

MILLINGTON TOWNSHIP POLICY FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS AT MEETINGS

I. Purpose

Millington Township welcomes and encourages comments from members of the public who attend Township meetings. Pursuant to the requirements of the Open Meetings Act, a person shall be permitted to address a Township meeting under rules established and recorded by the Township. This policy shall apply to meetings of the Township Board, Planning Commission, and Zoning Board of Appeals.

II. Application

1. If an agenda is available, the Township shall have copies of the agenda available for the public who attend the meeting. Public comments shall be at the beginning of the meeting. These rules apply to the Public Comment Period in any regular or special meeting or any portion of a public hearing where public comment is required or designated ("Public Comment").

III. Members of the public have no right to address the board or make comments outside of the Public Comment. At any time, the board, in its discretion, may accept comments from the public. However, outside of the Public Comment time, the board is under no obligation to hear comments from the public.

IV. Rules of Public Comment

The Township has adopted the following procedures to receive public comments at Township meetings:

1. When the Township meeting reaches a designated time for Public Comments, the Supervisor (or other person who is chair of the meeting) shall invite attendees to make Public Comments.
2. The Supervisor (or meeting chairperson) will ask persons wishing to speak to raise their hands to be recognized by the Supervisor. The Supervisor shall recognize one person to speak at a time, and each speaker shall provide his/her name and address. No person in attendance shall make a comment without being recognized.
3. Public Comments shall be addressed to the board, not to other members of the audience.
4. Public Comments shall be limited to three (3) minutes. Each speaker is only entitled to one (1) three-minute time during each meeting and may not split the time or "give" the time to another speaker. However, if a public hearing is held during a meeting, then a person may speak during at the designated time during the public hearing and also at the Public Comment period of the meeting.
5. In lieu of speaking, a person may submit any written comments to the Township Clerk. All written materials are to be read aloud. Written materials submitted to the Township are considered public documents.
6. The Township encourages free and complete public dialogue on Township issues within the bounds of civil discourse. Speakers may not breach the peace of the meeting.
7. If a speaker includes specific questions to the board in his/her Public Comments, the board has no obligation to respond, but a reply may be offered at a later date.
8. Groups are encouraged to designate one or more individuals to speak on their behalf to avoid cumulative comments. However, there is no requirement to make such designation.
9. Speakers shall understand that the board has full discretion of the inclusion and detail of any Public Comment, including written correspondence, within the minutes. Speakers shall not expect the minutes to include verbatim transcripts or details of any individual comment.

V. Recording of Rules

These rules shall be recorded in the minutes and kept on file with the Township Clerk.