

RESOLUTION NO. 10-2020

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Commissioners of Berks County holds public meetings to conduct the business of the County; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Commissioners seek to fully comply with the “Sunshine Act,” Act of July 3, 1986, P.L. 388, No. 84 65 P.S. 271 et seq., as amended, by providing a reasonable opportunity at each public meeting for residents and/or taxpayers of Berks County to comment on matters of local concern, official actions or deliberation which are or may be before the Board.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Board of Commissioners of Berks County, in order to conduct all public meetings in an orderly manner and to provide for public participation in such meetings, hereby establishes public meeting rules and regulations as follows:

1. There will be provided at the beginning and/or end of the agenda for each public meeting an opportunity for residents and/or taxpayers of the County and others having an interest in County matters to comment on matters of concern, official actions or deliberations which are or may be before the Board of Commissioners. Such time on the agenda shall be titled “Public Comment”. The following guidelines are established for this portion of the public meeting:
  - a) Comment shall be received only after the commenting party (hereinafter “speaker”) is recognized by the Chair conducting the meeting.
  - b) The speaker shall proceed to the microphone or lectern at the front of the meeting room and announce his or her name and address prior to addressing the Board of Commissioners.
  - c) The Chair may rule out-of-order scandalous, impertinent, irrelevant and redundant comments, or comments the discernible purpose or effect of which is to disrupt or needlessly protract the proceedings of the meeting.
  - d) The Chair may request any individual to leave the meeting and may contact security to that end when that individual does not observe reasonable decorum. Further, the Chair may request the assistance of law enforcement officers to remove a disorderly person when his/her conduct interferes with the orderly progress of the meeting.
  - e) The Chair may call a recess or adjournment to another time when the lack of public decorum interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting.
  - f) The Chair may allocate available time among individuals wishing to comment.
2. Time allocated for the public comment period at each meeting shall not exceed thirty (30) minutes. Each speaker will be allotted three (3) minutes to present his or her topic. Said time limitations may be altered or waived at the Chair’s discretion.

3. At the discretion of the Chair conducting the meeting, a group of citizens registered to address the Board on the same issue may be required to designate a spokesperson.
4. At the discretion of the Chair conducting the meeting, residents and/or taxpayers of the County may comment on issues being discussed during the meeting other than during "Public Comment".
5. Residents and/or taxpayers may use audio or stenographic recorders to record all or any portion of the meeting. Said recorders shall be operated from the area set aside for the general public seating and may not be placed on the Board of Commissioners table without prior consent of the Chair conducting the meeting.
6. Video recorders may be used to record all or any portion of a public meeting. The operator of the recorder shall remain seated in the area set aside for the general public or stand in the rear of the room behind the general public seating area so as to not interfere in any way with the activities of the Board of Commissioners or the ability of the general public to observe the Board.
7. Any resident and/or taxpayer proposing to operate recording/video equipment at the public meeting shall so notify the Chief Clerk or Chair prior to the commencement of the meeting.
8. In the event that there is not sufficient time for all public comment, the Board of Commissioners, at its discretion, may continue the public comment to its next regular meeting or to a special meeting occurring in advance of the next regular meeting.

ADOPTED THIS 9th DAY OF JANUARY, 2020.

COUNTY OF BERKS

  
Christian Y. Leinbach, Chair

  
Kevin S. Barnhardt, Commissioner

Attest:

  
Maryjo Gibson, Chief Clerk

  
Michael S. Rivera, Commissioner