

RESOLUTION NO. 01:3:24-2
RE: RENEW RULES FOR PUBLIC COMMENT PERIODS AT TOWN OF BEEKMAN
TOWN BOARD MEETINGS

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Beekman hereby adopts the following rules of decorum for all periods of public comment at its Town Board meetings for the year 2024:

The presiding officer shall have, to the fullest extent provided by New York State law, the sole authority to regulate public comment at any meeting as she/he, in his/her sole discretion, shall see fit, including, but not limited to, the authority to set priority for topics of comment and to declare any person to be out of order for failure to follow his or her directives in this regard. In governing the meeting and regulating public comment the presiding officer shall consider, but shall not be strictly bound by the following guidelines:

1. The public shall be allowed to speak during the period of the meeting designated as "Public Comment" or as such other time as a majority of the Town Board shall suspend these rules, or at a duly called public hearing, or any other time required by state law or the Town Code of the Town of Beekman. Speakers must sign-in and provide their name, address (if they so choose) and organization they represent, if applicable. Speakers must be recognized by the presiding officer. During the segment of the meeting designated "Public Comment", speakers shall limit their remarks to three (3) minutes and will be advised by the presiding officer when three (3) minutes have expired. Speakers are requested to conclude their remarks at that time. "Public Comment" is intended to afford persons an opportunity to express opinions on items on the Town Board agenda or general public comment periods. No Speaker shall be declared out of order, prevented from speaking or barred from attendance at any meeting because of any disagreement with the Speaker's position or view on any matter, because of the Speaker's identity or because of any disagreement with the content of relevant testimony. Written comments submitted to the Town Clerk will not be read aloud but included in the minutes. Written comments will negate the opportunity to a (3) minute oral comment.
2. All remarks shall be addressed to the Town Board as a body and not to any member thereof. Speakers shall observe the rules of decorum set forth in Subsection 3 below. Interested parties or their representatives may address the Town Board by written communications. Written communications shall be delivered to the Town Clerk.

3. Purposes of rules of decorum.
 1. To ensure that meetings of the Town Board are conducted in a way that allows the business of the Town to be effectively undertaken.
 2. To ensure that members of the public who attend meetings of the Town Board can be heard in a fair, impartial manner.
 3. To ensure that meetings of the Town Board are conducted in a way which is open to all viewpoints and which is protective of the content of each speaker's speech and expression, yet is free from abusive, distracting or intimidating behavior.
 4. To ensure that these rules of decorum are understood by persons attending Town Board meetings.
 5. To ban egregious, inappropriate, and obstructive behavior at meetings of the Town Board.
4. Rules for the Speaker.
 1. The speaker shall conduct himself or herself in a professional and respectful manner.
 2. All remarks shall be directed to the Town Board, and not at Town staff or the public in attendance.
 3. The speaker shall not defame, intimidate, make personal affronts, make threats of violence, or use profanity.
5. Rules for the public. Members of the public in the audience shall not engage in any of the following activities during a Town Board meeting:
 1. Shouting, Clapping, unruly behavior, distracting side conversations, or speaking out.
 2. Defamation, intimidation, personal affronts, threats of violence, or profanity.
 3. Behavior that disrupts the orderly conduct of the meeting.
6. Persons Authorized to approach the dais. No person except members of the Town Board and Town Staff shall be permitted to approach the dais without the consent of the presiding officer.
7. Enforcement of rules of decorum.
 1. Upon a violation of these rules of decorum, the presiding officer shall request the person or persons violating a rule or rules to cease the violation.
 2. If a violation continues, the presiding officer warns the person(s) that he/she may be required to leave the meeting room if a violation continues.
 3. If the person or persons does not cease the violation(s) the presiding officer shall declare the person out of order at which time the person or persons will be ordered to leave the meeting room by the presiding officer.

Introduced: COUNCILMAN BATTAGLINI

Seconded: COUNCILMAN LEMAK

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Councilman Capollari	AYE
Councilman Battaglini	AYE
Councilman Lemak	AYE
Councilwoman Wohrman	AYE
Supervisor Covucci	AYE

Dated: January 3, 2024