

**TOWN BOARD RESOLUTION
RELATING TO CONDUCT AT TOWN BOARD MEETINGS**

WHEREAS, Towns are authorized to enact rules and regulations regarding the conduct of public meetings and public hearings. Town Law, §130(1). Some residents restrained by these rules will insist that the Town Board has unconstitutionally limited their right of free speech. The response to these claims is that the Town Board has responsibility to ensure that everyone has the right to participate and, therefore, the contents, length, and general nature of public comments can reasonably be limited. Thus, reasonable limitations on speakers are necessary to ensure public participation by numerous speakers presenting various points of view for consideration by the Town Board and attendees at the public hearing or public meeting. Such rules and regulations are consistent with, and in fact help guarantee the rights of free speech; and

WHEREAS, while the law does not require that Town Boards set aside time at regular town board meetings for public comment, this Town Board recognizes that public participation is important and for this reason allows for public comment at each meeting; and

WHEREAS, in an effort to maintain an efficient, orderly and safe Town Board meeting the following guidelines shall be and hereby are adopted for each meeting:

1. The entrance to the meeting building will be opened to the Public no earlier than 30 minutes and no later than 15 minutes prior to the scheduled start time.
2. The Town Supervisor will begin each meeting at 6:00 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
3. The meeting will be video recorded by the Town in its entirety and the recording will be kept in the Town Clerk's office for two years. This recording is a reference for meeting minutes and town resident discussions.
4. Videotaping by the general public is allowed and should be expected by those attending.
5. The limit is up two video cameras per meeting. The video cameras must be tripod mounted and kept in one location. No additional lighting can be used. If the video recording process becomes disruptive, the Town Supervisor can request that the responsible individual stop recording.
6. The public is also advised that audio recording may occur as well during Town Board meetings and accordingly, any and all personal and private conversation should be conducted outside the meeting room to ensure and protect personal privacy.
7. The use of still cameras, including cell phone cameras, by the general public is prohibited.

8. Cell phones are to be turned off during Town Board meetings or put on "vibrate". Calls are to be taken outside the meeting room.
9. At each meeting there will be an opportunity for the general public to address the Board. This allotted time is listed on the agenda as "Public Presentations". At the appropriate time, the individuals wishing to be heard will approach the podium, state their name and address. They will have up to 5 minutes to speak to the Board. The Town Supervisor can end the address short or extend the allowable time.
10. The public is asked to make comments in a civil and respectful manner. Be advised that your statements do not enjoy the same privilege and immunity given to statements made by members of the Town Board. You are to restrict your comments to matters pertaining to Town business.
11. During the remainder and course of the meeting, the Town Supervisor can allow the public opportunity to comment or ask questions on agenda matters.
12. As a courtesy to the Board and all attendees, there will be no talking between attendees while the meeting is in progress.
13. A person who disregards the directives of the Supervisor in enforcing these rules, disturbs the peace at a meeting, makes impertinent or slanderous remarks or generally conducts himself or herself in a boisterous or inappropriate manner while addressing the Town Board may be barred from further participation, forfeit any balance of time remaining for his or her comments and may be asked to leave the meeting. After a final warning, if a speaker refuses to step down or remain silent, or voluntarily remove himself or herself from the meeting, the Town Supervisor can request that a police officer remove the individual from the meeting room. The authority is section 240.20 of the Penal Law, which provides that a person is guilty of disorderly conduct when, with intent to cause public inconvenience, annoyance or alarm or recklessly creates a risk thereof: 1) he makes unreasonable noise, 2) in a public place, he uses abusive or obscene language, or makes an obscene gesture, or 3) without lawful authority, he disturbs any lawful assembly or meeting of persons or 4) he creates a hazardous or physically offensive condition by any act which serves no legitimate purpose. Disorderly conduct is a criminal offense constituting a violation.