

**MADISON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
PUBLIC COMMENT RULES**

Adopted 6/12/2018      Resolution 147-18      Exhibit PUBLICRULES2018  
6-month trial revision Resolution #108-2021      Exhibit Adopted: April 13, 2021

Amended Resolution # 20-2022      January 20, 2022      Exhibit: PUBLICRULES2022

To better facilitate Madison Township's official business during a public meeting, the following rules of order apply to the general public when they wish to speak before the Board of Trustees ("Board") at a regularly scheduled meeting.

Public Comment will be placed on Regular Meeting Agenda after New Business and again after the Department Reports, (and prior to the reading of the resolutions).

The following shall be observed:

**A.      PROCEDURE:**

1. All persons interested in addressing the Board, shall complete a Public Request Form ("Form") prior to the commencement of the Board meeting by furnishing their name (first and last), address, organization represented, and the agenda item to be addressed. The speaker is only required to provide, on the Form, their first and last name, the agenda item(s) to be addressed, and whether he/she is speaking for or against the matter on the agenda. All other information is optional. However, without contact information, the Board will be unable to personally follow up with the speaker about the issue or concern.
2. If the speaker wants to address the Board regarding a non-agenda item, the topic to be addressed MUST be provided on the Form, otherwise the speaker will not be permitted to speak.
3. The Form (both agenda and non-agenda items) should be provided to the Madison Township Administrator ("Administrator") or Board Chairman prior to the meeting being called to order on the day of the regular scheduled meeting. No Forms shall be accepted after the meeting begins, except under rare circumstances a speaker may be granted permission to speak to the Board. This will be on a case-by-case exemption, and only after unanimous vote of the Board. After the 6:00 p.m. regular meeting has begun, Forms will not be accepted under any circumstances.

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4. Speakers may only speak to item/s indicated on the Form submitted to the Administrator. The Board will not limit the number of speakers on each side of an issue (proponents and opponents), unless the number of speakers would prevent the board from completing the scheduled work of the board in a timely manner. In that instance, a majority vote of the Board Members will determine the number of speakers for the meeting.

5. The Chairman will recognize speakers and they should proceed to the podium in the order the Forms are received by the Administrator. The Chairman will state the agenda item listed on the Form as the reason the person would like to speak before the Board

6. All speakers are limited to five (5) minute presentations, which must be made at the podium to ensure that it is on the record. Attendees will not be permitted to speak from the audience. Each speaker is only allowed one (1) opportunity to speak on a particular subject as stated on the Form.

7. If any speaker has additional written information he/she would like to provide to the Board, this information may be presented to the Fiscal Officer for entry into the record.

8. Any variance or waiver of these rules shall be by a majority vote of the Board.

**B. RULES OF DECORUM.** Speakers addressing the Board shall not engage in personal attacks that are directed toward any member of the Board, Madison Township Staff, or the general public. A speaker's presentation to the Board shall not contain obscenity, defamation or slander, nor shall the speaker engage in threatening, personal or abusive language, or any other conduct which would disrupt, disturb or otherwise impede the orderly conduct of any Board meeting.

**C. ENFORCEMENT.** The rules of decorum set forth, above shall be enforced in the following manner:

**1. Warning.** Speaker's conduct shall be subject to the right of the Chairman to preserve the order and decorum of the meeting. If the Chairman determines that these rules are not being followed, one warning will be given. The Chairman shall warn the speaker who is breaching the rules of procedure and decorum and will request that the speaker return to the subject matter of the agenda item on the speaker's Form.

**2. Warning Failure.** If the speaker fails to comply with the warning, the Chairman may revoke the individual's speaking privileges and shall order him/her to stop speaking and leave the podium.

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**3. Removal.** If the speaker breaks the rules of decorum, fails to observe the Chairman's warning to return to the topic on his/her speaker Form, does not remove him/herself from the podium after the Chairman orders him/her to stop speaking and leave the podium, the speaker will be considered by the Board to acting in a manner that prevents or disrupts a lawful meeting or obstructs or interferes with the due conduct of the meeting, the Chairman may order any Madison Township Police Officer to remove that person from the meeting and, if necessary, be confined until the close of the meeting. O.R.C § 505.09, and O.R.C. § 2917.12.

**4. Barring a Speaker.** If a speaker has a history of violating the rules of decorum, or engages in behavior that disrupts the meeting, or prevents, obstructs, or interferes with more than one meeting, the speaker, at the discretion of a majority of the Board, shall be barred for three calendar months from further audience attendance before the Board. Continued violations at subsequent meetings will be addressed on a case-by-case basis, and may result in permanent debarment, at the discretion of a majority of the Board. This action will only be used in the most severe instances.

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