

Forest County Conservation District & Planning Department

PUBLIC COMMENT POLICY

BACKGROUND

The Forest County Conservation District & Planning Department Board (hereinafter “Board”) encourages and values input from the community on all subject areas that are under the delegation and authority of the Forest County Conservation District & Planning Department Board and staff.

Under Act 93 (“The Sunshine Law”), the Board is required to account for public comment before official action is taken at a public meeting. The Board will continue to provide for a public comment period at the beginning of each public meeting of the Forest County Conservation District & Planning Department Board. The Sunshine Law allows for an agency to adopt and enforce reasonable rules regarding public comment. To ensure an effective public comment period, the Board hereby adopts the following Public Comment Policy.

PUBLIC COMMENT RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. The public comment period at each public meeting shall be no more than (20) minutes. In the event there is insufficient time for public comment at a meeting, the Board may, at its discretion, defer the public comment period to a meeting held in advance of the next regular or special meeting or until the next regular meeting.
2. A copy of the agenda will be available pursuant to the Sunshine Law.
3. All in attendance must conduct themselves in a courteous manner that is non-disruptive.
4. An individual wishing to address the Board, must register by writing their name and comment topic on a form provided by the Conservation District prior to the beginning of the meeting.
5. To the extent reasonable and proper under the circumstances, each individual shall be afforded one opportunity, not more than (3) minutes for the presentation of said comments, regardless of the number of issues, and may not yield his or her time to another individual. The individual shall state his or her name, the topic and other pertinent details. Comments should be concise, constructive, and respectful.
6. Comments shall be directed to the Board rather than staff members and shall not be in the form of questions. The Board may immediately comment, reserve comment to a later time, or decline comment. The Board may also recommend that a Right to Know request be submitted for information.
7. Board members, District staff, and members of the public are expected to conduct themselves with civility and to accord each other a measure of dignity and respect. Shouting, personal insults, and attacks or any other such conduct that may be deemed to disrupt the flow of business is out of order and may subject an individual to removal from the meeting. Individuals shall avoid the use of foul language and derogatory comments. The District Chairman may ask for any individual not abiding by this policy to vacate the premises.
8. Individuals should not speak outside of their recognized public comment time as to not disrupt others or the meeting.
9. Should a participant wish to address the Board on non-agenda items, or items of a special concern, that participant may submit a request in writing or by email at least seven (7) days prior to the Board meeting. The participant must include a topic, length of time requested, and any other pertinent details. The Board will confirm if the request has been added to the agenda. The Board will make every effort to accommodate matters that may arise within (7) days prior to the meeting or an emergency basis. The District Chairman reserves the right to place limits on the time requested.