

Policy on Citizen Input and Conduct at Township Meetings Eureka Township

Policy Intent:

Citizens are welcome and encouraged to attend any and all meetings of the Township Board of Supervisors. To allow township citizens and members of the general public the opportunity to provide input and comment on township-related issues, the Eureka Township Board of Supervisors has established the following policy:

As established by the Townships Ordinance, the Township will post meeting notices in compliance with provisions of the Open Meeting Law. The Township will post a tentative agenda for Board meetings three (3) days prior to a regularly scheduled meeting on the Township's website and posting places.

It is important to note that a Township Board meeting is a meeting conducted in public, not a public meeting. In other words, the public is there to watch the Board work, not to participate in the Board meeting.

The Township Board reserves the right to suspend public input at its sole discretion.

Meeting Conduct:

The Open Meeting Law ensures people have the right to attend Town Board meetings, but not to disrupt the proceedings. If a meeting gets particularly rowdy, the Board at its sole discretion may recess the meeting to a later time to allow for a cooling off period.

It is important that individuals follow these guidelines when presenting public comments:

1. Treat all people with dignity and respect.
2. Provide factual information and recommendations in verbal and/or written form.
3. Respect the time period allotted to you. You will be signaled when you are running out of time.

Citizen Input:

Individuals or groups wishing to address the Township Board are encouraged to complete a Public Comment Form and request that an item be put on the agenda for discussion at a regular Township Board meeting. The item will be placed on the agenda under Public Comment in the order it is received by the Clerk. The deadline for such requests is noon on the Thursday preceding the meeting of the Township Board. Public comment at Board meetings is defined by the following procedures.

It is requested that anyone bringing written materials to the meeting have seven (9) copies available—five for the Board, one for the public, one for the Attorney, one for the Planning Commission liaison, and one for the official record.

Citizen Input at Meetings:

Public Comment Period (Near the beginning of a Meeting)

Although not required by Township Ordinances, a public comment period will be held near the beginning of each Board meeting (following agenda approval) to receive input from the individuals in attendance. The “Public Comment” section of the agenda is your opportunity to address items on the agenda or general comments to the Board. The following procedures will be followed:

1. Public comment will be taken after the agenda is approved in the order of signature (but can be moved at the discretion of the Town Board).
2. The time allotted for all comments will be no longer than twenty (20) minutes.
3. After recognition by the Chair, each individual will have up to three (3) minutes to speak and cannot assign any remaining time to someone else. Time may be extended by the Chair based on the number of speakers and time available.
4. Each person will stand at the podium, if one is available and give their name, address and group affiliation (if applicable) before addressing the Board.
5. If a group would like to address the Board, an appointed spokesperson will speak for the group.

It is requested that anyone bringing written materials to the meeting have seven (9) copies available—five for the Board, one for the public, one for the Attorney, one for the Planning Commission liaison, and one for the official record.

The Township Board will listen to your comments and may ask questions for clarification. It should be noted that this is a time for listening, not uncontrolled debate. If there is a need for a response from the Board, it should come at a later time when the Board has had time to deliberate the issue, to seek more information, or to take recommendations from the Township Attorney.

During a Meeting:

In fairness to all individuals and items before the Board, public comment during a Board meeting will not be taken, unless the Board at its sole discretion decides it is necessary. Public comment is allowed during the public comment period.

If the board decides public comment on an individual agenda item is necessary by majority consent, the public comment process shall be completed using the process defined above. The public comment period shall be completed before the Board proceeds with discussion and action on the item.

