. Name of the person or the delegation affiliation, whichever is applicable.
 - o b. A detailed summary of the topic to be presented or discussed.
2. The individual making the request will be notified by the Township Manager and/or presiding member of the Township Board as to whether the request has been granted and, if the request is granted, will be provided three (3) minutes to speak, when the individual's requested topic is addressed on the agenda, unless extended by the presiding officer.
3. The Township Manager and/or presiding member of the Township Board shall take appropriate steps to determine that requests that an item be placed on the agenda are not frivolous, repetitive, or harassing in nature.
4. Delegations must select only one individual to speak on their behalf.
5. Individuals speaking to the Board shall address remarks only to the presiding member of the Township Board.

6. The presiding member of the Township Board shall have the authority to terminate the presentation of any individual who does not adhere to the above rules or is abusive toward an individual Board member or the Board as a whole.
7. The presiding member of the Township Board, members of the Board, and the Township Manager may ask questions of any individual addressing the Board

PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Each presentation to the Board made by an individual shall be limited to three (3) minutes in duration, unless extended by agreement of the presiding member of the Township Board.
2. No individual may speak more than once on the same topic.
3. To ensure that all interested parties have an opportunity to speak, please be brief and limit any comments to one topic.
4. **Public comment is not a question and answer period. It provides individuals with an opportunity to express their comments regarding any subject matter. All comments shall be directed only to the presiding member (Supervisor) of the Township Board; no person may address or question Board members individually.**
5. **The Board will not respond to comments made during the public comment period unless it becomes necessary to ask a clarifying question, correct a factual error, or provide specific factual information.**

THE PRESIDING MEMBER OF THE TOWNSHIP BOARD MAY:

- a. interrupt, warn, or terminate an individual's presentation when the presentation exceeds three (3) minutes or is personally directed, abusive, obscene, or irrelevant;
- b. request that any individual leave the meeting when that individual fails to observe reasonable decorum;
- c. request the assistance of law enforcement officers in the removal of a disorderly individual when that individual's conduct interferes with the orderly progress of the meeting; and
- d. call for a recess or an adjournment to another time