

DICKINSON TOWNSHIP
PUBLIC MEETING POLICY

All Board meetings shall be conducted according to the following Public Meeting Policy. Where not addressed by this Policy, proceedings shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 10th ed.

The purpose of this Policy is to maintain order of public meetings by structuring the public comment process in such a way as to allow the Board to efficiently and effectively perform its primary function of making collective decisions on the issues before it. Furthermore, this Policy is adopted to ensure that each citizen's equal opportunity to comment on matters of concern before the Board is not infringed upon or limited by another citizen's undue disruptions or behavior at a public meeting.

1. **Meeting Structure.** Board meetings are conducted according the following order of business:

- Call to Order**
- Roll Call**
- Pledge of Allegiance**
- Opening Announcements**
- Agenda Approval**
- Emergency Services Report**
- Approval of Minutes**
- Consent Agenda**
 - A. bills for payment**
- Chairman's Report**
- Plan Review/Conditional Use Hearings**
- General Public Comment (non-Agenda Items)**
- New Business**
- Old Business**
- Manager's Report**
- Assistant Manager / Treasurer's Report**
- Zoning Officer's Report**
- Engineer's Report**
- Solicitor's Report**
- Supervisors' Report**
- Adjournment**

2. **Agenda.** The Chairman may, from time to time, direct the publication and posting of a meeting agenda prior to such meeting in such manner as he may determine. The agenda shall be made available at least 2 days prior to the meeting by posting on the Township's website. The agenda shall be made available in hard copy in the Meeting Room at the beginning of the meeting.

3. **Public Comment.** Public comment at all meetings shall be governed by the following:

A. **Role of Chairman.** The Chairman of the Board shall preside over public comment periods and recognize individuals wishing to offer comment.

B. **Persons permitted to make comment.** No person shall be permitted to speak who is not a resident or taxpayer of the Township, except upon permission of the Chairman. Any person wishing to make public comment should sign in on the Sign-in Sheet available at the meeting.

C. **Time for public comment.**

1. Non-agenda items. One period of public comment is provided at each meeting. The purpose of the public comment period is for individuals to give comments on non-agenda items. A Sign-in Sheet will be available at the meeting. The Chairman will recognize those seeking to make public comment in the order appearing on the Sign-in Sheet. However, this does not preclude others from offering comment if sufficient time remaining for the receipt of public comment permits. Each statement by a citizen shall be limited to no more than five (5) minutes duration unless the citizen requests more time

in advance of making his or her comments. Prior to receiving the comments, the Chairman, in his discretion, may grant an additional three (3) minute period of time. In making a decision on a request for additional time, the Chairman will consider the number of citizens who have signed the Sign-in Sheet. The public comment period on non-agenda items shall be limited to a total of thirty (30) minutes.

2. Agenda items. Citizens may address items appearing on the agenda during the portion of the meeting at which that agenda item is discussed by the Board following the opening of the floor by the Chairman for comment but prior to any motion being offered. If the time for receipt of public comment on an agenda item exceeds or is likely to exceed a total of thirty (30) minutes, the Chair may limit each statement by a citizen, other than the applicant and his/her agent(s), to no more than three (3) minutes duration.
3. If there is insufficient time for general public comment at a meeting due to an extensive business agenda or other reasons deemed appropriate by the Chairman, he may defer the non-agenda public comment period to the next regular meeting or special meeting occurring in advance of the next regular meeting.

D. Subject matter of public comment.

1. The Board shall refer questions to the appropriate official or staff for subsequent response or answer during the meeting as appropriate.

E. Manner of public comment.

1. Each speaker shall speak only when recognized by the Chairman.
2. Each speaker shall identify themselves by name. If necessary, a speaker shall provide proof of residency in Dickinson Township.
3. Each speaker shall direct statements to the Chairman.
4. Please speak loudly, clearly and slowly so that accurate minutes may be recorded.
5. Citizens shall not comment in a manner that is disruptive, disregards the rules of decorum, or for the purpose of preventing the conduct of the business of the meeting.
6. Citizens shall not interrupt other citizens, or the deliberations or the discussion of the Board.
7. No citizen shall speak more than once on the same topic unless all others who wish to speak on the topic have been heard. A citizen may address a topic no more than twice at a meeting.
8. The Chairman shall issue one (1) warning to a citizen whose comments violate this Policy by stating that the citizen is out of order, warned of the violation and giving a basis therefor. Further failure to conform conduct to this Policy shall be grounds for the Board to consider removing the citizen from the meeting.

F. Submission of public comment in writing. Citizens may provide public comment in writing according to the following procedures:

1. Written public comment shall be addressed to the Chairman, both members of the Board of Supervisors, and the Township Manager at the following address:

Dickinson Township
C/o Chairman, Board of Supervisors
219 Mountain View Road
Mount Holly Springs, PA 17065

Upon receipt by Township staff, all written public comment shall be circulated to the Board members and the Township Manager.

2. Written public comment shall have the same force and effect as oral public comment provided during the course of a meeting.
3. All written public comment received by the Township shall be recognized at the next regularly-scheduled meeting during an appropriate time.